

The DAILY JESUS NEWS #191

(Note: You can read the online Newspaper edition of this post [here](#).)

Jesus Addresses Crucial Issues in Discipleship

Parable of the Wise Manager

Luke 12:41-48

41 Peter asked, "Lord, are you speaking this parable to us, or to everyone?"

42 The Lord answered, *"Who then is the faithful and wise manager, whom the master will put in charge of his servants to give them their food allowance at the proper time? 43 The servant whom the master finds doing so when he returns will be truly blessed. 44 I speak the truth: he will put him in charge of all his possessions.*

45 "But suppose the servant says to himself, 'My master is really taking a long time in coming,' and he then begins to constantly beat the other servants, both men and women, and to make a practice of eating and drinking and getting drunk. 46 The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he is not aware of. He will then cut him in half, and assign him a place with the unbelievers.

47 "The servant who knows his master's will and does not get ready or does not do what the master wants will be punished with many blows. 48 But the one who does not know and does things deserving punishment will be beaten with few blows.

"From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be required."

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NOTE: We use superscript identification of the source gospel in "blended texts" as follows: Matthew = ^{MT}, Mark = ^M, Luke = ^L, John = ^J, Acts = ^A. This "superscript ID" is inserted at the beginning of the quoted text, identifying that Bible book until a different superscript appears. In addition, *red italics identify the words of Jesus*. Old Testament quotations are CAPITALIZED.

| | CONTEXT DIGEST |
|---------------------|--|
| Location | Speaking to a Crowd of Thousands, Somewhere in Judea |
| Timeline | October or November (Months 33, 34) |
| Jesus' Life Context | Stage VI: Jesus' Later Judean Ministry |
| | D. Jesus Minister in Judea and Trains His Disciples |
| | 3. Jesus Addresses Crucial Issues in Discipleship |
| Title | vi. Parable of the Wise Manager |

COMMENT:

The principle of agreeing with Jesus means that each disciple will strive for the same standard of excellence in ministry that Jesus modeled for us: faithfulness. Jesus was faithful as a wise manager of his Father's resources. His obedience was complete. Disciples of Jesus also measure their ministry by the same criteria of faithfulness, not results.

Notice in Jesus' conclusion that the quantity of resources given to each servant were different, but the criteria for evaluating their service was faithfulness. Some servants of Christ are given more knowledge of his will than

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others. This knowledge difference may come from differing opportunities for study, native intelligence, or our ministry environment. However, whether we have deep comprehensive insight into God's purposes in this world, or very little understanding, God expects us to make the most of what we have, through faithful obedience.

In addition to differing levels of spiritual knowledge, we are also given different resources for ministry. These include spiritual gifting, time, health, and material resources for a start. God gives varying measures of all these resources to each of us. Again, what he expects is wise management of the particular cluster of resources he has given us. That is faithfulness.

A wise manager makes the most of their knowledge of their Master's will and purposes, by maximizing all the resources that have been entrusted to them for their Master's service. They will seek to do what he would do in the same situation. They manage "in his name," as his representatives. That is "agreeing with Jesus" in ministry.

Instead of evaluating our own ministries by Jesus' criteria of faithfulness, we easily succumb to the temptation of judging our ministries by the results. We can only do that by comparing our results with other people. This is a fatal mistake.

Every other person, or ministry with which we compare ourselves has been given different resources than us. Comparing results with each other assumes we have equal resources to begin with, but we don't. The process is flawed.

In addition, comparing our results is inherently dangerous. If our results are better others, it can only lead to pride. On the other hand, those with relatively meager results can become discouraged. Either way, our focus slips away from "agreeing with Jesus," to "comparing with each other."

Faithfulness to what Jesus gives us to work with is the only criteria for evaluating our service. It's our expression of "agreeing with Jesus" in ministry.

APPLICATION:

On a scale of 1 to 10, how are you doing with the resources and knowledge for ministry that Jesus has graced you with? Are you agreeing with him through faithful service?

What can you do today to increase your faithfulness?