

Bible Study: Prioritizing God's Work

Life is busy.

That's a gross understatement, isn't it?

We've become adept at over-scheduling our calendars and multitasking to a point where we're more than busy. We're completely overwhelmed.

As Christians, we're called – every day – to do more. James 1:22 teaches that we're to be doers of the word and not hearers only, otherwise we deceive ourselves.

The Hebrew language (the original language of God's Word) is action oriented, compelling us to act... move ... pursue... do... God's instruction.

Most times we don't slow down enough to listen for the Lord's prompting, let alone make the time to act on the instruction we read in His Word or feel He's laid on our hearts. It's often difficult to think through the next five minutes, let alone how our thoughts, attitudes, and actions can affect our children, our future generations, or even eternity.

The truth is, what we do today matters – not just for today but all of eternity.

If you're like me, you may ask how our actions can bear such weightiness!

Let's take a brief look at what the Scriptures teach in this regard.

Read 2 Corinthians 5:9-10.

What should we set as our goal? (v. 9)

Where must we all appear? (v. 10)



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Why will we appear there? (v. 10)

Will we receive judgment for only the bad things? (v. 10)

This judgment has nothing to do with our salvation. That matter was settled at the cross. (Refer to 1 John 2:2 and John 3:16). As those who have given our devotion to Christ, all our sins are forgiven and removed from us as far as the east is from the west.

Consider that the judgment described in 2 Corinthians 5:9-10 is for reward, not for penalty. What we do today for the Kingdom of God, whether good or bad, will be measured and repaid. There is untold blessing that awaits those who walk in obedience to God.

You might say, "I don't serve God for reward. I serve because of my love and devotion to Him."

Indeed. That's a mighty and noble motivation and I'm positive it greatly pleases Him. But that doesn't change His promise to give what is due for what we have done.

Perhaps we strive to hear Him say, "Well done, my good and faithful servant," at the end of our time on earth. Maybe our motivation is the joy of seeing lost souls come to Christ.

Regardless of what stirs our hearts about walking in obedience, serving the Lord wholeheartedly deserves the highest priority in our lives.

Yes, I said the highest priority.



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When the Pharisees asked Jesus about the greatest commandment, He replied, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and most important command. The second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets depend on these two commands.” (See Matthew 22:34-40 HCSB).

The most important thing we can do, according to Jesus Himself, is love: love God with all our heart, soul, and mind, and love our neighbor as ourself. The type of love that Jesus mentioned is *agapao* love. *Agapao* is one of several Greek words translated as love. It is commonly understood as unconditional love, but there is far more to it.

Agapao involves a response to God’s love and activity in our lives more than it involves a feeling or emotion. As a response, *agapao* is demonstrative. It requires action and is tangible evidence of God’s love pouring through us.

It’s not enough to love God by sitting on our sofas. In fact, Jesus tells what evidence He seeks for our love (*agapao*) for Him.

Write out John 14:15 here:

Remember, *agapao* is demonstrative. We show our love for the Lord when we obey His commands. That is the evidence He requires.

As a demonstration of His love for us, God acts with kindness and generosity. In a recent blog post titled [10 ways to Show Generosity Without Opening Your Wallet](#), I shared a few notable examples of God’s generosity:

Jesus gave His compassion,

His grace and mercy,

His healing touch,



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His salvation,

His joy,

His instruction and wisdom,

His time, and

through His most sacrificial gift, Jesus willingly laid down His life.

He also gives gifts, talents, wisdom, understanding, and abilities. Matthew 25:14-30 reveals His strong expectation that we utilize these gifts for Kingdom purposes.

Please read Matthew 25:14-30 now.

This Biblical narrative is called a parable, which is a story used to illustrate a heavenly concept through earthly examples that a learner can more easily understand. This story was not a historical event, rather, it was an illustration that Jesus provided to make a point.

In Bible times, a talent represented a large sum of money. Commentators estimate one talent is between 15 and 20 years' worth of wages. In other words, a talent held incredible value.

I don't find it coincidental that the Greek word for talent is translated into the same term that we understand to mean ability or skill. When God gives us gifts and talents, they, too, hold incredible value.

If we see the master in the parable as God, the slaves as followers of Christ like you and me, and the use of talents as obedience to God's commands ("doing" His Word), the parable shines a light on the eternal value of obedience and prioritizing our Kingdom-minded activities.

Let's take a closer look:



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How did the master turn over his possessions? (v. 15)

Hint: "each according to his _____" (fill in using the HCSB Bible translation).

Were each given equivalent portions?

Did the men who had received five and two talents wait before they put them to work? (v. 16)

What did the man who received the smallest amount do with what he'd been given? (v. 18)

As praise for their good work, the master offered three things to the slaves: A commendation, a promotion, and an invitation.

How did the master commend the slave? (v. 21)

How was the slave promoted (v. 21)

What invitation did the master extend? (v. 21)



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To each of the first two servants, the master issued similar praise. He said, “Well done, good and faithful slave” (a commendation). “You were faithful over a few things; I will put you in charge of many things (a promotion). Share your master’s joy (an invitation).

Which of the three types of tributes do you think meant most to the servants? If the Lord were giving you such praise, which do you think would mean the most to you? Why?

Why did the master scold the third servant? (v. 26-27)

The master’s punishment of the third slave was severe. What was his command in verse 30?

If you were to meet the Lord face to face today, based on your obedience and the pursuit of the call He has placed on your life, would He offer a commendation, promotion or invitation? Or do you believe He would issue the punishment of the third slave? Explain your answer.

Prayerfully consider what changes you may need to make in the way you prioritize your activities and record your thoughts below:

