

20.3.22 am

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Date: 20 March 2022

Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

- [0 : 0 0] Good morning and a warm welcome to the service today. It's good to see some who are visiting with us from different areas and you're especially welcome. I think there's a tea and coffee at the end of the service today.
- Is there? It's set up. There's tea and coffee at the end so if you're able to stay behind her, please do so. Also, let me say a welcome to those who are online today.
- I'm conscious that there's quite a number of people. There's a few in the congregation, I think, who have COVID and there's quite a lot of transmission over the last few days.
- And so I'm pleased to see so many out this morning. I expected to see just a handful. So it's good to see those in the church and it's good to know that there are some online who are watching as well.
- Intimations, just if I could go through these just now. The evening service at 6 as usual. The Slavic Gospel Association are holding a Ukraine update and prayer meeting featuring Pastor Igor Bandura via Zoom tomorrow at half past 7.
- [1 : 0 9] And you've got a link there, or you had that before the service, at office at sga.org.uk. Ladies' Fellowship on Monday at 8.
- And I know there are a group meeting on Thursday as well. Little Fishes on Tuesday, 10 till 12. Road to Recovery Tuesday night, 7 o'clock for an hour or so.
- Prayer meeting on Wednesday here in the church and there'll be a Zoom link as well. And the Friday clubs hopefully will go ahead this week. They're scheduled to anyway, and that's this Friday afternoon.
- Jam at 1.45, connect at 3.45 and routed at half past 6. The service is next Sunday, 11 o'clock in the morning. The English by myself, hopefully.
- And the evening service is a Gaelic service. And the Reverend Kenneth Ferguson will take that service, God willing. If I could just say something about the Gaelic service.
- [2 : 0 7] The session met last week. And amongst other things, we mentioned the Gaelic service was brought up. The numbers in the Gaelic service have really gone down quite dramatically over the last while.
- And it's got to the stage where it's becoming quite difficult, awkward, to ask somebody to come from maybe an hour and a half drive. And there might be 10 or 15 people, sometimes just 10 people at a Gaelic service.
- So it was raised at the session, not by myself, but by the Gaelic elders, that they wondered how feasible it was to continue with a Gaelic service.
- It would be a real shame if it got to the stage where we weren't able to carry on. And it would be a real loss at something that once it goes, it's very, very hard to bring it back.
- So I'm just raising this to bring it to your attention. And I'm maybe just saying to the younger ones who may not get all the Gaelic to consider coming out to the Gaelic service.

[3 : 15] I get very little of the Gaelic service, maybe 5%, maybe 10%. But there's a blessing in being there. For many of you who have fluent conversational Gaelic, it probably isn't a huge stretch to take it up to some level of understanding in terms of biblical Gaelic.

So be encouraged to think about that. And it's just, we're not doing anything at this stage, but we're just raising this as a point where we're having to put this under consideration. A couple more things.

Local Islands Prayer Meeting for the Work of Slavic Gospel Association, first Saturday of each month, 8.30 via Zoom. And further information on the table in the foyer. Stornaby Street Pastors are taking on new street pastors this year.

So if you're interested in becoming a street pastor, then there's information, which is on the screen. I've got it here. Just come and speak to me if you are interested in getting involved in that ministry.

Final thing is to say that this coming Thursday, at half past seven, we have our stated annual meeting, as it used to be called. I think it's just called a congregational meeting in the Free Church, where the accounts are presented and where there's a chance this time to hear about the vision of the Free Church in general.

[4 : 34] So half past seven, probably for about an hour. We'll see how many questions and comments there are. But that's this coming Thursday, half past seven for the annual meeting.

So these, I think, are all the intimations. Sorry there were so many. And we're going to begin now singing to God's praise. From Mission Praise 506, words on the screen. O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder consider all the works thy hand hath made.

We don't have an organ in us today, so sing out at full volume. We will stand to sing to God's praise. O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder consider all the works thy hand hath made.

I see the stars, I hear the mighty thunder. The part through earth, the universe is great.

Then sings my soul, my Savior, come to thee. How great thou art, how great thou art.

[6 : 01] Then sings my soul, my Savior, come to thee. How great thou art, how great thou art.

When through the woods and forest rates I wander. And hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees.

When I look down from lofty mountain grounder. And hear the birds and hear the birds and hear the gentle breeze.

Then sings my soul, my Savior, come to thee. How great thou art, how great thou art.

How great thou art, how great thou art.

[7 : 25] thought priests and brachi splits To take away my sin Then sings my soul My Savior God to Thee How great Thou art How great Thou art Then sings my soul My Savior God to Thee How great Thou art

How great Thou art When Christ shall come With shouts of acclamation And take me home What joy shall fill my heart Then shall I bow In humble adoration And their proclaim My God how great Thou art Then sings my soul My Savior God to Thee How great Thou art How great Thou art How great Thou art

How great Thou art How great Thou art Let's unite their hearts in prayer Let's pray Our Heavenly Father Our Heavenly Father We thank you for this Your day And we thank you for The gospel message That we've been sending We thank you for this Lord God to God We thank you for this We thank you for this The God who has not left us In the dark But you are the God Who has revealed Yourself to us And called us to come to you And we thank you for this thank you that as we look around us today in the world we see such beauty we see the wonder lord of your creation we feel the warmth of the sunshine and our hearts are are stirred with that sense of awe and thankfulness when we experience that and we thank you that you have directed us so that we will know where to speak when we are thankful and we thank you that we we are looking to you our creator god the one who made all things with a word from nothing the god who holds all things together by the power of your word and every breath we are given we are thankful lord that this is a gift that you have given us the gift of life we thank you that you have given us not only the gift of life for the few years that we have in this world but we thank you for the gift of eternal life through jesus christ your son our savior we know that this world is broken as much as we see the beauty of god in this world we see that it is marred by the scar of sin and lord we confess that as we look into our own hearts although we realize that we are made in the image of god we we know that we have drifted from you that we are by nature of the sin within us in enmity against you but we thank you that you have not left us in that state we thank you that you have in love told us about sin in order that we will look to jesus as our savior so we praise you on this day the lord's day for the death of jesus which we remembered last weekend his body broken for us his blood shed for us and we praise you for the resurrection of jesus that on the first day on the lord's day he rose from the dead and promised resurrection life eternal life to all who believe so give us faith we pray that we would be believing in jesus give each of us faith we pray so that we would taste of the eternal life which begins here in this world and goes on eternally in the hereafter give us faith that we would not only hear the word of god that we would believe and take hold of the promises that are offered to us in in scripture give us faith that we would not only hear the call of jesus saying come to me but we pray that each of us would come and that we would know the salvation that is promised in jesus and enable us we pray as we have sang that hymn to be ready for the day when christ shall come we know not the day we know not the hour where we will stand before you

so make us ready lord we pray may we be those who are washed in the blood of the lamb may we be those who are saved through the finished work of christ and who are day by day serving the lord jesus joyfully in this world that you've put us in we pray lord for those who are struggling today we think of those who are absent from this place who would normally be with us some who have covid and others who have different struggles and we pray for each one as they come into our mind's eye and we ask lord that you would lay hands of healing upon those who are sick we pray that you would give peace to those who are troubled that you would grant comfort to those who are grieving and we pray lord for our nation who have gone far from you we ask lord that you would draw us back that you would enable those that you're allowed to be an authority over us to look to and to trust and to call us to return to the lord who says return to me and i will return to you and as we look around in the world as we see our tv screens and we see wars and hear rumors of wars and as we can feel the anxiety of that we pray that you would be at work lord and these places that may be far from us that we feel helpless to have any influence towards and yet as we pray the hand of god moves and we ask lord that you would be bringing peace where there is war and that you would be working in the midst of war in darkness that the light of christ would be seen so hear our prayers take away our sin and go before us in the rest of this day enable us to be in worship as we gather together and we ask all this in jesus name amen boys and girls would you like to come forward please there's not so many of you today oh i don't need that audio you can come forward a wee bit more how's everyone today all good all good good to see you all and uh i think i'll say hello to all the boys and girls who are at home watching because uh we'd usually see a lot more of them on the floor today um any news this week nothing too much doing i know it was michael's birthday yesterday he's not with us today is he he's at home so happy birthday yesterday michael i know it was nanny's birthday as well he's a wee bit older than some of you i would never ask her at age though because you don't ask a lady at age so happy birthday nanny as well well i want to tell you a story today and it's a true story about a man called a man called brendan latham does anybody know brendan put your hand up if you know brendan we know brendan don't we well when you're going to tell a story about brendan you know anything could happen now brendan was on his holidays along with anthony and christian and the wider family uh just uh over the last few weeks and they were over in a hot place can't remember was it tenerife or or someone's tenerife it was so the sun was shining it was like harris but it was probably about 20 degrees warmer and so they were having a nice holiday and what do you do when you're in a hot place well you get ice cream when you go to the beach

