

Talents

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[0:00] The Talents, the parable of the man and his three servants.

And the talents that they were given. We're going to go to Matthew 25, verse 14. Talents. This parable talks of a man and his three servants. And we see Matthew 25, verse 14. It says, For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants and delivered unto them his goods.

So this master placed his own property in the care of these three servants, these three men. And verse 15 it says, Unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one.

To every man according to his several ability. And straight away took his journey. So here's this man, this master. He goes on a long journey. He calls his servants together.

[1:27] He divides his money amongst the three of them. And he gets to each of these three, each servant, according to his own ability it says. To the one he gives five talents. A huge amount of money.

To the second, two talents. To the third, just one talent. Then he leaves. And this owner, he gives his servants care of the money. He does not tell them what to do with it, with all this wealth.

Now the word talent, of course we know in modern terms, talent means a skill or ability. We could reflect that, we could use that in effect.

But really the meaning of the word talent, as it's read here, is it's a measure of weight. In other words, it's actually a lot of money.

And some have reckoned that one talent, as in those terms, in that currency, compared to today's value, it was about 20 years worth of wages.

[2:26] Imagine that, 20 years. One talent, it's 20 years, just one. And some say, well maybe five talents, could be maybe \$3 million or some huge amount.

Five represented a huge amount of money in our kind of terms today. And in this parable, the talent stands for, you could reflect on, as you kind of consider the spiritual application or the practical application of what our Lord is referring to, the talents could speak to us, for example, of God's gifts to us, of spiritual gifts, of the fruit of the Spirit.

Maybe it could include the abilities that we have, the opportunities, the abilities that we each one have, in particular areas of serving, maybe working with youth, working with children, working in Bible study, or in discipling others, and being a support to other people in all manners of different ways.

And the parable shows us, in a way you could reflect how it speaks to us about our God and our lives for God. And we see, as the master in the parable, our God is very generous to us.

He gives us valuable things, important gifts. Each one has been given different abilities and skills. And he lets each one of us decide, likewise, how we use those gifts.

[3:58] So God gives each of us, you could reflect, in that sense, that we've all got something. As you could consider that, each one of us has a talent, even if it's just one talent.

You know, we've all got one life to live. That's something, isn't it? And that's of great measure. One gift, to be used for him and for his glory. So my first point here tonight is that you have an amount. You have an amount. That's point number one. God has given you something. He's given you life. He's given you a measure of life, a quantity of time. He's given you a gift, a talent, maybe more than one.

And it is valuable. Spiritually speaking, practically thinking, we could consider how we've all been given something by God, a life to live.

We've all been given abilities and opportunities to use our life, to honour our God. There was a time when there was a group of people being welcomed into a church family and one man heard the

pastor say, now God has given to each of you a unique talent.

[5:07] When you join the church, you're expected to serve God with whatever abilities you have. Well, it just so happened that this particular man was a reformed criminal. And after he was released from prison, he'd renounced that life of crime and gone straight.

And he was joining the church here, making a commitment to follow the Lord. And it was his first step in that effort. And serving God was a little out of his mind, but he wanted to do what he could. So he went to the pastor and he said, preacher, church work is something I'm not really familiar with, but I can fix the church's electricity meter so that every other day it will run backwards. That way, you'll never have to write another check to the electricity company.

Now, of course, well, some talents are not appropriate for use in the service of God, no matter how sincerely they are offered. But we know, we've all got something, some talent, some ability.

We've all got something, as Christians, as believers, we've all got something that is valuable that we can give unto our God. You know, there's many gifts and talents amongst us here in the people in this very room.

[6:11] Do we bury our particular gift as the unprofitable servant? Or do we, you know, use our life to bless God, to serve him, to honour him?

So, my first point is you have an amount, an amount of time, an amount of life. How, how limited is that amount? We don't know.

So, we're up to Matthew 25, verse 19, is my next reference, where secondly, you will give an account. It says, Matthew 25, verse 19, after a long time, the Lord of those servants came, and he reckoned with them, and he settled the accounts with them.

