

Luke 19:11-17

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[0 : 00] Well, the Football World Cup is coming, isn't it?! So, people in your office, maybe where you work, they are glued to the predictions.

The words, maybe, if you work in the city, I'm a kind of Warren Buffett. People study every twitch of the Chancellor before a budget, don't they? Because companies, businesses, want to get their timing right.

And Jesus would say, as in sport, as in strictly, as in business, so in our spiritual life. So in our spiritual life. So today's sermon is this. It is about maximising investment.

It's about maximising investment in the light of the times that we are. And Jesus is saying, you've got to understand where you live in the Bible timeline.

You've got to understand what the times that you're living. And we can say that it's all about the timing. If I was in the sermon titles, which I'm not, it would be about the now and then.

[1 : 27] How we live now, how we live today, in the light of a certain tomorrow. It's all about timing. It's all about how you make your investments today, in the light of the certainties of tomorrow.

Some people think that the Bible could not be applicable today. The Bible is written to a different culture. You've probably heard it.

The Bible is written to an agricultural culture. And it's different today, isn't it? We live in a city. We live in different economic times. And so we've got to kind of re-translate the Bible into our times. So you might have said, the preacher lives between two worlds. The world of the Bible and the world of today. I think that is pretty awful. I don't agree with that at all, actually. And what Luke's Gospel has shown me more than anything is, Luke's Gospel could be more relevant to those of us who live in the city.

But Luke's Gospel could not be more applicable or easily understood. In fact, I want to ask Luke when I get to heaven, did he write it to the city? Did he write it to the London person?

[2 : 39] So think of what you have in Luke's Gospel. What have you got? You've got the parable of the rich fool. You've got the parable of the dishonest steward. You've got the parable of the great banquet.

And today you've got the parable of the ten miners. And the wise investment, given the days in which we live. And so, the other theme of Luke's Gospel that keeps coming up is money, isn't it? Money, money, money. I don't seem to be able to escape it. Luke particularly is interested in what you do with your money. And so today we come to it again. I've got three points and they are this. Two certainties and one priority. Two certainties, which have to do with now, and then one priority. Two certainties. First certainty is this. We live in days of delay.

We live now in days of delay. Jesus' kingdom would not come immediately.

[3 : 37] That's Jesus' message. The kingdom has come, but it will not come in its power and in its glory immediately. There would be a delay. And we should not be surprised by that.

We should not be surprised by the delay. It was something that he spoke about. Look at verse 11. There will be a delay. As they heard these things, he proceeded to tell a parable.

Because he was near to Jerusalem where he would die. Where his glory would come, the cross.

And because they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately. So then to some who thought that the kingdom of God was going to come straight away, Jesus told this parable.

Verse 12 really summarises all the action of the parable. He says this. He said, therefore, a noble man went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and then return.

The noble man represents Jesus. The far country represents his departure to be with his father in heaven. And the kingdom is the kingdom of God.

[4 : 49] And Jesus' point is very simple. Following his death and his resurrection, there was to be a coronation. And Jesus would be crowned king.

But he would go away for that. He would go away for his coronation before he returned. And this, of course, has been part of the theme. Of the whole section of this part of Luke's gospel.

So just turn back to chapter 17, verse 20. And you'll see it there. Jesus is asked by the Pharisees, verse 20. When will the kingdom of God come?

When will there be great power? When will the Romans be kicked out? When will we get back to the perfect world of perfect relationships? When the kingdom of God, when will it come?

And he answered them, the kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed. Nor will they say, look, here it is. Or therefore, behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you.

[5 : 45] And he said to his disciples, the days are coming when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man. And you will not see it. And they will say to you, look there. Look here.

Do not go out or follow them. In other words, there will be a delay. There will be a delay. Don't be surprised about the delay.

Because as Peter says, with the Lord, a day is as a thousand years. And a thousand years is as a day. With the Lord, a day is as a thousand years.

And a thousand years as a delay. As a day. So the delay has effectively just been two days.

What were you doing two days ago? Friday morning. Friday morning to today. As far as God is concerned, that's the delay. There will be a delay.

[6 : 47] And so here, two chapters on from chapter 17. In this part of the section of Luke's Gospel. Jesus returns to the theme of delay. In fact, I think that they are bookmarks. And everything in between is one section.

And he unpacks it a little bit further. There's no doubting the coronation. The resurrection of Jesus. His ascension. And his exaltation.

