

8 Managing Time And Gifts

Matthew 25:14-30

Time is one of the most precious commodities in today's world. We always seem to suffer from a lack of it. In light of Christ's lordship the effective management of our time and gifts is absolutely crucial. Oswald Sanders wrote:

After making a generous allowance of eight hours a day for sleep and rest—and few really need more than that—three hours a day for meals and social intercourse, ten hours a day for work and travel on five days, there still remain no fewer than thirty-five hours unaccounted for in each week. What happens to them? How are the extra two days in the week invested? The whole of a man's contribution to the kingdom of God might well turn upon how these crucial hours are employed. They will determine whether his life will be commonplace or extraordinary.¹³

Jesus addresses the seriousness of this issue in the Parable of the Talents.

1. What activities and responsibilities compete the most for your time?
2. Read Matthew 25:14-30. What arrangements does the master make before leaving on his journey (Matthew 25:14-15)?
3. The master "entrusted" his property to the servants (Matthew 25:14). What does it mean to be entrusted with something?
4. What are some of the "talents" Jesus has entrusted to you?
5. Based on their actions, how do the servants differ in their understanding of what the master expects of them (Matthew 25:16-18)?

³Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1962), p. 88

6. Consider your daily schedule—how you invest the time, energy and abilities entrusted to you. Does your life more closely resemble the first two servants or the third? Explain.

7. When the master returns, how does he commend and reward the good and faithful servants (Matthew 25:19-23)?

8. How does the third servant misunderstand the character of his master (Matthew 25:24-27)?

9. What are the consequences of his wicked and lazy actions (Matthew 25:28-30)?

10. If the wicked servant had known the end of the story, he might have acted differently. How should your life be different in light of Christ's coming to "settle accounts"?

11. What are some specific ways you might rearrange your schedule to be more faithful to what Jesus has entrusted to you?