“Faithful Service”

Luke 19:11-27

based on the sermon preached on 10-9-23 available on the church app or at https://lwac.org.au/sermons]

CONTEXT AND KEY IDEAS

1. Jesus was on his way towards Jerusalem and had stopped in Jericho.
2. The crowds continued to follow Jesus as he went, expecting that when he entered Jerusalem he would overthrow the Romans and establish his Messianic political kingdom.
3. In order to try to correct this misunderstanding on the part of the crowd and teach them that his kingdom was not political and would not be fully established anytime soon, Jesus tells a parable about a nobleman who goes away to be made king and is gone a long time.
4. Before the nobleman goes he gives his servants each 1 mina, tells them to put it to work while he is gone, and calls them to account for the mina upon his return.

CONNECT

- Have you ever had something entrusted to you while someone else went away? Or did you have to trust someone else with something important while you went away? What was that experience like? Share about this as you are able.

STUDY

Read Luke 19:11-14

- The crowds following Jesus were expecting Jesus’ kingdom to appear or be established right away, as a political kingdom, even though Jesus had been plainly telling them he was going to Jerusalem to die for all humankind. Why do you think the crowds didn’t get the message about why Jesus was going to Jerusalem and about his kingdom? Why were they hearing but not understanding?

- Each of the ten servants were given the exact same amount: one mina (which was about three months wages). Assuming the servants to represent followers of Jesus, what do you think the minas represent in the life of Christians? What do all Christians receive that is the same?

- Are the servants told when the nobleman/king would return? How might this impact their diligence in investing the mina they had been given?

- Was the mina they had been given theirs (the servants) or did it still belong to the nobleman/king? How might this be reflected in our lives as Christians?

- If we interpret the subjects and their hatred of the nobleman/king to be the Jews who did not like Jesus and turned on him, wanting him crucified, what was it about Jesus which the Jewish people (not just the rulers and the Pharisees) did not like and rejected?

Read Luke 19:15-19

- Upon the king's return, the servants given the minas had to give an accounting of what they had done with the mina they had been given. Should the servants have expected this accounting? After all, the nobleman said put it to work until I come back, which implies that they will have to report what they have done.

- How conscious and expectant are we of Jesus' return and our having to give him an account of what we have done with our mina? Make a list of some things which distract us from focusing on Jesus' return.

- If we were more aware and expectant, might that change what we do with what we have been given by God?

- A ten-fold and five-fold increase may seem extraordinary to us, but it was possible given the high interest rates and scarcity of investment capital in Jesus' day. Even so, the rewards of ten cities and five cities for their faithful service is extraordinarily generous. What does this tell you about the nature of God?

- Without reading too much specifically into this reward of cities, it does seem like we will be given things to do, responsibilities in heaven. If you could choose to do any job in heaven (on a grand scale), what would it be?

Read Luke 19:20-23

- The third servant was foolish in that not only did he not invest his mina, he did not even keep it safe by entrusting it to the temple treasury or the money changers: he hid it in the ground. This was a very foolish thing to do.

- He states in his defence that he was afraid the king would take away the mina, because he has a reputation for that sort of action. But was the mina the servant's to begin with? Couldn't the king take the mina if he wanted? Wasn't that his prerogative? What is the attitude toward the mina which the servant displays? Whose mina does he think it is?

- Is the king's rebuke of this servant justified or overly harsh (he calls him "wicked")?

Read Luke 19:24-27

- When the king has the fearful (lazy?) servant's mina taken away from him and given to the one who earned ten more, is this fair?

- When Jesus says "to everyone who has, more will be given, but as for the one who has nothing, even what he has will be taken away," what does this mean? Apply this to our lives.

- Why does the king then have the subjects who did not want him made king executed? Is this justified or is it too harsh?

APPLY

- How are you doing with managing and investing the mina which God has given you?

- What would you include in your "life of faith" which comprises your mina?

- Are you faithful in some areas but struggling and need improvement in others?

- Thank God for those areas of your life of faith where you have been faithful, and prayerfully and thoughtfully repent over those areas where you have not been so faithful and ask for God's help and strength so that you can be more faithful.

- Which other aspect of this study has struck you the most and why? What are you going to do as a result ?

- Identify one or more truths from this study which speak to and can be applied in your life.

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  2.

PRAY FOR OUR CHURCH AND FOR ONE ANOTHER

- According to need.