

Making a Change in my Thinking

Sermon Discussion Guide for the week of January 15th, 2017

Primary Scripture: **Luke 19:11-27**

Relationships

As you begin the study portion of your gathering ask a few of these questions to help your group focus their attention.

What is the worst New Year's resolution you've ever made? How did it turn out?

Why do you think so many people struggle with following through on their resolutions?

Why do you think we struggle with following through on the commitments we make in our walk with Christ?

Even if we have the best of intentions, those intentions don't mean anything until they are put into action. This parable shows us that we only really enter into the kind of joy God has in store for us when we put intentions into action.

Scripture

Ask a volunteer to Read **Luke 19:11-15**.

What is Jesus saying about His kingdom?

What is He saying about His expectations for kingdom people?

How does this parable speak to the misconception in verse 11 that Christ's kingdom was to appear immediately?

The far country related both to Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension and to His being King in God's kingdom. Through this parable, Jesus communicated to His followers that there would be a delay in the fulfillment of the kingdom of God, and that there is a right way to live as disciples until He returns. Jesus reigns as King now at the Father's right hand, but one day He will return and make His kingdom evident to all the world. At that time Jesus will require an accounting from His disciples.

What do the nobleman's actions in verses 13 teach us about God and how He interacts with us?

What do the minas represent in this parable?

What talents, gifts and resources do you have in your life? Take some time and list them.

A minas was the equivalent of about three month's wages. The parable highlights how God graciously blesses us with talents, resources and gifts that He intends for us to use to glorify Him. Understanding that the servants represent believers in Christ makes clear the application for disciples then and now. Jesus was about to leave His followers and return to His Father in heaven. One day He would return, but in the meantime His followers must serve Him faithfully with all He has entrusted to them.

What is the meaning of verse 14? Who do you think are the enemies?

Why do you think some people struggle with accepting Jesus as their King who has a right to control everything in their life?

Have a volunteer read **Luke 19: 15-27**

Do you think of yourself as someone who has been given 5 bags or 1 bag?

What do you think the first two servants did to earn a return on the minas the master gave them?

The third servant claimed to know the nobleman (vv. 20-22) Based on his actions, do you think he knew the nobleman as well as he said? Why or why not?

Do you think it's common for people to view God as the third servant viewed the nobleman?

How would you explain who God is to someone who described Him as the third servant did?

Take some time and write down the attributes of God that are different from the way the servant described the master.

The biggest opportunity the servant squandered was to know the master. People are what is most important to God, and He wants you to invest in your relationship with Him.

How might the way we see God influence whether or not we invest our lives in His kingdom?

What earthly rewards might believers experience when they faithfully serve God?

What heavenly rewards might believers experience in the future as a result of having faithfully served God?

Mission

In what area of your life do you most struggle to live intentionally for Christ?

What fears may have kept you from faithfulness? How might you move past those fears and begin living intentionally for Christ's kingdom?

Development

Looking back at your list of talents and resources that Jesus has given you? How do you feel about the way you have invested them? Are you using them to bring Him glory, or do you need Him to repurpose them?

Regardless of the talents or resources we have, we all have been entrusted with the gospel. What does Jesus expect us to do with the gospel? How can you use your gifts to meet this expectation?

Pray