

The Gospel According to Luke

“Mina Your Own Business”

“Nothin’ Could Be Finer than to Multiply Your Mina”

Chapter 19:11-27

Introduction

I took Dr. Phil’s on-line quiz. It’s a real quiz, given by the Human Resources Department of many major corporations today. I scored a 49 – which is great, considering Oprah only scored a 38. According to Dr. Phil (and I quote),

Others see you as fresh, charming, amusing, practical, and always interesting; someone who’s constantly in the center of attention, but sufficiently well-balanced not to let it go to their head. They also see you as kind, considerate, and understanding; someone who’ll always cheer them up and help them out.

Thanks, Dr. Phil! I’m happy – until I realize that his quizzes are not scientific... *And they’re certainly not spiritual.*

Here’s an example: On one of his quizzes he asks, *Are you a **giver** or a **taker**?* You have to choose one or the other. What would you say? You want to choose, **giver**, but if you’re honest, you’d probably have to say say, *Both*.

Let’s ask that question a different way. Let’s ask it of God: *Is God a **giver** or a **taker**?*

I’ll give you a clue. This is what Job said about God:

Job 1:21 ...“Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return there. The LORD **gave**, and the LORD has **taken** away; blessed be the name of the LORD.”

It sounds as though God is both a *giver* and a *taker*. True; but there’s a catch. Job said, *Blessed be the name of the Lord*. Whether God gives; or whether He takes away; you are to bless His name.

In the parable we've read, one servant gets slammed because he only thought of his master as a taker. The master gave him a mina; but he hid it away because of his feeling and belief that his master would demand it and anything he either gained or lost by it.

I can see myself in this servant. And I see a lot of other believers. We sometimes think of God as a taker. Fear then grips our hearts. We become spiritually paralyzed and do nothing to grow in our faith, or to go forth sharing our faith.

I want to put God's giving and taking into perspective. We'll organize our thoughts around two questions: #1 Do You See God As A Giver?, or #2 Do You See God As A Taker?

#1 Do You See God As A Giver? (v11-19)

There is a lot going on in this parable. It furthers our understanding of many topics: Bible prophecy, the postponement of the kingdom of God on earth, the Second Coming of Jesus to the earth, the rewards of believers, the punishment of unbelievers, and the present lost condition of Israel as a nation.

I was most struck this week by something else within the parable itself. I was struck with the description of God's nature by both the **good servants** and the **wicked servant**. We'll see the good servants motivated in their investing by a proper understanding of what God is like; and we'll see the wicked servant motivated in his lack of investing by an improper understanding of what God is like.

[Luke 19:11](#) Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately.

Jesus was leaving Jericho, just seventeen miles from Jerusalem. His disciples and other followers thought He was going to Jerusalem to overthrow Roman rule and re-establish Israel as a sovereign nation. They did not yet realize He would be rejected by the religious authorities and crucified. The establishing of the kingdom of God on earth would therefore be delayed. He told this parable to put the delay into perspective.

Luke 19:12 Therefore He said: "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return.

Luke 19:13 So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, 'Do business till I come.'

Luke 19:14 But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We will not have this *man* to reign over us.'

The nobleman represents Jesus. Heaven was the **far country** in that He would be crucified, rise from the dead, and ascend into Heaven. After an absence from the earth that has now lasted about two thousand years, He will return to establish the **kingdom**, in what the Bible calls the Second Coming.

There are two types of people mentioned in the parable: **Servants** and **citizens**.

1. The **servants** represent believers who are expected to go about doing spiritual **business** until Jesus **comes** back.
2. The citizens clearly are unbelievers. They hate the Lord and reject His right to **reign over** them.

There are some other ways of breaking this down:

1. You could get very technical and say that the **good servants** are the tribulation saints who are on the earth, serving the Lord, immediately prior to His Second Coming.
2. Then, too, there is always an argument as to whether or not the **wicked servant** is truly saved.

Let's not get too bogged down in those details, not just yet. Just put yourself in the parable. You want to be one of the **good servants**. Here's how you do it.

Luke 19:15 "And so it was that when he returned, having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading.

