

Luk 139 19v11-27 The Nobleman and His Servants

Sermon #139

Luke Sermons

Title: **THE NOBLEMAN AND HIS SERVANTS**

Text: Luke 19:11-27

Subject: *The Parable of the Nobleman*

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Tape # Y-51b

Readings: *Bobbie Estes and James Jordan*

Introduction:

(Luke 19:11) And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.

When our Master had saved Zacchaeus, though the disciples heard his doctrine and saw the way he dealt with that poor soul in grace, though the Lord Jesus had told them plainly that he was on his way up to Jerusalem to die in their place, to redeem his people by the shedding of his blood, they still thought they were on their way to his inauguration ball as the King of Israel! The parable given in verses 12-27 was given to correct their ignorance, “*because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.*”

Their minds were fixed on the notion that the coming of Christ the King, meant that he was about to become a carnal king, a King over the physical nation of Israel. They had terribly carnal notions about his kingdom. So he here showed them that, for the present, the practical

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matter to be remembered was that he had come “*to seek and to save that which was lost.*”

If they had not been so full of their idle dreams of a temporal, earthly kingdom, they would have understood that, in the calling of Zacchaeus, the Lord Jesus had manifested his Kingship in the realm of mercy and grace and salvation. He had, in seeking and saving Zacchaeus displayed the sovereignty of his grace as the sovereign King of grace. That is what he is doing today on his throne as our great King, the Son of God and the Son of Man, the Son of David and David’s Lord — Seeking and saving his lost ones.

Let’s read this parable, which is commonly used to teach works rewards in heaven, and ask God the Holy Spirit to inscribe its message on our hearts.

(Luke 19:12-27) He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. (13) And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. (14) But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this *man* reign over us. (15) And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. (16) Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten

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pounds. (17) And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities. (18) And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds. (19) And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities. (20) And another came, saying, Lord, behold, *here is* thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin: (21) For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow. (22) And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, *thou* wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow: (23) Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury? (24) And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give *it* to him that hath ten pounds. (25) (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.) (26) For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him. (27) But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay *them* before me.

Proposition: This parable is an illustration, a picture of things present and things to come, which ought to set our hearts upon our Savior and his cause in this world. — **It's intent is to show us our faithful God and Savior, who has promised, “Him that honoureth me I will**

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honor,” will reward his faithful servants for their service, not in this world, but in the world to come.

THE NOBLEMAN

(Luke 19:12) He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.

I am sure that you understand who the nobleman in this parable represents. **He represents our Lord Jesus himself.**

There is **an event recorded by Josephus** in his history of the Jews that took place 30 years before this, which our Lord here used as a parable, or an illustration, by which he teaches us things concerning himself.

Herod was king over Judaea, but only a subordinate king under the Roman emperor. Caesar at Rome made and unmade kings at his pleasure. When Herod died his son Archelaus succeeded him. This is the Herod of whom we read in Matthew 2. When Joseph heard that Archelaus was king in Judea he was afraid to go back to Judea.

Archelaus had no right to the throne until he was officially made king by Caesar. So he went to Rome, which in those days was a far

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country, that he might receive the kingdom, and return.

While he was on the way to Rome his citizens in Judea, who hated him, sent a message after him, saying to Caesar, — “We will not have this man to reign over us.” The messengers told Caesar that Archelaus was unfit to be king of the Jews.

The people were tired of the Herods, and preferred anything to their cruel rule. They even asked that Judea might become a Roman province, even that it might be joined to Syria, rather than they remain under the hated yoke of the Idumean tyrants. **Therefore Caesar divided the kingdom,** and to put Archelaus on the throne as ethnarch, or a ruler with less power than a king. **When Archelaus returned** he took revenge upon those who had opposed him, and rewarded his faithful servant generously.

All this took place shortly after our Lord’s incarnation, just 30 years before he used it as a parable here in Luke 19. It had to have been something about which this thronging multitude was very familiar. — **These people at Jericho were especially familiar with these things.** Archelaus had built a palace for

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himself very near Jericho. Those who lived in Jericho at the time could not have failed to make the connection of our Lord's parable with the things they had seen and experienced.

Thus the providence of God paved the way for the instruction we now have before us. The Savior, without excusing Archelaus or commending him in any way, makes use of these things as an illustration to teach us things concerning himself, his kingdom and us. The Savior compares himself to a nobleman. He was here on earth a man among men, and truly a nobleman in the midst of his fellow citizens. He was and is King of all the earth. He is King by nature and by right, but he must first go away, by death, resurrection, and ascension, to the highest courts heaven to receive for himself a kingdom from his Father as the reward of his obedience. It is written in the 2nd Psalm, "*Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance.*" The day is coming when he will return, clothed with glory and honor, to take unto himself his great power and reign; for he must reign till all enemies are put under his feet. When he comes his enemies will be destroyed, and his faithful servants will be abundantly rewarded. **That is the essence of the parable's meaning.**

- He came here in humiliation as the Son of Man "*to seek and to save that which was lost.*"

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- He is here portrayed as having finished his work of redemption and returned to glory to receive his kingdom.
- He ascended back to heaven to receive the kingdom for us as our Forerunner (Heb. 6:20), and to receive all his ransomed ones into his kingdom by the mighty operations of his Holy Spirit.
- He is still the Son of Man, now ascended to Glory and seated upon his throne, and it is still his business “*to seek and to save that which was lost.*”
- After he has received his kingdom, after he has saved all his lost ones, he will return to judge the world.
- Even then, it shall be his business “*to seek and to save that which was lost.*”

When the Lord Jesus left the world, he ascended up into heaven as a mighty conqueror, leading captivity captive. He is there sitting at the right hand of God, doing the work of a High Priest for his people, ever making intercession for them. But he will not sit there always. He will come forth from the holy of holies to bless his people. He will come again with power and glory to put down every enemy under his feet, and to set up his universal kingdom in a new heavens and a new earth.

(Hebrews 2:8-9) Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing

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that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. (9) But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

When Christ returns, the kingdoms of the world shall become his.

Let these things sink down into our hearts and minds. In all our thoughts about Christ, let us never forget his second advent. **He who lived for us, and died for us, and rose again for us, and intercedes for us is coming again in power and great glory.**

(Titus 2:11-14) For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, (12) Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; (13) Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; (14) Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

(2 Peter 3:11-14) *Seeing then that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of

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persons ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, (12) Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? (13) Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. (14) Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

CHRIST'S SERVANTS

(Luke 19:13-14) And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. (14) But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this *man* to reign over us.

Our Lord compares his servants men who have been left in charge of their master's money, with strict instructions to use that money well. They are to occupy until he comes again. To each of these ten servants he gave a pound of money. But who are these servants? Though ten servants are mentioned, there are but two groups, or categories. All ten are the Nobleman's servants, but some were faithful and good, the others were slothful and useless.

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Each servant was given a pound, which appears to me to represent the gospel of the grace of God. Oh, what a choice blessing that is! All who are given the great privilege of hearing the gospel of the grace of God have the same charge. — “*Occupy till I come.*” The words mean, “Take this pound that I have put in your hands and busy yourself in trade with it until I return.”

What does that mean? It means that we to whom the Lord God has given this great treasure are responsible to trade with it for the increase of riches to our souls, responsible to believe it to the saving of our souls. This is exactly what Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 5:18-6:1.

(2 Corinthians 5:18-21) And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; (19) To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. (20) Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. (21) For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

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(2 Corinthians 6:1) We then, *as* workers together *with him*, beseech *you* also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.

Yes, it is true that we cannot and will not trade, without money and without price for the Pearl of Great Price until and unless God the Holy Spirit gives us grace to do so. But that is our charge, our responsibility before God. Taking the pound the Lord has given us, believing the gospel, our souls are enriched with grace, enriched with the sweet experience of grace, some fivefold and some ten fold. And in the world to come, we shall be enriched by his grace to an infinitely higher degree than can ever be imagined by us in this body of flesh (1 Cor. 2:9-10).

The countless privileges which we enjoy, compared to those who have never heard the gospel are "*pounds*" given to us by Christ, "*pounds*" for which they must one day give account. In the judgment day we will not stand side by side with the tribesmen of heathen lands, who never heard of the Bible, the God of Glory, and the substitutionary sacrifice of Christ. We have much more for which we shall give account in that great day.

The faithful servants in this parable represent those who believe the gospel, using the means God has given us for the benefit of our souls. These faithful servants rejoice in the prospect of the Lord's coming. By the grace of God, we shall be found looking for him when

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he comes again, living in hope of eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

The unprofitable servant has his pound. He, too, hears the gospel of grace and salvation, redemption and righteousness. But the unprofitable servant hates his Master, the Lord Jesus. He hates God's method of saving sinners by free and sovereign grace through Christ, the sinner's crucified Substitute, and rejects the counsel of God against his own soul.

