



Opportunities
Matthew 25: 14-30

Opportunities

- Ted Chiang, “men of experience say, "Four things do not come back: the spoken word, the sped arrow, the past life, and the neglected opportunity.”
 - Did you notice the word “neglected”
 - Neglected - suffering a lack of proper care, not receiving proper attention; to disregard
- As a born-again child of God, we have been given an extraordinary gift of salvation
 - With salvation comes a place in His family to serve Him, to serve His kingdom

Opportunities

- As a servant we will be given opportunities to bring glory to our Master
 - **Ephesians 5:15-16 NIV**, “15 Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, 16 making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.”
 - The greatest opportunity we have as Christians is to grow deeper into the knowledge of and will of God

Opportunities

- **Jeremiah 9:23-24 ESV**, “Thus says the Lord: “Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the Lord.”
- To know God is to serve God in whatever capacity He brings to us
- This is not a just at church issue
 - Are you walking through the opportunity doors presented to you?
- Are you investing the opportunities God brings to you or are you burying them, neglecting them?

Opportunities

- In Matthew 24 and 25 Jesus has been speaking about His second coming
 - If there is any thought that should bring you joy as a Christian, it is this fact - Jesus is coming again
 - We are to live our lives now with the knowledge of His return

Opportunities

- **1 John 2:28 NIV**, “28 And now, dear children, continue in him, so that when he appears we may be confident (*not arrogant*) and unashamed before him at his coming.”
 - **MSG**, “28 And now, children, stay with Christ. Live deeply in Christ. Then we’ll be ready for him when he appears, ready to receive him with open arms, with no cause for red-faced guilt or lame excuses when he arrives.”
- To prevent this, Jesus left instructions for us in a parable about a wealthy man going on a long trip and how his servants are to handle his business while he was away

While we wait His return the Lord provides, equips, empowers us with opportunities that will allow for our blessing and His glory

- **Matthew 25:14-15 NIV**, “14 Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. 15 To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey.”
 - *“Again, it will be like”*, points back to the parable of the Ten Virgins
 - Be ready when the master returns, watch for His coming, expect it, be prepared (*not perfect but moving in that direction*)
 - Don’t let the importance of his return fade from your life

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- **Matthew 25:14-15 NIV**, “14 Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. 15 To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey.”
 - This was not unusual in Jesus’ day for a wealthy merchant
 - Long trips were inevitable – no Amazon, UPS
 - The master would train certain servants to perform his tasks while gone – the business needed to go on, household...

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 - They were trained to carry on the master’s dealings, in a way the master would have, if they had been there
 - Think Joseph in Potiphar’s house

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- **Genesis 39:5-6 NIV**, “5 From the time he put him in charge of his household and of all that he owned, the Lord blessed the household of the Egyptian because of Joseph. The blessing of the Lord was on everything Potiphar had, both in the house and in the field. 6 So Potiphar left everything he had in Joseph’s care; with Joseph in charge, he did not concern himself with anything except the food he ate.

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 - The master would also equip the servants to carry on his business
 - One would need five bags of gold, another two bags to perform his tasks and one would need one bag

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 - The master would provide more than enough
 - Each bag would be equivalent of about 20 years of pay for a day-laborer
 - Notice it was **HIS** servants, **HIS** wealth, **HIS** business, **HIS** name, **HIS** glory, **HIS** increase or decrease

The master will return and to be ready we must not neglect the doors of opportunity opened for us

- **Matthew 25:16-18 NIV**, “16 The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more. 17 So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more. 18 But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money.”
 - Three doors of opportunity, one for each individual
 - It looks a lot like work, stress, potential of loss, risky

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 - Two “*went at once*” through their door and began stepping into their opportunity
 - Notice it isn’t saying they had an easy time doubling the funds entrusted to them
 - I’m guessing they struggled with it, especially at the start

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 - We must understand every opportunity involves risk
 - What if they lost some of the master’s wealth
 - The master’s return was not an issue with them

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 - They would continue doing the master’s business in the master’s name and way until he returns
 - The parable is not about doubling his investment, but were they managing the master’s business in the same way he would have

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 - The last one was not concerned at all with the master nor his business, nor his return
 - He snuck off, dug a hole, and hid his opportunity, blessing

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 - He saw the door of opportunity differently than the other two
 - Where first two saw an opportunity to raise the master’s presence in the community, to continue the master’s business while gone, the third one didn’t see any advantage for him

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 - The only thing he could see was failure
 - Maybe he compared himself to the other and determined I can’t, it’s impossible, not a good time in my life, I don’t want to, maybe later
 - Those are all statements of neglect

We all have the opportunity to hear the praising words from our master, “*Well Done*”

- Those words are not just reserved for the Apostles, the persecuted, pastors...they are available for every born-again child of God regardless of status or position
- I also believe you can hear the voice of you Savior speak these words to you in the here and now

We all have the opportunity to hear the praising words from our master, *“Well Done”*

- **Matthew 25:19-21 NIV**, “19 “After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. 20 The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.’
 - 21 “His master replied, ‘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!’
 - Notice how the master described this servant
 - Good and Faithful

We all have the opportunity to hear the praising words from our master, “*Well Done*”

- He was good and faithful because he continued the work of the master until he returned
- It is not about doubling his investment but being good and faithful with the investment made
- The results?
 - More opportunities to bring praise and glory to the master
 - Sharing in the master’s happiness

There will be no satisfactory excuse for neglecting so great an opportunity

- The greatest opportunity we have is through the door called salvation
 - **Hebrews 2:3 NIV**, “3 how shall we escape if we ignore (*neglect*) so great a salvation?”
- **Matthew 25:24-25 NIV**, “24 “Then the man who had received one bag of gold came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. 25 So I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.’”

There will be no satisfactory excuse for neglecting so great an opportunity

- **Matthew MSG 24-25**, “The servant given one thousand said, ‘Master, I know you have high standards and hate careless ways, that you demand the best and make no allowances for error. I was afraid I might disappoint you, so I found a good hiding place and secured your money. Here it is, safe and sound down to the last cent.’”
 - This servant did not know his master
 - You’re getting the increase when I would have done all the hard work
 - You are not being fair
 - There was too much risk I was not comfortable with

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 - He proved he was not a trustworthy servant at all
 - He proved he wasn’t a part of the family
 - His allegiance was elsewhere, probably himself

There will be no satisfactory excuse for neglecting so great an opportunity

- How did the master describe the third servant?
 - **Matthew 25:26-27 NIV**, “His master replied, ‘You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew (*thought/believed*) that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? 27 Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest.’”

There will be no satisfactory excuse for neglecting so great an opportunity

- What was the result?
 - For the first two, more opportunities, for the third they lost theirs
 - **Matthew 25:28-29 NIV**, 28 “So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags. 29 For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them.

There will be no satisfactory excuse for neglecting so great an opportunity

- What was the result?
 - To neglect so great a salvation the cost is eternal
 - **Matthew 25:30 NIV**, 30 And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Summary

- Do not neglect your salvation opportunities
- Do not neglect your salvation
- Be at the task of working every opportunity God brings to you
- When God opens a door, it is an opportunity to know Him deeper and share in His happiness deeper



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