

# Faithfulness- Faithful Servant

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 06 November 2016

[0:00] Matthew 25. Let's stand shall we just to read verse 23. Maybe we can read it together. Matthew! 25 verse 23. We'll read it together. His Lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant. Thou hast been faithful over a few things. I will make thee ruler over many things.

Answer thou into the joy of thy Lord. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for your word, for our hearing of it now and for our receiving of it and acting upon it. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Please be seated. His Lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant.

Talking about faithfulness, faithful service and faithful stewardship. Faithful servants is what he calls us to be. And in this parable of this context here, our Lord is telling of one who was accounted faithful by his master. And what a picture that is for us of our serving God. Faithful servants. God wants us to be faithful. Faithful. It means steadfast, reliable, trustworthy, loyal. Faithful. Faithful. It comes from the word faith, of course. Faithful. God is looking for faithful people. People who live by faith. They're full of faith. They're filled of faith.

They're faithful to the master. The master, our Lord and God. Faithful in doing his work. Consider back through history where there were masters and maids and servants. And at such a time, if you were a master and you had a servant, what kind of servant would you want to have? One who was faithful. One who was faithful. You know, when the master rings the bell, ding, ding, ding, ding.

That's what I do when it's, you know, when I summon my wife to make my lunch.

No, not really. But, you know, if you get to the ding, ding and then the servant comes, yes, sir. Yes, ma'am. How can I be? I'll make your service. I'm ready to serve. And they just spring into action.

That's the kind of picture here of a faithful servant. That's what we should be, isn't it? Unto our Lord. And in 1 Corinthians 15, 58, it says, Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. For as much as you know that, your labour is not in vain in the Lord. Be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding. That's the kind of servants our Lord wants us to be. You know, God didn't ask us to be brilliant or successful, but he does expect us to be servants who are faithful, reliable, dependable, trustworthy. You know, as employers, we want employees who are like that. Whereas as the old picture of the master and the household, they wanted the servants, the maids to be faithful and reliable servants. And so our Lord calls us to this service of faithfulness. And I put to you, furthermore, not just as servants, but as stewards, as stewards. And that's what I want to kind of focus on in this time with us together just now, of stewardship, of stewardship. In Luke 12, 42, 12, 42 of Luke, we see a like picture of a parable again, where our Lord tells of the same kind of picture of a steward, of a servant. And Luke 12, 42, the Lord, the master of this parable says,

[4:05] Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his Lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? So the Lord tells of a faithful and a wise steward.

In 1 Corinthians 4, verse 2, it says, It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful. A faithful and wise steward. It's required, it says, in 1 Corinthians 4, verse 2, that it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful. So what is a steward? A steward.

A steward is the name of a person who is entrusted with a responsibility. There's something entrusted to us as stewards. A steward is a house manager. Again, in those old times where there was a master and servants, there was a steward who is a house manager. And they were trusted by the master to do what the master wanted done. And those stewards would have other servants working with them as a team. And we are stewards, if you like. Stewards, managers. God's entrusted things into our management, into our care, into our responsibility. We are stewards of resources and responsibilities that we all have committed into our care by our master. And we are to be about our master's business. That is his calling for us, each one of us as his children, as his servants, to manage for God.

You know, the stewards of old time, they would manage someone else's property, the master's. But they would steward such resources and responsibilities wisely. Such as Joseph was one who could be entrusted by Pharaoh with, or by the master of Joseph with all the care of the household. And so he was a steward. He was a picture of that good and faithful and wise steward. And when you think about it, really, brothers and sisters, that our God is our master. And he is the owner of everything. He owns everything. You know, our father owns a cattle on a thousand hills. Our father, our heavenly father, he has everything under his control. And he gives us a part of his property under our stewardship, under our control. We know we only have a little part of God's creation that he gives to us temporary use of, of what we have here on earth.

You know, I've heard people say, it's not my car, it's the Lord's. If someone else needs it, they can have it. They can use it. You know, you have that kind of mentality that we're brothers and sisters, we're family. And you know, back in Acts, they were sharing, weren't they, and caring and thoughtful for one another about practical needs. And really, everything we have is just temporarily under our control. And we should be managers of God's property. We are not the owners of it. And both the steward and his work belong to the master. And the master gets all the credit. He gets all the praise. The Bible says we've been bought with a price. Even we belong to him. We are his property, in effect. You are not your own, it says. You are bought with a price. Therefore, glorify God with your body, with your spirit, which belong to him. Christ died to save us. We belong to him. We're under his ownership, under his control. And it's loving control. We must learn to be wise and faithful stewards of what he's placed in our care. God promises rewards for us. He wants to find us what? Faithful. When he comes.

[8:23] When he comes, he wants to find us faithful. Each day. Every day. Not just Sunday. Not just Sunday morning. All the time. 24 by 7. By 365. To be a full-time Christian. A full-time minister. We all are called to that. Faithful. Each day. Every day. Every word that we speak. How we live. How we act. How we treat others. He wants us to find us faithful. Faithful to him. To his work. To his word. Faithful to his calling. With which he's called us. Faithful to the kingdom. Which he commands us to seek after.

First. Doesn't he? Seek after the kingdom. Faithful to the church. Which is his body. We are the visible representation of his body. His very presence on this planet. In this place. In this community. In this city.

Of Adelaide. We are the church. Faithful to the gospel. Which he's given into our hands. And ordained that through our lips it be communicated. By the power of God. The gospel. The power of God.

Over sin. And he's called you and me to this faithfulness. To this total commitment. This radical commitment. So we are stewards. Each one. Each one of us. It's not a select few.

Every believer is a steward. Every believer is a servant. Every believer has stewardship. So what are we stewards of? What are we stewards of? We are stewards of everything.