and you go on the sea and all that kind of thing so they were having a good holiday and it was this one day and they were out swimming in the sea and so they were swimming in the sea and splashing about having having good fun and uh then they came a wee bit out of the sea and they were just kind of on the shoreline and they were relaxing and uh everything was peaceful and everything was quiet and then out of nowhere came this massive wave and the wave came crashing in and nobody saw it coming and uh it swept up and it swept up over the the high tide line where it had been before it swept all the way up to where the people were it swept all the way up over to where Brendan was and where Anthony was and where uh other people within the family were as well and the wave it went over their heads and then it went back out to sea and it sucked a whole lot of them back out to sea and the current was really strong now Brendan had managed to kind of hold on to this thing and he wasn't quite he wasn't into the sea so he was standing uh or sitting just on the shoreline a bit shocked and shaken uh but uh he was okay and he he sat there for a minute just getting his breath back and he looked out and he could see that Anthony uh was swimming and he was doing okay he was heading back to shore and there was other people who were heading back to shore um but uh one of the guys in the group uh

[19 : 23] Mary Latham's father-in-law he was struggling and he was flapping about in the sea and he got his head up and he was getting there but he couldn't get enough strength to be able to swim and so he went back under and he came back up and the waves were crashing over him and he just couldn't get he couldn't get himself back above above the water and so Brendan said he was sitting there and he was looking and just in a moment of clarity he thought this man's drowning and he realised this guy he wasn't just swimming and struggling a bit but he was actually drowning and you know what happened next Brendan he didn't actually hear an audible voice but he could hear someone's voice in his head do you know whose voice it was he could hear in his head who?

Cammy Cammy that's right he could hear Cammy's voice in his head Cammy wasn't I know when Cammy shouts he's loud but they couldn't hear him in Tenerife but Brendan had gone to life saving classes in the swimming pool in Harris and so Cammy was doing their lessons there and he was teaching all the the life savers how to save lives and if somebody's drowning what to do and so Brendan as he sat there he could see the man struggling and he could hear Cammy's voice he could hear all the instructions from that class so what do you think happened next?

He jumped into the water and he swam out and he got hold of the man and he pulled him out of the water swam back to the shore and he saved his life so Brendan on that day true story he saved the man's life heard Cammy's voice in his mind and he thought I must do something about this and off he went out and he saved the man and it made me think if we're Christians that's the way we're to be because in this world you know it's a bit like a stormy sea and the sin that's in us it weighs us down and the sin that's in us it puts us in real danger if we don't have our sin taken away we can't be we can't be alive forever so whose voice do we hear that helps us to know how to be saved not Brendan's if we open the Bible whose voice do we hear that tells us how we're to be saved go on

Fraser Jesus' voice and so every time we open the Bible we hear the voice of God we hear the voice of Jesus and the big message in the Bible is not a message of how we can make our lives here better how we can make more money how we can be healthier the message of the Bible is be saved and Jesus says to us I came to this world I went to the cross I died on the cross so you can be saved so he says come to me trust in me and you can be saved so we hear Jesus' voice when we open the Bible but we need not just to hear Jesus' voice we need to do something don't we see on that day if Brendan had been there and he was sitting on the stone and he saw the man in real struggles and he thought he's drowning and then he could hear

Cammy's voice saying this is what you need to do imagine if Brendan had just sat there on the rock and thought well I know he's struggling and I know what to do to save him but I think I'll just sit here what would have happened to the man Emily he would have drowned it says in the Bible James chapter 1 be doers of the word and not hearers only so we're to not just hear Jesus voice but we're to do what he says and come to him and in this world there are people in your class there are people in our families there are people in our community there might be people in the church this morning who are watching and they don't know yet Jesus and so if we know Jesus if we responded to his voice if we are saved our job is to tell other people about

[24 : 51] Jesus so they too can be saved so boys and girls let's pray that we would hear Jesus voice today all of us and that we wouldn't just hear Jesus voice but we would act on it and come to him and call other people to come to him too so that they can be saved so let's pray Lord we thank you for this day and we thank you for that true story about Brendan we thank you on that day that you helped him to know what to do that he could remember what he was told by coming in that class that you gave him the courage to go out and do what he did and we thank you Lord that Jesus came into this world to seek and to we thank you Lord Jesus that you say to us come to me look to me and be saved so help us