Thanks, man. Thanks so much. You will give an account, is my second point. You have an amount, it's quite number one, we've got a life to live.

And the second point, is you will give account. In Matthew 25, verse 19, it says, this master, the Lord came back, of the servants, and it says, he reckoned with them.

[7:15] He settled accounts with them. He said, okay, what's happened? He asked them what they've done with their talents, these sums of money, these weights of money, that they all have different weights, different measures of money, which reflect our life, our living.

God wants each one of us to use wisely what he has given to us. Are we doing all that we can possibly do? Are we using the abilities God has given each one?

Do we use our talents? It's a good question. One day, we'll have to give an account of our stewardship. One person told a pastor he never thought he could do anything for God, because he only had one talent, he said.

The pastor said, well, don't be discouraged. God can use it. What is your talent anyway? And he said, my only talent is criticising people. In that case, the pastor said, you'd better do what that servant did, bury it.

Now, we don't need the talent to criticise people. We want to have people that are building up the church, don't we? But, you know, seriously though, every one of us has got different abilities.

[8:26] We've all, we've all got something. We've all got a body. The same body, temperature, 98.60 degrees. Our blood is red.

We all have a brain. There's never been a brain transplant ever performed. But no two people have even the same fingerprints, not even twins. So, we've all got different abilities.

Everyone's different. We've all got something, we've all got an amount, but we've got different amounts. We've got different abilities. And, you could think, church-wise, applying this in the sense of ministry, of serving God, God gives, all of us gives.

Different abilities. Then He leaves us alone. He does not abandon us. He's always there to guide in prayer, if we ask, but we know one day the Master will return.

Friends, the Lord Jesus is coming back. He's coming back. And He will come again to certain accounts with us. So, let me ask you this. Do you want to be the person that buried their ability?

[9:26] Now, I know I've got to put a bit of a point across here. We could consider that the servant had buried his talent. He wasn't actually safe.

He was a pretend servant. So, and we, of course, we know heaven is not gained by what we do. I just want to try to make that point clear too. It's not our activity that gets us into heaven.

It's the cross of Christ. It's the blood of Jesus shed for us. I'm trying to apply this story to how we can apply our lives and make our lives count for God.

And so, we could think, some, you know, even as a Christian, even as a, as a, as one who is saved, we can neglect the gifts that we have.

That's, I'm trying to make that point here today. We can be like some who would just neglect the abilities that we have. You know, they might say things like, I'll be at the meeting, but don't ask me to do anything.

[10:32] I will take on a role, but don't count on me every time. I'm not going to be committed to be regular. Or, I'll help with a certain church program, but don't expect me to attend all the activities.

I'll just take my pick, you know, I'll just be, when I, when I can fit it in. In a way, that's kind of burying your talent, isn't it? And friends, burying your talent is sin.

You know, friends, we're all going to stand before the judgment seat of Christ, it says in Romans 14, it says that every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Now again, let me make it clear, when we're at the judgment seat of Christ, we're saved people.

But there will be some who will be ashamed before him at his coming. There'll be a neglect. There'll be, there'll be something neglectful. And there'll be a regret.

And so, sobering words, when we think of the life we've maybe yet to live, who knows how long we've got. Can we invest our talents that God has given to us?

[11:40] Can we invest them wisely? Now how do we? It's a personal question and we've all got to consider ourselves individually. And my message to you here is put into use the talents that God has given into your care.

Think about yourself. God will bless you for your faithfulness. He'll recognize your work and he'll reward you. And we've all been given different talents and abilities through our lives, even through what we learn in our secular learning and in our employment.

You know, I was thinking lately how, and it's not to big note myself, but I just thank God for what I've learned in some of my secular employment. I worked alongside Peter Guttridge here in the Elizabeth CES, the Commonwealth Employment Service.