Jesus is coming back. He'll return at the end of what is called the Great Tribulation. When He returns, it is to reign as King over the earth, upon which He will establish the kingdom of God for a period of

one thousand years. You can read all about it in the Revelation of Jesus Christ.

Jesus will review the lives of His servants. His review happens at different times, depending upon when you see Jesus:

1. You and I are part of the Church. If you die, you are absent from your body, but you are immediately present with the Lord. At some point Jesus promised to Rapture the Church. He will literally remove living believers off of the planet – catching them away to Heaven. It seems that there is a review of Church Age believers immediately following the Rapture. This review is with regard to rewarding you for your life and service. It is sometimes called the Reward Seat of Jesus; or the *Bema*, the Greek word for Reward Seat.
2. There's another review at the Second Coming of Jesus. All the people who somehow survive the Tribulation are brought to the Lord. He separates them. The believers enter the kingdom on earth as its first citizens. The unbelievers are cast into Hades to await their final judgment.
3. Then, at the end of the one thousand year kingdom of God on earth, all unbelievers from all through human history are brought to stand before the Lord at a place called the Great White Throne. Having rejected Jesus Christ as their Savior in life, they have no hope in death. They are cast alive into, and remain eternally alive in, the Lake of Fire – what we commonly refer to as Hell.

Each of the servants in the parable received the same amount to invest. We're not talking about talents, or abilities, or gifts. They were all given the same amount exactly. It seems to represent the fact that they were all saved. Then they were all called upon to serve the Lord with their new lives.

By the way, the parable is not primarily about money, either. Money and how you use it is just one part of your whole life and lifestyle as a Christian. The Lord will review your entire life as a Christian.

Luke 19:16 Then came the first, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned ten minas.'

Luke 19:17 And he said to him, 'Well *done*, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.'

Luke 19:18 And the second came, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned five minas.'

Luke 19:19 Likewise he said to him, 'You also be over five cities.'

We sometimes get lost in the math, because we think in terms of earning the greater reward. Put that aside for a moment and you'll notice what I think is the key word in this section. It is the word **your**, y-o-u-r. The first two servants, the good servants, said to the Lord, **Your mina has earned...** They recognized and acknowledged that everything they had was a gift from their Lord. Whatever they had to invest, it was given to them. They saw their Lord as a **giver**.

Do you believe that everything that happens in your life must first be approved and then allowed by your heavenly Father? Of course you do. And since you do, you can see **everything** as given to you, to invest as part of your serving Him.

Remember our quote from Job. He said,

Job 1:21 ..."Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there. The LORD **gave**, and the LORD has **taken** away; blessed be the name of the LORD."

1. He said, **the Lord gives...** When you first encounter Job, he has been allowed many things: health, wealth, and prosperity in every area of life.
2. You're not even a chapter into the book before God approves and allows the devil to **take away** from Job. *But Job still blesses God.*

The point I'd like you to consider is this: **Whatever God approves and allows is to be received as a gift.**

1. If God gives you things like health and wealth and prosperity, they are gifts to be received and invested serving Him.
2. If God takes away from you things like health and wealth and prosperity... **They, too, are gifts to be received and invested serving Him!**

The apostle Paul prayed to the Lord about what he called a **thorn** in his **flesh**. The Lord refused to remove it. Instead, He let Paul know that He had approved it and was allowing it. So Paul described it as being **given** to him. He understood it as God's gift, to be invested. He went on to talk about some of God's other gifts: Infirmities, reproaches, necessities, and distresses. In other passages he described gifts of weariness, painfulness, watchings, hunger and thirst, and nakedness. He spoke, too, of various perils. Beyond those, he listed the following:

1. Five times he was given thirty-nine lashes by the Jews.
2. Three times he was beaten with rods.
3. Once he was stoned.
4. Three times he was shipwrecked – one of those left him bobbing up and down in the sea for a night and a day.

All these and more were *given* to Paul, to invest. He only knew God as a giver. If things were taken away, it was a gift to be used to the glory of God.

God may give you abundance; or He may give you times of being abased. Invest them. Serve Him through them.

Our attention turns to the third servant. He had a very different understanding of his master and His gifts.

#2 Do You See God As A Taker? (v20-28)

Luke 19:20 "Then another came, saying, 'Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief.