Lord we pray if there's anyone here today who's never yet taken the hand of Jesus and been pulled out of the danger and pulled into safety we pray that even today they would do that and help us Lord if we are Christians in school or at home or wherever it is to be telling other people that there is a saviour there is one who can save us there is one who can make us safe forever and his name is Jesus and he lived for us and he died for us and he rose from the dead so that we can be saved so help us to take that message out not just to hear your voice not just to hear the message but to act on it and to share it and we pray all these things in Jesus name Amen we're going to sing now and we're going to sing the words of the hymn on the screen bless the Lord oh my soul and we'll stand now to sing bless the

Lord oh my soul oh my soul worship his holy name sing like never before oh my soul I'll worship your holy name sun comes up it's a new day dawning it's time to sing your song again whatever may pass and whatever lies before me let me be singing when the evening comes bless the Lord Lord oh my soul oh my soul worship this holy name sing like never before oh my soul

I'll worship your holy name your name your name your name is great and your heart is kind for all your goodness I will keep on singing ten thousand reasons for my heart to find bless bless the Lord oh my soul worship his holy name sing like never before oh my soul I worship your holy name and on that day when my strength is failing the end draws near and my time has come still my soul will sing your praise unending ten thousand years and then forever more bless the

Lord oh my soul oh my soul worship his holy name sing like never before oh my soul I worship your holy name okay boys and girls if you head through to Sunday school now we can turn in our bibles to Luke chapter 19 please blueprint and uh

[30 : 41] And we'll read from the beginning. Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus.

He was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. He wanted to see who Jesus was, but being a short man, he could not because of the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore fig tree to see him since Jesus was coming that way.

When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today. So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly. All the people saw this and began to mutter, he has gone to be the guest of a sinner.

But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, Look, Lord, here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor. And if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.

Jesus said to him, Today salvation has come to this house because this man too is a son of Abraham. For the son of man came to seek and to save the lost.

[31 : 48] While they were listening to this, he went on to tell him a parable because he was near Jerusalem and the people thought the kingdom of God was going to appear at once. He said, A man of noble birth went to a distant country to have himself appointed king and then to return.

So he called ten of his servants and gave them ten minas. Put this money to work, he said, until I come back. But his subjects hated him and sent a delegation after him to say, We don't want this man to be our king.

He was made king, however, and returned home. Then he sent for the servants to whom he had given the money in order to find out what they had gained from it. The first one came and said, Sir, your mina has earned ten more.

His master answered, You take charge of five cities. Then another servant came and said, Sir, here is your mina. I have kept it laid away in a piece of cloth. I was afraid of you because you are a hard man.

Why then didn't you put my money on deposit so that when I came back, I could have collected it with interest? Then he said to those standing by, Take his mina away from him and give it to the one who has ten minas.

But those enemies are mine who did not want me to be a king over them. Bring them here and kill them in front of me. Amen. And may God bless that reading of his word to us.

[34 : 04] I waited for the Lord my God and patiently did bear. At length to me he did incline my voice and cried to hear. He took me from a fearful pit and from the mighty clay. And on a rock he set my feet, establishing my way.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS

eyes that we may see

Jesus, that we may see our need of Jesus, that we may see this world as well that we are part of and the reality of our state outside of Christ we pray for the children in Sunday school those who are here and those who will be at home as well and we ask Lord that you would enable them in their early years to remember you to trust you we pray for the little ones in the creche and those who haven't yet reached the creche, even the young ones that you know within the womb not yet born we pray for them Lord, we thank you that you're the God who knows us from conception and we ask Lord that you would be working in the lives of these young ones, that they would grow up to know you and to trust you to walk with you as we remember the young, we pray for those who are elderly those who are feeling the weight of the years, those who would desire to be with us in this place but who don't have the strength to be able to come we ask that you would be near to them on this day that you would minister to them those who are watching and others that may not be watching those who may feel the confusion of the ears we thank you that when we are struggling to reach people you in the power of the Holy Spirit are able still to minister to those who who may be struggling in their minds even and we pray for them Lord as we think of them we pray for the churches around us as well all denominations where Jesus is preached where the cross and the resurrection are preached we ask Lord that you would be at work for your glory and for the salvation of souls so hear our prayers and help us we pray in Jesus name

Amen Luke chapter 19 and we're focusing today on verses 11 and following the parable of the 10 minas or the 10 pounds as it might be in some of the versions that you have and as I was studying it and thinking about it this week my mind went back to a conversation that I listened into it seems like yesterday but it was actually in 2018 it was the world cup towards the end of the world cup it was the semi-finals of the world cup and England had just crashed out of the world cup apologies to any England fans here they just crashed out of the world cup to Croatia and after that game two of the pundits were talking about it and they were locking horns