And we were on the council, weren't we, Peter? I'm not sure that we're always together, but we had sort of a casual acquaintance at that time. Didn't really know Peter that well. But I used to work in the Commonwealth Employment Service and as time went by there was opportunities to become an interviewer and, you know, to do, to be an employment officer, to interview people and select them for jobs.

And sometimes we had some pretty scary moments. I know, actually, for one time I used to work in the Department of Social Security and I was on the, on the council in what is Centrelink today and I had to refuse people the council check and, you know, they wanted money there and then over the council and I got an advance of their welfare payment and this guy got really aggro and he, and he was really steaming there and he slammed the door and the glass broke in this glass door.

[13:23] He was so angry. So, I was just, just trying to make the point that my experiences of dealing with angry people kind of helps me as a pastor today. I can, I can cope with anger and I can cope with people who might be abusive to me.

Not that anyone abuses the pastor, of course, but, you know, there's those moments, isn't there? I mean, it's really life. You have those experiences of life and, you know, I learnt to have more confidence in myself and communicating and interviewing people because he used to be really quite lacking in my self-confidence.

I was a very nervous, shy, kind of, quiet person and I learnt to kind of step up and that, so, the point I'm trying to make is sometimes what we learn even in employment, even in the experiences of life, can help us spiritually, can help us to be a stronger person and God's giving you, we're learning all the time, aren't we?

Through lots of things, through secular and hopefully biblical training that we get hold of and learn and we're growing and building skills and abilities and, but sometimes we don't always use the abilities that we have.

That, that is the point that is really a sad thing and God wants us to. All the learnings of our lives, all the things and experiences and abilities we might have learned, you know, abilities that are more

maybe natural or learnt or talents that we, that we've grown to, to have, things that God, we feel God has really granted us and given us that ability.

[14:50] We see that God told Jeremiah even as he called him before he was even conceived, God knew that Jeremiah had a calling and he had a mission to fulfil and friends, that's true for every one of us.

So God doesn't want us to have wasted talents, he wants to use the learnings and abilities, the skills, the things that we've, we've learned through life and put them into practice, use them for God's glory.

One day we will face him and give an account of what we've done with our lives. Let's not tell him that we've wasted our lives, the gifts that we've, that he's given us, it's in your hands what God has put and you are responsible for that.

So this goes for spiritual matters as well as, you know, practical things of life, how he uses our resources, our money, he'll bless you for that level of your ability.

So again, to recap, you have an amount, all of us have an amount, we've all got a lifespan, we've all got something, a life to live, you will give an account. You know, for believers it will be before the judgment seat of Christ.

[15:57] For unbelievers it will be that they've neglected salvation and their destiny is hell. There's no question, they haven't trusted Christ as their saviour. So, my third point here tonight is make your life count.

Make your life count. We see that reckoning time is coming. The first man, he got five and he added five so he had ten, he doubled. The second man, he had two, he added two so he had four, he doubled.

Now the third man, he had one but he had just the same as he started with because he buried it. He did nothing. He didn't, you could reflect that picture as someone, he never had faith, he never trusted Christ, he was not a saved man.

He just dug a hole in the ground, he wasted his life, he squandered that opportunity, he wasted the talent, he hid his master's money.

And servant number three and eight, this report in Matthew 25, verse 24, it says of this one, he said, Lord, I knew that, I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown and gathering where thou hast not strawed.

[17:10] In other words, gathering where you had not scattered. You know, he's saying that this master is a hard man. And it says, verse 25, and I was afraid and went and hid thy talent in the earth.

Lo, there thou hast that is thine. So this one, he feared losing the master's money. He buried his talent in the ground. He wanted to protect himself.

Really, he was seen as lazy. He didn't even put it in the bank to gain some interest. So, the master was furious with his servant. The third servant here. He had done nothing.

He hadn't tried. And verse 26, he's called a wicked and lazy servant. He had not done anything. Now, some people leave salvation undone.

There's no, they don't receive the gift, they don't trust Christ, and they're like this one that has a life that counts for nothing.

[18:16] The ones who have five talents and two talents, they have faith. they have faith in God. They have faith that reflects to us our faith in our Lord, that our life is in his hands.

We've given ourselves to him as our master. it's faith. It's how we can see the way we can put our lives into his hands.

Consider for yourself as a believer here today, how can you be a profitable servant? How can you make your life count? God, there was a complaining church member and talking to a preacher and he was kind of saying I can't do anything.

And the preacher said, can you read? Yes. Can you talk? Of course. Well, the preacher said, if you can talk, you can pray. If you can read, you can study the Bible.

You know, it's this everything, everyone's got something they can do. We can all be challenged to how we can make our life, invest our life in what really truly counts.

[19:41] And sometimes we might think, what little can I do or give or be? And you might have heard this little story, someone pictures this, gets this point across where there was a man walking along a beach and a young boy was throwing starfish into the sea.

And the man walking by, the boy saw these thousands of starfish and asked why he was doing it. And told the boy, there's so many starfish in the sea, why did he think throwing one more back in would make a difference?

No one is going to notice. And the young boy picked up the starfish from the sand and he threw it into the water, saving that starfish, and he said, it sure made a difference for that one.

Now we can all chip away with one thing, one thing, one by one, maybe one soul at a time, that you can be an influence on. We can all do something, even those little things of service. We might think little of it.

I was glad that someone helped sort things out here just now. It was a little thing to do, but it helped the service to run. And friends, there's little things we can do.

[20:47] Try to come to the service perhaps a little early and lend a hand. Be of a support. Encourage one another. There's sometimes opportunities to fellowship prior to the service or afterwards that we can just make that little bit of an effort can truly be a blessing and an encouragement.

And friends, we don't all have the same talents. It's what counts is what we do with what we do have. In the church, there's people who can wash the dishes. There's people who can put the chairs out, people helping with the Sunday school, helping with the youth group, driving the bus, passing out a track.

We've got loads of tracks we can gladly give you, tracks to distribute. You know, picking up rubbish. And, you know, I was blessed this morning when someone picked up the vacuum cleaner and just thought, well, it needs doing, I'm going to do it.

But here's what ability they have. There's people that can paint a wall or greet someone or sweep the floor or help with the crash. There's opportunities all around us if we just open our eyes.

And spiritually too, what about investing in our spiritual life, in praying, in reading the Bible through, in dedicating each day to our Lord?

[22:07] We've all got so many talents. Potentially, faithfulness, that's a talent, that's a blessing, isn't it? Fruitfulness, our time.

We've all got that precious gift of time. You think of what presidents and prime ministers and famous people, they've got just the same time as we have.

So why can't our time be invested wisely so that there'll be something tangible from it? Our giving, that's a talent. Our dependability, our thinking power, our reasoning, seeing things and being open to it.

Well, this is a ministry, maybe God's putting this on my heart. It might be a ministry we're not even doing yet. Well, we're open to people as God leads them to say, Pastor, what about this ministry or that ministry?

You know, we're not confined to what we're doing now. There's opportunities beyond. And it's just having that heart, tender heartedness towards God. Friends, there's loads of opportunities and they're all around us.

[23:12] And we can make an investment. Whenever we're in fellowship together, it could be greeting someone new. It could be praying for those with needs, giving and being a blessing, serving others.

Friends, there's many opportunities as talents that you have that are potential talents. To support a ministry, to help one another, to help a young one, to spend time, you know, thinking even some of the little toddlers and attackers that come, especially our morning service, to just be a smiling face for them.

They'll remember that when they're older, that church wasn't something that was stuffy and hard and restrictive, but it was something where they were around people who had the joy of the Lord on their faces.

They had something that they knew God was there in the faces of other people. And I think of some of the people in my life growing up and in my later years, and you could see the love of Christ

shining out in some people.

It was just this glow about them that you knew they were saved and they were a fair dinkum Christian. And having a heart for God is just a wonderful blessing and you can be a ministry, a servant of God by just being used of Him when those opportunities come.

[24:35] And it could be those simple little things. When our Lord is the master placed in something of value into the hands of one of His servants, He wants it to be used for His kingdom. And friends, all of us, our whole lives are reeling at His call.

We are all in the ministry, everyone. And it doesn't stop on Sundays. What about Monday morning? Are you working for God on Monday? Of course you are. Every one of us is. We don't usually think of our jobs that way, but God does.

Really, when we're at the work site, Colossians 3, 24, addressing a servant, it says, you serve the Lord Christ. Our daily work is part of our service unto Him.

And every person is a steward for Christ. So all of us are important, every one. And no matter how small you may think, that contribution you can make, that how small you think your personal talent is, you may only give a glass of water to a thirsty child, but if you do it in the name of Christ, you've done well.

[25:51] Then we see of this one who was an unprofitable, a lazy servant. The master took the one talent away and ordered that he be cast into the darkness forever.

Think of the shame of this one. Of course we know it speaks to us of an unsaved one. But think how we even as believers, we can neglect the opportunities that are in front of our faces.

And what a shame it would be to miss using that talent that you have when you could have used it. We could think for example, because there was no one at the crisis centre to answer the phone, a woman leapt to the death.

Because the talent was buried, a team grew up without a caring mentor. Because the Sunday school teacher was overrun with children and lacked helpers, a child left Sunday school never to return to church again.

Could be a little thing that's missed, could have a dramatic impact. Now, when the master, the owner, left these servants, he gave them no instruction, he left it with them.

[27:01] And there's that sense too, where each one of us were individually accountable. The two servants realised that the owner trusted them and they proved faithful and responsible.

So, friends, it's a calling to each one of us to think, will our Lord say, well done, good and faithful servant, with what we've done, with ourselves, with our lives?

Of course, the critical factor is, are we born again? And that involves no work of our own. But then the next stage is, what will our life be, as saved people?

Can we be useful for God? And we can think through the pages of scripture, that really it's the ordinary, simple, maybe not so talented ones, that God used.

As, for example, Moses, he kind of downplayed himself, and tried to pass the buck to Aaron. He told of himself that he wasn't able.

[28:13] We see Peter had many faults. We see Mary, one who didn't seem to have much to offer. We see a small boy with a small lunch.

These were just common, ordinary people, right through the Bible. God uses the ordinary ones. So, don't think that you are not able. And, it's true as the saying goes, use it or lose it.

There was a man in New York who was afraid as he grew older that maybe he was going to lose his eyesight. And so, what he did was he covered one eye with a patch, thinking that eye's not going to get so much work.

And so, because he's not using it, it might have more life, that eye that he had not used. And he kept doing this because he thought that he might lose his eyesight.

And sure enough, he was right. Eventually, he lost the sight in the eye that was covered. The eye that was not used was the one that failed. And it's the same really with what talents we might have.

[29:16] You might say, well, I've done some Bible training, I've got some knowledge, I know the Bible, I know this and that, and I'm well, I know sound doctrine.

But if your talent is not used, it's a tragic thing. You know, when we think of that even practically wise, we can think, someone who might know how to play the violin, if they don't keep playing the violin and practice things, they lose it.

Even typing, sending Morse code. I know I learnt a little bit of Morse code when I was young, but I scarcely know any of it now. It's the same if I studied German at school and it's very rusty now, what little German I might know.

The things that we might study, and I've done courses and it's almost like you swat up and get the exam over and then you pretty much forget what you learnt. Well, that's what I'm a bit like. You can learn a language and then if you don't use it, you lose it, don't you?

You might have knowledge of different languages. It's all the same, isn't it? It's the same in the way with the service of God. We can get so rusty that we're not using that opportunity that we have, we're not using the abilities that we have, that it's neglected.

[30:33] Well, how much better to be as the one of this one, of whom it is said, well done, good and faithful sir.

thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things, answer thou into the joy of thy Lord. In other words, share the joy of your master. Think of it when this short life is over and we stand before our Lord and it's all to his glory that we even could have the privilege of being saved, let alone having anything more.

