

Taking Responsibility for Your Life Leader Guide Session 4: Embracing Your Response Ability

Video Overview:

Life isn't fair-there's an unevenness about it. And this can quickly become an excuse for our irresponsibility.

The issue isn't how we can make life more fair or even. The real question is this: What will I do with the opportunities I've been given by life and by God?

In Matthew 25:14-30, Jesus related a parable to show us that God doesn't try to fix the unevenness and the unfairness of life. Instead, he wants us to learn to leverage it.

His story concerns a man going on a long journey who first entrusts his wealth to three servants, expecting them to invest it.

They receive differing amounts. But even the one getting the least had a fortune-one "talent" (the Greek word Jesus used is Talanton), or a "bag of gold" (TNIV). The amount was equivalent to twenty years' wages for a typical laborer. Another servant received five talents and another two.

Afterward, the servants receiving five and two talents both doubled the investments. But the servant with one talent dug a hole and buried it.

Finally the master returned to settle accounts with them. The two servants reporting a doubled investment were each told, "Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!" (Matthew 25:21, 23).

Then the third servant reported that he'd buried his money because of his fear of his master's toughness. Essentially, he was blaming the master.

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The master rebuked him for his laziness and worthlessness. And the money the servant buried was taken away and given to the servant who already had ten talents.

We learn in this parable that those who've been responsible with what they have will be given more.

As Jesus wraps up the story, the master commands that the "worthless servant" be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (25:30). This "gnashing" of teeth" was the sign of acute frustration. That's the tragic consequence for those who are irresponsible, who waste the opportunities given them.

The point of this parable is this: We don't all get the same amount of opportunity, but we're all held accountable for what we do with whatever we're given. These opportunities are on loan to us, and it's our responsibility to figure out how to leverage them to their maximum.

The bottom line: To whom something is given-regardless of how great or small-something is required.

Discussion Questions:

1. In you own life, or in observing others, how have you seen most vividly the truth that irresponsibility diminishes our happiness?
2. "The more we have, the more we waste"-how have you seen this to be true, either in your life or in others around you?
3. What do you consider to be the most strategic opportunities God has given you?
4. Think of the people around you, the people you know best. How can you show appreciation, support, and encouragement for them as the seek to make the most of the opportunities they've been given?

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5. Why do you think it's important that the opportunities and responsibilities we've been given are *on loan* to us from God? How should that impact our mindsets toward our obligations?
6. What does it mean personally to you that we're held accountable by God for the opportunities and responsibilities that we've been given?