Ian Wright very vocal character and Roy Keane who's an Irishman and very straight talking they were battling in the aftermath of the game Wright was distraught because England had crashed out and he thought they were going all the way and Roy Keane the Irishman was showing very little in the way of sympathy and Roy Keane pointed out repeatedly that England's problem the problem that had caused them to go out of the world cup was that they got overexcited they weren't focused on the semi-final they weren't focused on beating Croatia Croatia were hardly in their vision at all they thought they could just sweep them aside without any effort all they could think about was the final the final the final and that was their downfall according to Roy Keane and we tend to get like that we get very excited very quickly we can as people become overexcited very quickly we get carried away and it can cause us to be foolish and so from time to time we need a blast of realism and that's what the disciples of

Jesus got when he told them this parable he speaks with realism into their lives and their experience so the first thing I want to look at today is the purpose of the parable Jesus he tells the disciples the purpose the meaning of this parable before he actually tells them the story and we're told that in verse 11 while they were listening to this the disciples Jesus went on to tell them a parable because he was near Jerusalem just where he was going to the cross and the people thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear at once so the disciples they have this idea in their minds that the kingdom of God and all the drama of that was just about to appear any minute there was this huge excitement because of that now when we ask the question why were the disciples so excited it's easy to see how they could become so excited because if we glance back over the previous few chapters as Jesus journeys in the direction of Jerusalem amazing things were happening blind people were being given their sight with no medical intervention lame people those who had been unable to walk for decades were being given their mobility sick people those who had leprosy and who were outcasts were being touched by

[44 : 18] Jesus and they were being healed even the dead were being raised by Jesus and so there was huge excitement around Jesus and there was a great buzz around Jesus the crowds were gathered around him and the crowds were getting bigger day by day and people were being saved you know even people like Zacchaeus who was the most unpopular man in the town that he lived in this unscrupulous tax collector this posh gangster he was saved he was sought out and he was saved by by Jesus and so it's no wonder that the disciples as they walked along with Jesus and observed all this it's no much wonder that they were getting excited because they knew their old testaments they knew passages like

Isaiah 35 and Isaiah we haven't got time to go there today but Isaiah 35 it gives signs by which the Messiah could be recognised it gave an indication of the things one could expect that would show that the Messiah had come and all the things that Jesus was doing they were exhibits they were pieces of evidence that showed that he was the king that he was the Messiah that he had come so we can understand why the disciples as they thought about the Old Testament and as they watched what Jesus was doing we can understand how they were so excited how they were getting so carried away but Jesus can see into their minds and Jesus knows that they have things wrong in their minds Jesus knows that they're thinking that when he gets to

Jerusalem everyone will see that he's the king they're thinking that when he gets to Jerusalem there was going to be this huge recognition of Jesus as political king and they would have the top jobs because they were his disciples that's what was in their minds but that's not why Jesus came he didn't come to be some political mastermind he didn't come to be a warrior who would overthrow the tyranny of Rome he didn't come to have this this muscular rain that everybody could be in awe of so the disciples expected all of this they had things wrong and the purpose of this parable was for

Jesus to put them right Jesus wants to tell them we're not going to Jerusalem Jerusalem to have some huge political rally we're not going to Jerusalem to have this amazing experience of Jesus being lifted up as a this worldly king and this was a kindness on the part of Jesus he's preparing them for what's to come he's teaching them how to understand what it meant to be a disciple in this world that was the purpose of the parable and you know if you and I want to understand this world if we want to understand what's going on in this world we need to listen to Jesus C.S. Lewis said I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen not only because I see it but because by it

I see everything else see without Jesus it's very hard in fact really it's impossible to understand the purpose of this life without Jesus we don't really know why we're here we don't know the purpose of life we may pursue money we may pursue career success we may pursue popularity but the more we actually accumulate of it the less it means the more we scratch our heads saying I don't know why I'm here I don't understand this world to understand this world to understand the purpose of life we need to listen to Jesus as we open the Bible we are given direction on how we are to live so how are we to live if we ask that question how are we to live if we are disciples of

[49 : 38] Jesus what do we need well the next thing is we need patience Jesus tells us this parable gives us the purpose of the parable first of all but the second point is if we are disciples of Jesus we need to have patience so point number two is patience look at verse 12 Jesus said a man of noble birth went to a distant country to have himself appointed king and then to return now this is a story that everyone in that place knew usually when Jesus would tell parables they were made up stories they were they were just illustrations of what was going on around them but they weren't based in fact they were just kind of made up stories to make a point but this was a story that everybody knew there was a story that dated back about 30 years and there was a character called Archelaus who went off to