But there's a sense where we can make our life count, that there'll be a reward, there'll be son, there'll be his smile as he welcomes us, there'll be his joy and there'll be that gladness that yes, I made my life count, God helping me.

So have the acknowledgement of our Saviour, that joy of coming into his presence and he's saying you've been trustworthy, you've been faithful over those few things of your life and there's a reward there.

So think of yourself, you might be struggling today to wonder what is it that I can do with the rest of my life. Think prayerfully, think prayerfully about what you could do, what you could do and God can help you to take those steps of action.

[32:13] You can reach your God-given potential. What a shame it would be to be as the one, or alike to the one that was neglectful. Now, we don't all have the same gifts, we've all got different things that we can do.

Some can teach, some can fix things that get broken, some can make lovely cloths for the tables at church, or I know one has made these cushion covers and such.

Some can prepare delicious food for fellowship meals when we can hopefully start having them again. And if you can't do any of those things, well maybe you can preach. We can all do something, can't we?

We can all do something for the glory of God. And it's about being faithful too. There was Queen Elizabeth's official birthday some while back and she had this honours list and these very subjects of her reign that she acknowledged.

And there was one 60-year-old postman in northern Wales and he was a man with the most unroyal name of Jones. And because Jones came from a family delivering Welsh mail for 150 years, he had not missed a day's service in 43 years.

[33:27] He got the mail through despite snow, storms, floods and floods. And so the Queen bestowed upon him the British Empire Medal expressing the gratitude of the nation.

It's kind of a funny story really, isn't it? That he's just doing a very basic postal delivery job but the point was he was faithful.

And this earthly queen, she bestowed on him such a great honour, this amazing privilege of having a British Empire Medal. And it was given for his faithfulness in simply doing the task faithfully of delivering the mail.

Now don't you think the King of Heaven will be even more diligent to make certain that everyone of his subjects will receive that acknowledgement for our lives lived.

Of course he will. He will reward you for the quality of your service as in the picture of the servant here. And the parable shows we're not measured by what we have to begin with but what we do with what we have.

[34:38] You know the one who got two, he doubled it to two. The one who got five, doubled it to five. They did something what they had. God wants

us to use our life, do what you can with what God has given you with your life.

And you might say who am I? Well God can use jackasses and big fish to do his will. See as the donkey of Balaam's story of the big fish of Jonah's account.

Certainly if he can use even such creatures certainly he can use you. if you'll just let yourself be used of God. And you can do more than you think.

I reflect back here. There was a man in our church, I think he was about 70 years old and he'd never come and given an address at the front here.

And I asked him to and he took the challenge and he delivered it and he said it's the first time he's ever done that. And so you might do something that you don't even think you can do.

[35:42] Don't limit yourself and don't compare yourself to others too. Invest the talents, your life that God has given to you. And don't sit back when you know you could use the gift.

Volunteer. Volunteer. We all can feel inadequate. That's a common feeling that I have. You may feel like you can't do much.

That you don't amount to much. Or what's the use? You can feel like it's too hard. And so you do nothing. That's wrong. Be willing to step out in faith and trust God.

Be willing to step out of the comfort zone and invest yourself, invest your life, especially in others. And they may not always appreciate it.

I get situations where you're giving and giving to certain people and you're still treated poorly. But you're not serving them.

[36:47] You're serving the Lord Christ. And friends, invest yourself in the lives of others, even when they might think ill of you or still complain.

Because some people only complain. use the good gifts that you have. Use the life that you have. And for the glory of God, because that's our object.

It's not to get earthly praise, it's to glorify our God. And make something out of the life that he has given to you. We've all got something.

We've all been given an amount. And when it comes to the close of life service, as we come to his throne at the end of time, God will not ask, how many talents did you have, but what did you do with what I gave you?

This useless servant of the parable, in our Lord's eyes, you could understand that he represented the Pharisees. They've been given everything, really, haven't they?