Both the faithful servants and the unprofitable servant differ from the world in general. They differ in this one thing. — You and I have been given the gospel. We have been called by the gospel. The world at large has not. To whom much is given, much shall be required.

- What a great benefit!
- What a great weight of responsibility!

The unbelief and rejection of the unprofitable servant is the cause of his just condemnation (Pro. 1:23-33).

(Proverbs 1:23-33) Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you. (24) Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded;

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(25) But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: (26) I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; (27) When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. (28) Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: (29) For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD: (30) They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. (31) Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. (32) For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them. (33) But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.

The faith of the profitable servant, believing the gospel, trusting Christ, magnifies the riches of his free grace in us and assures us of greater riches in the world to come.

BLESSED SERVITUDE

Now, let me remind you that all ten were the nobleman's servants, both the faithful and the unprofitable. You and

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I are alike Christ's servants. You who hate him and refuse to bow to him are his servants, just as surely as Gabriel himself. And we who believe him and rejoice in his rule are his servants. But all are his servants. But we who believe him, we who are glad to be his servants, are "*occupying*," using the gospel for our souls' everlasting benefit. Let me show you something about the blessedness of our service. Ours is a blessed servitude indeed!

- Our service is **most honorable**. — "I'm a child of the King!"
- Ours is **a service for which he supplies all** — "a pound." All that we need to know Christ and enrich our souls by Christ is found in the gospel.
- Our service is **just exactly that which we need**. — Faith in Christ. The essence of our service is faith in Christ, worshipping the Son of God. What blessed service this is!

The Master says, (John 6:27-29) Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed. (28) Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? (29) Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

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To occupy till he comes, to make trade with the gospel, is neither more nor less than believing him.

The more we believe him, the more our souls are enriched by him. The more we believe him, the more we grow in the grace and knowledge of God our Savior.

RECKONING DAY

There is a day coming in which we will give an account of our service. In that great day of reckoning, we will be judged by the gospel, by what we have done with the “*pound*” our Savior has given us.

(Luke 19:15-16) And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. (16) Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds.

The faithful servant, with proper humility, puts himself in the background. It is not he who has “*gained ten pounds,*” but his Lord’s pound that has done it. He is pleased to bring the ten pounds; yet he claims no credit for himself, but says, “*Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds.*”

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(Luke 19:17-19) And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities. (18) And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds. (19) And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities.

Don't miss this. — There is no correlation between the servant's work and the reward for it. He who gained ten pounds in this world by the faith God gave him by the gospel, and he who gained but two, are both declared to be faithful servants and rewarded as such.

(Luke 19:20-23) And another came, saying, Lord, behold, *here is* thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin: (21) For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow. (22) And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, *thou* wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow: (23) Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury?

THE SERVANTS REWARDED

(Luke 19:24-27) And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give *it* to him that hath ten pounds. (25) (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath

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ten pounds.) (26) For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him. (27) But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay *them* before me.

Hear this and be warned, you who will not have this Man to rule over you, you who are his enemies, when he comes again, he will take from you everything you have and give it to his own. Then, he will have you brought before him and slain.

Now, do you remember our Lord's answer to Peter, when Peter asked him what we shall have who have left all and followed him (Luke 18:28-30)?

(Luke 18:28-30) Then Peter said, Lo, we have left all, and followed thee. (29) And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, (30) Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.

“In the world to come life everlasting!” — That is the reward the Lord Jesus gives to all who trust him. He will say, “*Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee*

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ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord” (Matt. 25:21).

God’s saints receive great recompense even in this present time. Though our names are often cast out as evil, though we must through much tribulation enter the kingdom of God, the gain of godliness, of faith in Christ, is not to be measured in earthly things, but in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, in a good hope through grace and joy in believing. Still, our good things are not in this world. But there is a day coming when we shall have an abundant recompense! We shall, in that day, receive wages far exceeding anything we have imagined. — **“In the world to come life everlasting!”**

“We read of a place that's called heaven.
It's made for the pure and the free.
These truths in God's Word He hath given. —
How beautiful heaven must be!

In heaven no drooping nor pining,
No wishing for elsewhere to be.
God's light is forever there shining —
How beautiful heaven must be!

Pure waters of life there are flowing;
And all who will drink may be free.
Rare jewels of splendor are glowing —
How beautiful heaven must be!

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The angels so sweetly are singing
Up there by the beautiful sea.
Sweet chords from their gold harps are ringing. —
How beautiful must be!

Refrain —

How beautiful heaven must be!
Sweet home of the happy and free,
Fair heaven of rest for the weary,
How beautiful heaven must be!”

Amen.