They guarantee it. The prophets of the Old Testament. They spoke about his coronation. The coronation of God's King. Jesus preached it.

And following his resurrection. The early preachers. The disciples and the apostles spoke about it as well. So if you go to the first ever Christian sermon.

You will find Peter there in Acts 2. Speaking about the resurrection. Of Jesus. And his coronation. And the conclusion of that sermon in Acts 2. Is this. Let all the house of Israel.

[7 : 46] Therefore know for certain. That God has made him both Lord. And Christ. Lord and King. This Jesus who will be you crucified. Is now crowned Lord and King.

In fact the apostle Paul talked about his coronation. Didn't he? That God has highly exalted him. And given him the name that is from every name. That at the name of Jesus. Every knee should bow.

And every tongue confess. That Jesus Christ is Lord. The key point is this. There are two certainties. And certainty number one. Is there will be a delay. We live in days of delay.

Certainly. Certainty number two. Is also there in verse 12. Which outlines the action of the parable. Look at verse 12. Chapter 19. He said therefore.

A noble man went into a far kingdom. To receive for himself a kingdom. And then return. Certainty number two. Is the return of Christ as King. The return of Christ as King.

[8 : 46] He is crowned. Notice. That some of the citizens hated him. They didn't want him to be king over them. And you read of that in verse 14.

They hated him. We do not want this man to reign over us. And their demand is spelt out in verse 27.

But as for these enemies of mine. Who did not want me to reign over them. Bring them here and slaughter them before me. So his certain return.

In this parable is undeniable. He has been crowned king. He has been given a kingdom. He will return in power.

To usher in his kingdom. And once again. That has been the theme of the whole section. Of Luke. If you look at this kind of outer layers. Of Jesus teaching.

[9 : 45] That Luke has arranged for us. We find that chapter 17. It is all about the return of Christ. So just flip back there again. Chapter 17 and verse 24. For as the lightning flashes.

And lights up the sky. From one side to the other. So will the son of man be. In his day. Then verse 26. Just as it was in the days of Noah.

So will it be. In the days. Of the son of man. They were eating and drinking. And marrying. And being given in marriage. Until the day when Noah entered the ark. And the flood came. And destroyed them all.

So if you remember the service in that passage. What do we see? We saw that. The return of Christ will be unmistakable. When Jesus comes. You're not going to miss it. Clearly it hasn't happened yet.

Of course it hasn't happened yet. It will be cataclysmic. It will be. The end. It will be decisive. And it will be divisive. And as he judges his enemies.

[10 : 45] He will welcome his friends. And once again. This return of Christ. It is fundamental. To the teaching of New Testament Christianity. It is fundamental.

To the teaching of the Old Testament. It is fundamental. To the teaching of Jesus. In his own instruction. Jesus says. All authority has been given to me.

Jesus said. The father judges no one. But has entrusted all his judgment to the son. The hour will come. When those who are in their graves. Will hear his voice. And come out.

Into judgment. Go to the grave yard this afternoon. Enjoy the beautiful day. And look at the graves. And one day the bodies will come out of those graves. You find the return of Christ. When you come into Acts. You find Paul preaching about it.

[11 : 40] You find Peter preaching about it. And the New Testament letters. They are full of it. So the apostle says. That God has fixed a day. When he will judge the world. By the man he has appointed.

He has given evidence of this judgment. By raising that man from the dead. The message of the resurrection. The resurrection is judgment is coming. So there are two certainties.

There is a coronation. And a delay. And a certain return. That is three actually. Is it? God will call it three.

And on that return. Well there is a fourth. There will be a judgment of the living and the dead. So what does that say to you? What does that say to you? It says to you this.

You are not just bumbling around. Life is not some sort of endless cycle. Going nowhere. You are not lost.

[12 : 38] Meandering through time. There is a fixed point at the beginning. And there is a fixed point at the end. And at the end. Christ will return. With the blast of a trumpet.

The dead will be raised. And then will come judgment. And just as Jesus appeared in history. And the evidence is there.

He came once. So we can trust that. He will keep his word again. And he will come again. Because if he came once. In fulfillment.

Of all the prophecies of the Old Testament. And kept his word once. How much more. Would he not come a second time. And we can be certain.

That it will happen. So if you believe in the first coming of Christ. Evidence in the gospel accounts. You can believe. In the second coming of Christ. It may sound a little bit over dramatic.

[13 : 38] But it's true. He has fixed the day. When he will judge the world. By the man he has appointed. He has given evidence of this judgment. By raising that man from the dead.