Rome because he wanted to have himself appointed as king he wanted to be the king but the Jews that he was hoping to rule were not happy so after he went to Rome to make this application to be king they sent an embassy of 50 men on behind him to express to Rome they didn't want this man to be king so that was a story that had created some interest going back a few decades and it was a story that everybody would have remembered and Jesus uses it as an illustration here he tells a story about a man a noble man a man of gravitas who went off to a distant country and when he returned he would be king it's the premise of the story and Jesus was telling the story about himself he was with him just now but soon Jesus would go away shortly after he arrives in

Jerusalem Jesus was going to go away and he was going to go away to the distant country of heaven and when he would return everyone would see that the king had appeared in Jerusalem they wouldn't see that but when Jesus came back after his death and resurrection everyone would see that the king had appeared but patience was required in waiting for the return of Jesus and the universal recognition of king Jesus in Jerusalem when the disciples arrived in Jerusalem with Jesus they would not hear shouts of crown him as king rather what they would hear were shouts of crucify him we don't want him as king so the disciples need to be made aware of that they would need patience as they waited for the kingdom of God to appear as they waited for people to recognize that Jesus was the king they were going to need patience for that and you know today if we're disciples of

Jesus we still need patience we see in the world such injustice so much trouble we see war we see good people being pushed down evil being pulled up we hear people say of Jesus still crucify him we don't want him as our king we don't hear Jesus name being lifted up in worship in public places we hear that the name of Jesus is either cursed or it's removed that's the reality of the world that we live in and it's hard to live in that place so we need patience Dale Ralph Davis the commentator says we long for instant relief but in his kingdom

Jesus invites us to and he insists on the long haul you know if we're Christians we have to recognize that we're going to need to be patient in this world Jesus said you're going to have trouble it's not going to be easy you'll need to have patience and today if we think about where we are in history today in terms of this parable Jesus is still in a distant country he has died he has risen he has ascended he's still in the distant country of heaven but as we sang he is coming back remember last Sunday at communion we remembered the death of Jesus he died in our place his body was broken his blood was shed we take the bread and wine we remember all that he did to save us but there's that line at the end of communion we do this until he comes he is coming we don't know what day we don't know what hour but he is coming until that day we need we need patience

[55 : 48] J.C. Ryle says in all our thoughts about Christ let us never forget his second advent it is well to know that he lived for us and died for us and rose again for us and intercedes for us but it is also well to know that he is soon coming again I wonder are we prepared for that day if today was to be that day where Jesus returned or called us to stand before him are we ready for that for that meeting for that divine appointment the disciples they were given the purpose of the parable Jesus told them the parable so that they would understand the world around them and the calling of the disciple Jesus he told them the parable so that they would have patience so that they would follow him patiently and the third point here is

Jesus told this parable to give them perspective and I'm not an artist but artists need to know the importance of perspective we could get Margarita out she could talk this for 15 minutes about perspective keeping things in perspective from the artistic point of view means that when one is drawing a picture the things in the picture need to be of the correct size and position in comparison with the other things I'm not describing that very well but I think you know what I mean perspective everything's got to be in perspective everything's got to be of the right size you don't have things that are far away big and things that are close to you small otherwise the perspective is all skewed and spiritually we need perspective spiritually we need to make sure that Jesus is in the right place in our lives that he is the right size he has the right magnitude in our lives he has the right position in our lives and that's the lesson that's taught probably in the main part of this parable look at verses 13 to 15

Jesus tells this story and in verses 13 to 15 we see the master he called 10 of his servants and he gave them 10 minors put this money to work he said until I come back but his subjects hated him and sent a delegation after him to say we don't want this man to be our king he was made king however and returned home then he sent forth the servants to whom he had given the money in order to find out what they had gained with it so that's the story that's the scenario so what does this mean because it's not the most straightforward of parables so let's try to figure out where do we fit in this what does this all mean well who's who in this parable well the servants are us in the parable and some are willing servants maybe I should say the master is Jesus the servants are us and some are willing servants who trust king Jesus and serve him gladly and some are unwilling servants who do not want

Jesus to be their king and who rebel against him and say I want to live my way but the thing is although we hear these words in the parable we don't want this man to be our king the fact is Jesus is king whether we want him or not Jesus is king and whether we believe it or not this world is his world his kingdom and whether we're ready or not Jesus is coming back one day to this world to see what we have done with the minus that he has given us to what are the minus well the minus are the privileges that we enjoy life breath a measure of health and strength knowledge of the gospel message no one in this room either doesn't have a bible or can't get hold of a bible if you don't have a bible ask me you'll have one by the end of the day that's a privilege it's a minor knowledge of the gospel message people who've taught us about

