

Parables of Jesus #10

The 10 Minas

Luke 19:11-27 11.27.2016

BIG Idea: The coming King calls for a return on his investment.

INTRODUCTION

- Today we are diving into the final parable in our series. It has been awesome to journey through the core of Jesus parables. I have been challenged afresh to think about my own journey.
- Today's parable is no less challenging but is a great one for us to end the series since it is one of the last parables recorded in the Gospel of Luke.
- Jesus tells this parable to get us to see the importance of return on investment. I was a busy major in undergrad and loved my finance classes so I'm going to slightly nerd out today. In finance and business, ROI is the net profit earned after the investment costs are taken out. In the business world, several people in history have achieved staggering ROI's with very famous products.
- ILL - Peter Thiel made an investment of \$500,000 in Facebook in 2005. In 2012, he sold 80% of the shares he owned for \$400million. A return of 800x his original investment
 - Asa Candler scooped up Coke for \$2,300 in 1891 and sold it for \$25 million in 1923. Bringing a return of 833x his original investment.
 - Another huge ROI came for anyone who invested in Apple stock when the company went public. On December 12, 1980, Apple went public and its initial public offering was \$22/share. If you had invested \$990 right after Apple's IPO, assuming that you could purchase each share of Apple at its IPO price of \$22, you would have 45 shares. July 24, 2015, Apple closed at \$124.50 per share. Currently, the initial investment of \$990 would be worth \$313,740, which is 2,520 shares multiplied by \$124.50 per share. The Return On Investment is 317x original investment.
- Our parable today tells us that all of Jesus' followers are investors. You might think... I can't be an investor for God, I don't know anything about business. I can't manage my checking account and I just use my debit card until they tell me its not working any more.
- Finances are a small part of it but the truth is much bigger: Jesus is talking about your whole life not just your finances. If Jesus was just interested in your finances that would be easier, right? Just give a little bit and then I'm free to spend the rest and do what I want with the rest of my life. But its far more significant than that.
- Jesus is using financial investment as a metaphor for ALL that God has given us and the return he is looking for. What if all of life is an investment? What if it isn't just how you give money or how you serve people or how you work at your job or how you spend your free time or how you use your home or what you do with your talents. What if the very way we live life is meant to bring a return for King Jesus? What if everything we are, everything we have and everything we do is meant to be leveraged to bring a return on his investment?
- Now, that may sound almost like we are involuntary servants for Jesus but that is not what we are. Jesus said in John 15:15-16 *No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.*

- So then, you and I are friends of the King! And our friend, the King, has invested in us so that we join up with his purposes in this world. He has chosen us and appointed us that we should go and bear fruit. We have the opportunity to help bring about God's kingdom on earth.
- The BIG Idea for today is this: **The coming King calls for a return on his investment.**
- I want us to see this by applying the 3 movements of the parable to us.
 1. We have been invested in by the coming King
 2. We have an opportunity to invest now
 3. We will be held accountable by our King

1. We have been invested in by the coming King.

- Jesus tells why he told the parable... 19:1-11 is the story of Zaccheus. Not a parable but a true story of Jesus' encounter with a tax collector. v.11 *As they heard these things, he proceeded to tell a parable, because he was near to Jerusalem, and because they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately.* Expectation among the disciples that Jesus would bring the kingdom in full force was heightened as Jesus approached his final destination—Jerusalem. They were fully expecting him to walk into Jerusalem and bring in the rule and reign of God in its fullness.
- What he wanted to do by telling the parable was to help them to see there was going to be a time of stewardship between the first and second coming of the King.
- There is a background context for Jesus' followers to this story. Both Herod the Great in 40 b.c. and his son Archelaus in 4 b.c. went to Rome to receive confirmation of their rule so they could be client kings over Judea.
- vv.12-13 *A nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and then return. Calling ten of his servants, he gave them ten minas...*
- This is not the parable of the Talents (Matthew) – parable of the Talents, people are given different amounts of wealth, dependent on each one's ability.
- In this parable, Jesus says the king called 10 of his servants and gave each of them a mina. A mina was equal to roughly 3 months wages. To put it in today's dollars in MA, it would be roughly \$15,000.
- Each of these servants was given the same amount and the King made sure they understood that he was going to return. This wasn't their money or their profit. It all belonged to him.
- Every follower of Christ has been entrusted with what they need to invest in the kingdom of God until Jesus returns. It is not that we all have the same gifting but that we all have an investment from the king. We are all saved by the same grace and has the same responsibility to take what has been entrusted to us by our king.