[37:49] They've been given the law, they've been given the promises, they've been given the covenant, they've had that heritage of God's working in their families for many generations, but they buried God's blessings, they didn't use the opportunity that they had, and we see really the unprofitable servant was not really a true servant at all, he was a pretender.

There were people like that too, and sometimes they might be active church people as well, don't get me wrong, some people might be active, and not even saved, it's not about the works that you do, first get saved, then let God activate you as his servant.

So as someone has put it, there's three things you can do with your life, you can waste your life, you can spend your life, or you can invest your life. Waste, spend, or invest.

And friends, we've all got talents, we've all got gifts. Each one of you has great gifts, great potential, great talents. And we've all got different levels of responsibility.

And we can think, sometimes, it might be some things that are unnoticed as well. You might think of some occasion where there might be a beautiful array of flowers far high up in the mountains, filled with beauty and fragrance, but no one ever sees them.

[39:24] but they're still fulfilling God's calling for them. You might be labouring in fields where you're not recognised, you might be giving more than people really understand your giving.

You might be praying more than people appreciate your praying. You might be reading your Bible more faithfully than any other person here. And they're all things that are secret things. It's those secret things.

You might be fasting as the Lord commands. These various actions of faithfulness. And the ones who are commended were the ones who are doing those things secret. Notice, but how much did you do?

That's better. We are faithful in fulfilling your calling where God placed you. So, consider tonight these three points. You have an amount. We've all got a life that's to live.

A life to live. Firstly, get saved. That's the critical fundamental. Trust Christ as your Lord and Saviour. Let Christ be your master.

[40:35] Come and bow to His Lordship and receive His gift of salvation as you trust Him for the once and for all work of the cross of His blood shed for you to save your soul.

And you've got an amount. As a Christian, you've got an amount of life to live. In a way, you look back and think of the wasted years before you were a Christian. But whatever the case, you've got an amount and it's ahead of you.

There's an amount ahead of you. You have an amount of life to get to live. And you have one day to give an account. It says we will all appear before the judgment seat. You have to give an account one day.

There'll be judgment. And that won't be a judgment for your salvation, but a judgment for rewards, for works, for life lived. So the third point, I urge you, make your life count.

Make today a decision point where you prayerfully ask God, what is it that I could do for your service? What is it that I could give in terms of how I can take the opportunities in front of me?

[41:39] What are the areas of service that are all around me that perhaps I could say, I'll be there, and you can depend on me. Friends, let's be a servant of whom it will be said, well done, good and faithful servant.

Enter into the joy of thy Lord. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you that you are a great and wonderful saviour, that we can trust that blood shed at the cross where you took our sin and paid it in full that we can receive that precious gift of salvation.

We cannot work for it, we cannot deserve it, and we can gain no commendation that it be credited to us. It's only as you freely choose to give it to us, as we simply receive it by faith.

Lord, help us to see the amount of life we all have, the amount of abilities you've granted us in a life lift, of experiences, of learnings, of your callings, of your enablings, of your giftings.

Lord, to see the amount that we have, to consider Lord, of those things that we can do, that will one day as we will give that account, it won't be with a grateful or regret, but we'll be glad because of how we've lived, as you've enabled us to.

[43:16] It'll be a glad time, a time of reward because of entirely your grace, and Lord, help us to, for the meantime, make our life count, that as we start each new day, we'll think, Lord, what is it that you want me to do?

And we'll have eyes open to see the souls we can touch, the opportunities we can seize, the blessings we can give, and the service we can render, Lord, of ministries maybe we've yet to even contemplate, that we can have those eyes that see, those things that you want us to see and to do.

And we pray for each one that they might have that heart tender towards you, that you would lead us by your spirit into maybe new fields of service. You'll help us to take the big steps we need to take to leave the comfort zone and to step into those opportunities, Lord.

Even though it might be hard and we feel inadequate, Lord, we know it's by your spirit we can be used of you. And it's all to your praise, our Lord God.

In Jesus' precious name we pray. Amen.