Jesus and his love and our sin and our need to be saved and the cross and what Jesus did for us and the resurrection and the eternal life that's offered all these privileges of the gospel and the gifts that God has given us they are wrapped up in this term minus we've been given us Hendrickson the commentator says the nobleman's return and session with his servants symbolizes Christ's second coming when he will demand of his servants that they render an account of the manner in which they have dealt with the gospel and in this connection with the gifts and opportunities for service that were placed at their disposal so we see ourselves in this you know we're servants of Jesus some willing some unwilling we see the privileges that we enjoy and the question that we're going to be asked on the day that we stand before Jesus is what did you do with these privileges what did you do with the message of the gospel you know on the day that we stand before

[62 : 19] Jesus the questions he asks us are not how rich were you you know or how famous were you or how powerful were you you know how pretty were you how big was your house how nice was the decor how much money did you make what kind of car did you drive they're not questions that will feature on the day that we stand before Jesus how many letters did you have after your name not interested they're not questions that are going to feature in that meeting that we have with Jesus the questions that we're going to be asked are how did you use the life that I gave you did you trust me did you obey me did you point other people to me did you believe the gospel did you tell other people the gospel these are the questions it's the basis on which we will be assessed we're all going to have to answer to king

Jesus whether we wanted him as king or not we're going to stand before him and if we keep that in perspective we're going to live wisely you know if we allow money and popularity and comfort and career success to become big and Jesus to become small our perspective will be wrong we're going to live unwisely we're going to spend all our time on decorating and saving and working and we'll spend no time in spiritual things our perspective will be wrong we'll live unwisely or if to put it another way if we allow these few years that we have on this earth to become the big thing and eternity to become small our perspective will be wrong and we'll live unwisely so we need this right perspective that

Jesus gives us remember the line in gladiator what we do here echoes into eternity we need to remember that we need to have that perspective so the purpose of the parable the patience that we need as disciples of Jesus the perspective that we're to have that we're to live wisely the fourth thing is the profit that we see in this parable look at verses 16 to 19 I'll speed up now the first servant came this is before the master and said sir your mina has earned ten more well done my good servant his master replied because you have been trustworthy in a very small matter take charge of ten cities the second came and said sir your mina has earned five more his master answered you take charge of five cities so we see two servants as they stand before the master and given account of what they did with the miners they've used the miners wisely they've invested them and they're in profit one servant servant number one has a profit margin of 1000 percent the second one has a profit margin of 500 percent so these are good returns but the thing to note here is not so much the profit margin that they earned for their master but the profit the master gave to them you know if we actually scrutinize the figures here a mina were told by the commentators was about three months wages so we talk in our terms say 4,000 pounds 4,500 average wage so servant number one he's given 4,500 he makes 45,000 pounds it's a good return servant number two he makes 22,500 pounds from 4,500 so they make good money it's good money it's not insignificant money but it's not crazy money you know you couldn't get 45,000 pounds and build a house in

Shilabost you couldn't even buy a plot in Shilabost so it's good money but it's not massive mega money but think about the reward the master gives he doesn't give them a share of the profits he gives them so much more than they actually were given in the first place he doesn't say well you made 45,000 pounds let's give you a 1% bonus at Christmas 450 pounds that would be generous he says to the servant number one you've made 45,000 pounds you can have 10 cities that's massively disproportionate in terms of the profit the generosity of the master and the second one he says you've made 22,500 you can have 5 cities you can imagine these servants going surely a mistake here I worked but I didn't work that hard surely there's a mistake in this I did a wee job but I don't deserve to have 10 cities given to me

I don't deserve 5 cities and the answer is that's right they didn't deserve that but Jesus doesn't give us what we deserve when we trust him and when we serve him he gives us what we don't deserve that's grace this is a picture of grace we see the massive generosity of the master this immense grace that is shown towards these servants and that's a lesson that we need to take hold of serving King Jesus it takes effort it takes hard work it takes discipline it takes commitment but Jesus won't shortchange us if we serve him he won't treat us cruelly he is generous he is kind he is good his returns are not stingy and frugal he is gracious and we get tastes of that in this world but we enjoy the full measure in the world to come and if you want a picture of grace at work the grace of God at work we just need to glance back at the previous verses