On that day. The dead will rise from their tools. When the Lord Jesus returns. With the trumpet blast. The graves will give up their bodies. By the Lord Jesus.

Now all of the timing is there in verse 12. Which we just explained. He said therefore. A nobleman went into a far country. To receive for himself a kingdom.

And then. Returned. And the centre part of the section of Luke's gospel. Has been about the kingdom. So think about what we've learned.

Over these last number of weeks. In chapter 18. And the start of chapter 19. With all these characters. It's been saying to you. The kingdom has come. The kingdom is coming.

[14 : 32] The kingdom is available to enter. So currently. We live in the midst of these two times. We live in the now. But there's a not yet to come. And so what you've got to do now.

Is make sure that you enter the kingdom of God. It is available to you. We live in a period of time. Where Jesus summons us. To enter the kingdom of God.

So do you remember that? Do you remember Zacchaeus last week. Up that tree. Hurry down. Hurry down. I must stay at your house.

Tonight. And Zacchaeus hurries down. And the man enters the kingdom. Do you remember. Blind Bartimaeus. Son of David. Have mercy on me.

Lord. I want to see. And he receives his sight. He enters the kingdom. Do you remember the Pharisee. The tax collector. The tax collector. Stands at a distance. And he says. Lord be merciful to me.

[15:30] The sinner. And Jesus says. I tell you. That that man. Not the other one. Went home justified. He entered the kingdom of God. We live.

In the period of time. Where we can enter the kingdom of God. Let's move from the timing. And the delay in which we live. It's vital to know. The days in which we live.

Because it enables. Us to live right. So two. Two certainties. There is a delay. And the kingdom is coming. And one priority.

And the one priority. Is very simple. Is this. We are to maximize. Our resources. In the service. Of the king. We are to maximize. Our resources. In service.

Of the king. So here's the aim of today's sermon. On today's passage. It is that we maximize. Our resources. In service. Of the king. And that much is clear. From the command of the nobleman.

[16:28] From his commendation of the servants. And from his condemnation of the wicked. So let's look at the command of the nobleman. Look at verse 13. Calling ten of his servants. He gave them ten minas.

And said to them. Engage in business until I come. Or put this money to work until I come. Verse 15 tells us. That when he did return. Having received the kingdom.

He ordered the servants. To whom he had given the money to. Be called to him. That he might know. What they gained. By doing business. Now this is our parable. This is a parable.

For those of us. In London. It's about maximizing. The investment. That has been entrusted. To us. And there is an expectation.

In this command. That you'll do something with it. But there's also. And do hear me here. There's great privilege. There's great privilege. That we are children. Of the kingdom of God. God. I.

[17:27] As a privileged child. Of the kingdom of God. I. As a kids. You. A blind Bartimaeus. You. A tax collector. Have entered into the kingdom of God.

And we are to engage. Our resources. In this period. In this time of business. Of King Jesus. We are commissioned. If we like. And I hope.

As we read this. As we understand this power. And you feel. That extraordinary. Extraordinary. Privilege. The danger is. We think this is terribly worrying.

And you know. Well. I'm going to be called to account. And I'm done very much. But this is. Tremendous privilege. A minor. Was the equivalent.

Of three months wages. So take your monthly. Pay salary. Think about whatever that is. And triple it. I don't want that. I don't know what that comes out of.

[18:22] As it's none of my business. I'm not. I'm not particularly interested in it. In what that is. But think of your monthly pay package. And triple it. And each servant. Is graciously entrusted with it.

It's a share in the master's business. And the master is a noble man. Who is often crowned king. And now they are being trusted. With the king's business. If you like.

On his majesty's service. And a substantial part. Of his kingdom. Is entrusted to that individual. So here you are. Trusted with it. Put it to work.

And it's the idea of privilege. Surely meant to be there. Think of the day you first qualified. And you wore your new clothes into work.

If you did qualify. You went to the job that you got. Think about that time. Where you got the job. Think about that time. Where you went into the boss's office. And you didn't know what.

[19:20] And he gave you a pay rise. And you left. Just feeling that little bit taller. Think about the time. You got your degree. You got a degree. And you walked on stage. How pleased you were.

What an honour. What a privilege. Think about that time in school kids. When you got the sticker. Or you were made star of the week. Or you became a prefect.

Isn't it? Made a prefect with a giant badge. I've seen that. Think about how you felt like that. The privilege. The honour. And now the one who is crowned king. Says. There's going to be a delay. But you servants.

