

Unit 30, Session 3: Parable of the Faithful Servant

Matthew 24:45-51; Luke 12:42-48

Christ Connection:

Preschool: Jesus wants people who believe in Him to take care of His world and to tell others about Him. No one knows when Jesus will come back to earth. We must always be ready. When Jesus comes back, He will reward those who worked hard for Him.

Kids: Jesus gives believers the responsibility of caring for His world and sharing the gospel. No one knows the exact time Jesus will return to earth. We must always be ready. When Jesus returns, those who faithfully work for Him will be rewarded, but those who do not will be punished.

Adult Connection Point: Faith and obedience are closely tied together (although they must always be distinguished). One's degree of faith is shown by their faithfulness. Christians, for instance, believe in the existence of God, but we are distinct from the world in what we affirm about this God who exists. Specifically speaking, we believe in the gospel—the good news about Jesus Christ and what He has done for us. We don't believe in a generic God or an impersonal force. We believe in God as He has revealed Himself: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Simply put, one will not live and act in obedience to the triune God of the Bible unless one has faith in the triune God of the Bible. Hence, it is only by faith that we are saved (Eph. 2:8-10), but only an obedient faith saves—a faith that works through love (Gal. 5:6).

Jesus' point in the Parable of the Faithful Servant is that those who are found faithful at His return (i.e., those who show themselves to have true saving faith) are those who will inherit the kingdom with Him: "That slave whose master finds him working when he comes will be rewarded" (Matt. 24:46). If our lives do not match the pattern of those who expect Jesus to return, we will face His judgment rather than be welcomed into His kingdom. We will enter a place where there "will be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (v. 51). Hence, we must never assume that we are saved because we responded to the gospel at some point in life. We as individuals must ask ourselves, "Am I believing the gospel right now? And if so, do I live like someone who expects Jesus to return?" Past professions of faith do not lead us to salvation, but present and abiding faith in Jesus expressed in faithfulness does. Those who are not faithful will face eternal punishment.

Family Devotion:

Tell your family you may have company coming. Assign each of them a chore to do before your devotional time. When the chores are completed, gather your family.

Summarize the parable of the faithful servant.

Ask: "What two kinds of servants did Jesus describe in the parable?"

Contrast the activities of the faithful and evil servant. Jesus said the master would find the faithful servant working hard while he was away. The evil servant, however, will do whatever he wants. The evil servant would hurt the other servants. He would eat and drink whatever and whenever he wants. That servant will be punished, but the faithful servant will be rewarded.

Ask: "What does this parable have to do with us?"

Recall your activity and how you prepared for company. We know Jesus will return to earth, but we do not know when that day will be. Jesus told His followers to work hard and faithfully. Then we will be rewarded. We will not know when Jesus will return, so we should continue to take care of His world and share the gospel until He returns.

Pray, asking God to help your family serve Him faithfully. Pray specifically for any family members who do not know Jesus.