2. We have an opportunity to invest now.

- v.13 The king gave each of them a mina and *said to them, 'Engage in business until I come.*
- We don't get an explanation of all 10 servants but we get to see that at least two of them (probably meant to be a representative group) listened to their King and invested the money.
- God is a venture capitalist – someone who finds an opportunity with lots of potential and provides the funds needed for the company to get going...
- Every Christian has been invested in and has the opportunity to participate. What is the business of the King? V. 10 *For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.*" This is echoed in the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20. *"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

- John 20:21 *"As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you."* This sending supersedes and includes all other callings in our lives. God has sent me so that I may make disciples as a husband, make disciples as a father, make disciples as a neighbor, make disciples as a pastor, make disciples as a friend, YOU GET THE POINT, RIGHT??? I could keep going... as a professor (at least this semester!), as a chaplain, as a redeemed human being in this world.
- How do we make disciples? We make disciples by proclaiming the gospel in word and deed. We tell people about Jesus, we point people to Jesus, and we live in a way that demonstrates that we live under the new King. We point people to our King. We tell them about our King. We serve them because of our King. We invite them to know our King.
- This is literally in the Lord's prayer – *THY Kingdom come, THY will be done on earth as it is in heaven.* The kingdom of God came through Jesus but now he extends it through his followers. We want God's will to be done in Boston as it is in heaven.
- Jesus recognized that he is asking us to practice business in a hostile environment... in the parable the citizens don't want the king to rule over them. V.14 *"But his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We do not want this man to reign over us.'"*
- The investment environment is tough. There are those around us who call us to invest in their temporary get rich quick schemes. Get that career you are looking for! Get that relationship that fixes your loneliness! Spend your money on what will make you happy today! Sacrifice making eternal investments to get a quick return in this world.
- Christians – beyond the basic human elements the King has given you, he has equipped you with tools. Day traders have TD Ameritrade and Charles Schwab trading online platforms that provide them everything they need to be able to evaluate the potential of a stock and buy and sell as they desire. They look at the information and make a decision on when to buy and when to sell a stock.
- For us, we don't think about stocks but we think about relationships, about decisions on where to live, on where to work, on what to do with our money.
- Christ has given you and I some tools for investing our lives in a way to bring a great kingdom return...
 1. Our salvation – GOSPEL – the king died for his subjects!
 2. God's Word – promises
 3. The Spirit – power (key word in Acts associated with the HS)
 4. The church – God's people gathering not to be internally focused but to press the kingdom out. We come in to go out as a church. We gather each week to scatter around the city. YOUR CG is your investment team.
 5. Unique Gifting – 1 Cor 12, Rom 12 – "spiritual gift"
 6. Prayer – John 15:15-16 I read earlier said, *"so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you."*

Basically, God has given you everything you need to bring a ROI. It is like he has taken you back in a time machine to 1980 given you \$1000 and asked you to invest it in Apple for a good return. OR You CAN blow it because you can invest in vinyl records, disco balls, or in the rotary phones believing they will make a return but you can also invest in what he says will last. He's given you an insider trading scoop: INVEST IN MY KINGDOM and it will bring you both joy and an awesome return.
- Simply put, Jesus is inviting us to make our lives count for something that will last forever.
- 3. We will be held accountable by our King.** The King returned from the foreign land and calls his servants to account. The way the parable is told, it builds towards the last one but when we get there we will see the difference with the first two and the last one: Faith and Fear.

- The first two servants were driven by faith in the King**

- The first two were captivated by their King. There isn't a sense of "we have to invest" but that "we get to invest" You can see the King's gratitude in the rewards given to them.
- v.16-19 *"The first came before him, saying, 'Lord, your mina has made ten minas more.' And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in a very little, you shall have authority over ten cities.' And the second came, saying, 'Lord, your mina has made five minas.' And he said to him, 'And you are to be over five cities.'"*
- NO difference in the recognition of them as "good and faithful servants." There is not the slightest rebuke for the one who got only 5. Jesus is recognizing faithfulness.
- How do you think they brought this return? They were constantly remembering their King. They were every mindful and captivated by their king.
- ILL – We have a huge capacity to be captivated with things and to talk about them all the time. At the retreat last month I had a long conversation with several guys chatting about the phenomena known as Stranger Things. One of the guys started watching it one evening and couldn't stop. He watched all 8 episodes in one night.
- Binge-viewing is fast becoming the new national pastime: 70% of U.S. consumers now binge-watch TV shows, with Americans gulping down an average of five episodes per marathon session, according to a study by a consulting firm (Deloitte).
- I'm not blowing up everyone who binge watches. Just my point is, that we love being drawn into something big and multi-faceted and epic. The kingdom of God is a huge REALITY that encompasses our entire lives. Maybe in the middle of everything going on in life, we take our eyes off that awesome reality.
- The first two servants remembered their King and his coming kingdom and invested accordingly. One bringing a 10 fold return, the other a 5 fold return.
- An assumed element in the parable – They had to take risks. When I hear the word risk the phrase "RISK is Right" is stuck in my head. It's a John Piper-ism from his book Don't Waste Your Life. He has since written a short book called Risk is Right. "A choice lies before you: Either waste your life or live with risk. Either sit on the sidelines or get in the game."
- ILL - MY FAMILY – gave up a consistent salary and a home to move to Boston... It all looks good now but there was some risk back then. Why is risk right? Second idea here...