Here you are. You do my business. You're in his majesty's service. And the point is. Reinforced with the commendation. Look at verse 16 to 19.

The first came before him. And said. Lord. Your minor has made 10 minors more. 10 minors more. And he said to him. Well done good servant.

[20 : 16] Because you've been faithful in the very little. You shall have authority over 10 cities. I love that. Don't you? So think about it. Three months wages.

And 10 cities. What kind of return is that? Work it out. Three months wages. And 10 Birmingham. Or if you don't like Birmingham.

Pick your own city. Lisbon. Or somewhere like that. Rio. Three months wages. What is that? That kind of rate of bonus. Do the maths.

What kind of return is it? Well the second man comes. Does he? And verse 18 says. Say. Lord. Your minor has made five minors. And he said to him. You are to be over five cities.

It's a great privilege. We are expected to be faithful. Faithfulness is commended. There will be a reward. And notice. The reward is out of all proportion.

[21 : 17] To the gift. So Jesus knows. No austerity measures. Does he? Jesus knows. No cutbacks.

Jesus knows. No recession. Jesus is the king of bonus time. Jesus invented bonuses. And when we finish this earthly race.

There will be a reward. For those who serve the Lord. Out of all proportion. To the service. Now. We mustn't tie ourselves in knots on this. Alright. This does not compromise.

Everything we've been learning. About salvation being a gift. It isn't. Doesn't compromise that. We saw last week. That the call of salvation. The call to enter the kingdom. Comes unconditionally.

By grace. And it's totally undeserved. And the minor was also a gift. Wasn't it? Verse 13. He gave them ten minors. So these men. Have been brought into God's kingdom.

[22 : 15] By grace. By God's undeserved kindness. Zacchaeus came down. Blind Bartimaeus. His eyes opened. These guys have been entrusted. By the king's grace.

By the king's possessions. He gave them a minor reach. And these men are rewarded. Beyond imagination. By grace. To be in charge of ten cities. And the king.

But the king however. Is expecting faithful service. When he's gone. And he does reward the faithful accordingly.

Augustine puts it like this. God rewards not our merits. But his grace. So the command of the nobleman. And the commendation of the faithful. Both underlie for us.

One key priority. To maximise our resources. In the service of the master. A friend of mine refers to this.

[23 : 12] A kind of Christian family judgment. As prize giving. I quite like that. This Christian family judgment. Will be like prize giving.

Well done faithful servant. Now some of you will immediately beat yourself up. Because you're of that temperament. And you'll think. I haven't done very much. My reward will be a tiny flat.

In little snod grove under the motorway. I bet I get Lewisham. Now let me say this.

Hear me. Alright. You have done far more. You have done far more. Than you ever will realise. Let me take you to Jesus. Other teaching on this subject.

Jesus said this. In so far. As you give a drink. To this my disciple. You give it to me. Ever gone to the tap.

[24 : 11] And given someone a drink. And some of us will be sitting there. Thinking. Oh yeah. I won't get anything. There will be no reward for me. You've done far more. You've done far more.

Than you will ever imagine. And I love it. I love it. That nothing is forgotten. And nothing is unnoticed. And everything is rewarded. Nothing is forgotten. Nothing is unnoticed.

Everything is rewarded. Nothing is forgotten. Nothing is unnoticed. Everything is rewarded. It's unnoticed. The prayer is noticed.

And rewarded. The friendly word. The text. The email. Everything noticed. And rewarded. It's so unlike our earthly masters. Isn't it? Isn't it?

Your boss. Claiming credit. For your hard work. No slogging away at a project. When it's not even noticed. No spending months.

[25 : 06] Working on something. Only for the project to be shut down. With the Lord Jesus. I'll be none of that. Nothing is forgotten. Everything noticed.

Everything rewarded. And everything worth it. But if the command. And the command.

Commendations. You use the kind of American. What they do is.

They incentivize us. Don't they? They incentivize us. Incentivize us. To maximize our resources. But so does the condemnation. The condemnation.

The indolent man. So I want to say to you this. This man does not know Jesus. This man does not know Jesus at all. The last servant.

Has totally missed the point entirely. He does not know the master's character. And so when he comes. He says. Can you believe this? Look at it. It's just remarkable. Isn't it? Verse 20.

[26 : 03] Then another came. Saying. The Lord here is your miner. Which I kept laid away. In a handkerchief. And then this is the most incredible thing. He said. Because you are a severe man.