[70 : 06] Zacchaeus he has been zapped by God's grace the old Zacchaeus is squeezing everybody he meets for every last penny he can get out of them he is extorting every last bean he can get out of the people that he has charge over but once he meets Jesus he is writing checks he is writing tax rebates far in excess of what he is actually legally obliged to give to them and it is a picture of what God's grace looks like in action it is lavish it is transformative of course the high definition picture of God's grace is not seen in Zacchaeus it is seen in Jerusalem in just a few days where Jesus would become poor so that we could become rich where

Jesus would become sin so that we could be saved did we deserve that of course we didn't deserve it it's all of grace we profit eternally from the blood of Jesus that was shed on the cross it's grace so we see here a prophet the prophet the servants make but more importantly the prophet that they receive graciously from the master and the final point my time is gone but I think I would be unfaithful if I finished without dealing with this point the final point is punishment and if you look at verse 20 to verse 27 we see that this parable finishes with a warning about punishment the third servant comes verse 20 and said sir here is your miner

I've kept it laid away in a piece of cloth I was afraid of me because you're a hard man you take out what you did not put in reap what you did not sow his master replied I will judge you by your own words you wicked servant you knew did you that I am a hard man taking out what I did not put in and reaping what I did not sow why then didn't you have ten miners sir they said he already has ten he replied I tell you that to everyone who has more will be given but as for the one who has nothing even what he has will be taken away but those enemies of mine who did not want me to be king over them bring them here and kill them in front of me it's serious words to finish and it's totally counter to the way that we would present a point you know every lesson in public speaking would say you finish on the positive if you need to mention negatives yeah by all means mention them but move through the negatives quickly put them on the small print but major on the profit major on the positive a peer expert would say to Jesus in terms of this parable major on the gain, major on the grace finish on the grace but that's not what Jesus does here his final word in this parable is a word of punishment we see a servant servant number three who either doesn't know King Jesus or who's lost sight of King Jesus and has no real understanding of the character of the master we see a servant in these verses who wastes his life who takes the gospel and hides it away doesn't act on it doesn't share it we see a servant whose life and whose lack of witness yields absolutely nothing for God's glory and for such a servant on judgment day it's a difficult conversation it's not profit that's being discussed it's punishment and you and I may not like the ending to this parable it might make some of us squirm but we need to hear it

Dale Ralph Davis says final judgment is never pleasant and it cannot be described pleasantly but it is the note that Jesus ends on Jesus warns us about the punishment that awaits those who waste their lives investing in this world and forgetting about the world to come Jesus warns us about the punishment that awaits those who say we do not want this Jesus to be our King my life and that's the note that finishes on that's the point that we're to take home so let's ensure that we learn from this parable and ask Jesus to be our King whilst we have time let's ensure that we do not waste our lives that we use our lives here to serve Him and let me say if that seems unreasonable if there is someone here who like the wicked servant is saying

God has been hard on me expecting that can I ask you to look again at the cross or maybe to look for the first time at the cross look at the love of God for you look at the Son of God the servant King who does not come to this world to take our lives away from us but who went to the cross to lay his life down for us so that we could escape the reality of this punishment and be assured of the promise of eternal profit and peace we'll pray

[77 : 49] Lord God we pray that whilst we have time we would ask Jesus to be our King break down the rebellion in us we pray break down the spirit that would say we do not want this Jesus to be our King break through the selfishness that would cause us to focus on our own comfort and the very few years that we have in time Holy Spirit we pray that you would open our eyes that we would see the reality of punishment for those who turn away from Christ and the peace and joy and grace that is promised to those who trust him we pray this in

Jesus name Amen we'll finish by singing the hymn from Mission Praise 109 Crown Him with many crowns crowns the lamp upon his throne hark how the heavenly anthem
drought all music but its own awake awake my soul and say of him who died for thee and
given as my chosen king through all eternity crown him crown him the son of God before
the world began and he who tread where he hath trod crown him the son of man who
every dream hath known that brings the human breast and takes and bears them for his
own that all in him may rest crown him

Lord of life who triumphed o'er the grave and rose victorious a stead the strife for the Lord
he came to save his glory is how we sing who died and rose on high who died eternal life
to bring and lives that death be died crown him the Lord of heaven and God in worlds
above crown him the king to who is given the wondrous name of love all hail redeemer
hail for love has died for me thy grace shall never ever fail through earth eternity and now
may the grace of our

Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God the Father and the fellowship of God the Holy Spirit
be with us all now and forever more Amen God to our number God have forever having
patience to realize you have equal to youOD of and the Town mijn therapy and een j m
pour sessions