- The last servant was driven by wrong FEAR and a lack of faith**

- vv.20-23 *Then another came, saying, 'Lord, here is your mina, which I kept laid away in a handkerchief; for I was afraid of you, because you are a severe man. You take what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.' He said to him, 'I will condemn you with your own words, you wicked servant! You knew that I was a severe man, taking what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow? Why then did you not put my money in the bank, and at my coming I might have collected it with interest?'*
- I struggle with this last servant. In one sense, he didn't go blow the money on a new TV or a Xbox. But that's not the point. He didn't use what the King gave him so in essence he wasted it.
- He made excuses (you are a severe man and I know you take what you didn't earn) but then Jesus turns it back on him and says that makes no sense. If you were genuinely fearful of me you would have not acted like you did!
- No, with this last guy some other kind of fear was at work. Fear of the citizens of the land. Fear of losing everything. Fear of working hard. Fear of not fitting in. Fear of not being cool.
- His sin is not one of commission but omission. It wasn't that what he did was sin. It was that his lack of action was sin. If people could have been served. If people could have met Jesus. IF

the Kingdom of God could have gone forward through that servant but he didn't act, then his lack of action is a sin. He didn't care about bringing a return on investment and he lived that way.

- What does this last guy look like today? Someone that when you pull back the veneer of their church attendance and Christian friends, their life is completely self-absorbed. They are living for themselves...
- They are missing the chance of taking all the moments of our life... the glorious, the boring, the wonderful, the exciting, the painful, and the mundane moments and leveraging them to be a part of a story that FAR exceeds us.

CONCLUSION

- So how are we to begin to think about our own status, whether we are like the first two servants or the last one. Well I came up with my own formula for thinking through your return on investment. It is not based on activities or on achievements but on you individually. He has given all of us the Tools we looked at earlier but how do think about our investment in terms of practical life?

FORMULA FOR ROI $T^2 + R^2 = ROI$

Time – length is not equal but everyone's time goes by at the same rate. No one's day is any longer than anyone else's. How quick are we to waste time? How often do we use it for things that will not bring rest or kingdom investment? What if we started seeing ourselves as stewards of time?

+Talents – it is sliding ALL of your talents and abilities onto the table. "It's yours Jesus! Can I use it for your kingdom?"

+Resources – it is looking at everything you own and every dollar you have as an opportunity to bring a return

+Relationships – it is seeing every person in your life as put there by God for you to love and give them an opportunity to hear and respond to the GOSPEL.

=ROI (Return On Investment)

- We are literally here gathering as a church today because of countless investments. People praying for years for a gospel believing church in our community. People who gave in incredibly generous ways. People who gave up their convenience on countless Sunday mornings to set up this space so we can worship. Countless others who have opened their homes to welcome people into a community group. Many others who have worked behind the scenes to make sure CoaH kids are well-cared for and taught the gospel. I can't begin to put the number on those who have served a neighbor, shared the gospel with someone who was hurting, who has prayed with those who are struggling. That is ALL kingdom investment.
- But we have to continue to move out and move out even more. The greatest kingdom opportunity to invest for the King is not found here on Sundays. It is found the rest of the week among your co-workers, your neighbors, your friends. Will you take a right risk to tell them about your King?
- I'm not sure how many minas Jesus gave me but I want to leave it all out on the field. This is the HIGHEST, MOST GLORIOUS CALLING OF YOUR LIFE.
- The coming King calls for a return on his investment but that call is an invitation to join him...

COMMUNION – INVITATION FOR NON-CHRISTIANS TO TRUST IN JESUS

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