You do not. You take what you did not deposit. And you reap what you did not sow. Does that sound like the Lord Jesus to you? The master gave him.

He's not a severe man. He fails to understand the master's business. You take what you did not deposit.

And you reap what you do not sow. Think about the story. Three miners. Ten cities. Does that suggest taking what you did not deposit.

And reaping what you did not sow? And he makes excuses. Only to cover up his own laziness. If he really did believe that the master was severe.

[27 : 03] And took what he did not deposit. Jesus says. Well you could have. You could have at least put it in the bank. You could have at least put it in the bank. And got 0.0001 interest.

Or whatever it is at the moment. Wouldn't he? His master sees right through him. Right through him. And therefore he recognises him. As a wicked man.

Who knows neither the master. Nor understands the master's business in the first place. And I guess that is Jesus isn't it? Speaking into church.

Speaking into church circles. People who have actually. Though they've mixed with Christians. And though they've been around the business of Christianity.

They've maybe even. Been brought up in a Christian home. They've never come to know the Lord Jesus at all. And in some way or other. They are fraudsters. And so what begs the question.

[28 : 04] I wanted to be short this morning. This begs the question. What are the ten miners? What are the ten miners? Which we've been entrusted with. Trusted without. And are put to work. What are the ten miners?

With which we are to be faithful. And from which he expects a return. And though the parable doesn't explicitly spell it out. The context does. Because what have we been speaking about? All the way through chapter 18. Back into chapter 17. We've been speaking about the kingdom of God. From the start to the finish. And the central section. It is all about entry into the kingdom of God.

And the message that enables somebody to enter in. And that is what verse 11 is about. It's about the delay. They suppose that the kingdom of God was about to appear immediately.

This thing of great value. This precious gift that we've been looking at. All the way through chapter 18. Has been salvation for the helpless. As a result of the gospel being taught.

[29 : 00] And that is the precious thing. With which we have been entrusted. Surely it is the work of God's kingdom. It is the announcement.

Of the kingdom. That the gospel. The good news. Is available. In that in between period. It's time to enter in. And people are entering the kingdom. All the time.

And you. And I. Have been entrusted with that message. This wonderful message. So Jesus says. Put it to work. Put it to work. And when he returns.

He will be wanting to know how we've done. Let me go through application if I can. Each of us has been given different opportunities.

The point of this parable. Is not. Is not. Is not. You've been given gifts. As a. A banker. Or you've been given gifts.

[29 : 58] As a teacher. And you must climb up the tree. As far as you can. In order to maximize your potential. You've been given the minus. And you maximize your potential.

If that is how you. If you did it taught. That is by. Taught by. If you haven't really got a clue. What the parable is about. The point of the parable. Is not. That every single one of us. Should enter full time. Christian ministry either. And we should teach the Bible. For a living. The point of the parable is this. Every single one of us. Has been made differently. And each one of us.

Has been given different circumstances. And we've been given different opportunities. We've been given different workplaces. We've been given different families. We've been given different schools to go to.

We've been given different locations. And we are to maximize. The business. Of the Lord Jesus. Through seeing the gospel advance. Wherever he's put us.

[30 : 56] We're to do that. And nothing will be missed. And there will be a glorious reward. Out of all proportion. To whatever you think you might have achieved.

So in work. You've been put in a position of seniority. Maximize the opportunities for the gospel. Maximize the opportunities. Is you a huge influence.

To make Jesus known. Live as a Christian. Work as a Christian. Speak as a Christian. Have you been given a position.

Of not very much authority in your work. Well maximize the opportunities. Get into the work.

Of the Lord Jesus. Be soft. Be different. Make known. This wonderful truth. That we live in an age.

[31 : 55] When people can enter the kingdom. Before the king returns. Do you stand at the school gate. With the other mums and carers. Maximize.

The opportunities for the gospel. Take a risk. Maximize the opportunities. To use your home. All of us. Are we single without an immediate family near us.

Maximize the opportunities amongst your friends. And serve. Maximize the opportunities. Well done.

Faithful servant. You've been faithful. In. Little. Well it's over to you isn't it. Rather than me doing all the work for application.

Here's your question. Alright. Maybe ask it over tea and coffee. Now the football season is over.

The World Cup hasn't started yet. Ask the question. How will we maximize.

[33 : 01] Our resources. In service. Of the master. He sees it all. Nothing goes unnoticed.

It will all be rewarded. And it will be worth it. Let's pray. Amen.