Luke 19:21 For I feared you, because you are an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.'

Luke 19:22 And he said to him, 'Out of your own mouth I will judge you, *you* wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow.

Luke 19:23 Why then did you not put my money in the bank, that at my coming I might have collected it with interest?'

He was so afraid of his master that he didn't even think to put the mina where it could at least earn some interest. He simply hid it.

The Master quoted the servant's words back to him. He wasn't agreeing with the servant's assessment. He was establishing that it was the servant's understanding of his master's nature that paralyzed him with fear.

We can argue later about whether or not the wicked servant represents those who only profess to know Jesus, and are not truly saved; or whether he represents believers who are saved but suffer a loss of reward when they stand before the Lord.

For now, let's concentrate on the point Jesus was making. The servant thought of his master as a taker:

1. When the master returned, the servant thought that, at the very least, he would take back the mina he had given.
2. If the mina earned anything, the master would certainly want it.
3. If the mina was reduced, then the master would want the servant to make up the difference.

We've just seen the incredible generosity of the master. He gave the first two servants much more than they had earned. The mina was a gift that would earn rewards as it was invested serving him.

When bad things happen to God's people, you have a choice to make. You can continue to see God as a giver; or you can begin to think He is a taker. I'm not saying it is easy to bless the Lord as He takes away; but in His strength it is possible.

Luke 19:24 "And he said to those who stood by, 'Take the mina from him, and give *it* to him who has ten minas.'

Luke 19:25 (But they said to him, 'Master, he has ten minas.')

Luke 19:26 'For I say to you, that to everyone who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.'

Taking the mina away is not equivalent to losing your salvation. It is simply the logical end of the story. It seems to indicate that you remain a servant, in the master's household; but you will suffer the loss of any rewards. It's consistent with what you read in the Bible regarding the *Bema*, or Judgment Seat, of Jesus Christ. If you appear there, you are saved and cannot be lost; but you can suffer

the loss of rewards, depending upon how you invested your life and lifestyle.

Luke 19:27 But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay *them* before me.”

Jesus will deal decisively with unbelievers – first, at His Second Coming, and then at the Great White Throne. For our purposes this verse reminds you that, even though He is currently absent from earth and away in Heaven, Jesus is indeed the Lord and should be served. You should be investing all He gives – whether it’s in the category of giving, or taking away.

It is only normal and natural, when something is taken away from you, to first think of God as a taker. But it is the new normal, and it is supernatural, to adjust your perspective and see adversity and affliction as being given to you. You can serve the Lord in your suffering and invest it, with the certain hope of receiving ten-fold or five-fold in Heaven.

Why the difference in return on your investment? Why do some get greater reward than others? I can’t say for sure. But here are two things I will suggest:

1. First: Whatever your reward, it will be way beyond fair, and what you deserve; and we will all be in Heaven, with Jesus for eternity.
2. Second: God seems to give some believers a much more difficult journey through their life on earth. I’ve been very healthy most of my life; I’ve been greatly blessed as a believer with an excellent wife, wonderful kids, a great son-in-law and daughter-in-law to be. When I get to Heaven, if God decides to give someone whose life was filled with suffering, five or ten or a hundred times more reward than I receive, that’ll be OK by me.

Applying God’s Word:

If you are a believer... The Lord will give you many things. And He will take away some things. But all of it is a gift.

The parable mentioned ten servants; but only three were brought before the Lord. What about the other seven? Two things come to mind:

1. First: The other seven would have either been like the first two good servants, or the one wicked servant. They would have been judged similarly. There were only two categories.
2. Second: It might be a stretch, but it is interesting to note that, in the Book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ, there are seven Churches. The seven Churches represent all believers of the Church Age, from the resurrection of Jesus until the Rapture. So the Lord is simply telling us that there are only and always two categories. You either believe God is a giver; or that He is a taker.

Maybe you are not yet a Christian... Well, there is only one other group in the parable. ***You are in it!*** You will be suddenly and decisively judged by the Lord – unless you acknowledge you are a sinner and receive Him as your Savior from sin.

He can save you; and you can begin to invest your life serving Him. He's coming back, and His reward is with Him.