[10:11] Everything that we have. Everything that we have. We owe to him. Don't we? We can't claim credit for our salvation. We can't claim credit for our holiness. We can't claim credit for really anything.

Because it's all glory to God. All to his glory. Everything that we have we owe to him. Nothing that was ours. Nothing was ours to begin with. It's all been given to us from him.

It's all been handed to us. You know there's no rack for luggage in a delivery room. You know when you come in. You come in. A bare baby don't you?

You come out. Come out of the mother's womb. With nothing. And we. We bring nothing into this world. And when was the last time. You saw a hearse pulling a trailer?

You know. You know. Some people think they can have their bags packed and take it with them. You know. But there's nothing that. We can take nothing with us when we leave.

[11:18] So let's make the most of what we have now. And use it wisely. What are we stewards of? Everything that we have. All that we have. Is to his glory.

And for his praise. And a steward has responsibility. A steward has no right to use what he has as he pleases. But to use it as according to the will of his Lord.

What would be pleasing to my master in how I employ my life? We should use what we have that God gives to us according to his directions.

So what responsibility do we have? Our Lord has entrusted us with our souls. Our will. Our mind. Our bodies. Our possessions.

Our talents. We are accountable for how we use our hands and feet. And our tongue. How we use our words. Will we praise him?

[12:14] Will we glorify him? Will we post things on Facebook that glorify him? Or will we put other things on there that don't glorify him?

God has entrusted us with possessions. With food to eat. With clothing. With our home. With all that we need and more. And God has entrusted us with bodily strength and health.

And learning. And knowledge. The capacity to study and improve ourselves. And aspire. And gain employment. And use our lives wisely.

For the good of others. He's given us time. From moment to moment to moment. He's given us the grace of God. And the power of the Holy Spirit. So really it's staggering isn't it?

What God has given to us. And friends one day. Soon. One day. Soon. We'll give account of our stewardship. All of us will give account.

[13:16] It says that every one of us. Will give account of ourselves to God. You know. Saved and unsaved. Of course the saved. Don't have to account for their sin.

That was paid for at Calvary. But we'll give account for our works. For what we've done. And what we haven't done. We'll give account of our stewardship.

In Luke 16.2. Luke 16.2. Our Lord gives another parable there. Another picture there. Of this truth of stewardship. And he says. And he called him and said unto him.

Give an account of thy stewardship. There was a story there. A parable. Of servants called to reckoning. Servants called to an accounting. Before the master.

As he returns. And he called him and said unto him. Give an account of thy stewardship. One day brother. Sister. We will give an account of our stewardship.

[14:11] Before the whole human race. Before the devil. Before the angels. And before God. The judge of all. We will appear. And we will give an account. Of how we've employed.

All of our Lord's goods. And the judge of all. Will then ask. Such as someone has spelled it out here. Consider what he might ask us.

Someone has reckoned. I'm quoting here. What the judge of all the earth. Might say to us. How did you employ your soul. Your understanding.

Your memory. Your will. Did you learn to know me. My works. My word. Did you pursue wisdom. And righteousness. And holiness.

Did you give me your will. Your heart. Did you not love the world. Neither the things that are in the world. Was I the object of your love. Was I the joy of your heart.

[15:07] The delight of your soul. Did you think according to my will. Not on folly. Or sin. But on whatsoever things are pure. Whatsoever things are holy.

The Lord will then ask. How did you employ the body that I gave you. I gave you a tongue to praise me. Did you. Did you use it wisely. Not in evil speaking.

Or gossip. I gave you knowledge. Sight. And hearing. I gave you hands and feet. Were they employed. Not doing. The will of the flesh.

Of your evil nature. Or the will of the mind. The things to which your reason or fancy led you. But the will of him. That sent. You. Into the world.

The Lord of all will ask. How did you employ the worldly goods. Which I placed into your hands. How did you employ money. Did you use it to gratify your flesh. Did you waste it.

[16:04] Or hoard it. Did you employ your health and strength. Not in folly or sin. Not in making provision for the flesh. To fulfill the desires thereof.

Did you employ your time wisely. Weighing the value. Of each moment. And knowing. That all were numbered. In eternity. You know the Bible says. To count your days.

And engage your heart. To know wisdom. Count those days. That they're getting less and less. Ahead of you. On this planet. Our lives are a gift from God. We can accept this gift of life graciously. Thanking and praising him. For all that he has given to us. Or we can complain. Now I must confess.

Sometimes I get negative. I get negative. I see. You know. The things that I'd like to see different. I can be a glass half empty person.

[17:10] We all can. Can't we? Where we see the things. Oh. We whinge and complain about people. Disappointment.

Frustration. But rather. We talked about joy this morning. Let's. Employ our lives. Our heart. To see the good. To see the good in people.

To see the. The blessings. That we can be to people. The. The good things that we can do.

Because life is a gift. And. All we've got is the now. Isn't it? We didn't earn.

Life. It's given to us. And we belong to God. Our master. And he's given to us. This gift. Of life.

Every day. Is a gift. That's why they call it.

The present. It's a gift. Isn't it? And you know. Friends. How many days. Have we got left? I know Roy's.

[18:08] Kind of hoping. There'll be few. Because he wants to go. But. You know. While. While we're here. On the meantime. Roy. And you know this. We've got to make the most. Of each day we've got.

Don't we? Make the most. Of each day we've got. He's entrusted. This gift to us. This gift of life. And we must take care. Of the gifts. That he's given to us. That he's placed. In our care. In 1 Peter 4.

Verse 10. It says. As every man. Hath received the gift. Even so. Minister the same. One to another.

As good stewards. Of the manifold. Grace of God. Every man has received a gift.

It says there. In 1 Peter 4. Verse 10. We've all got different gifts. And callings. And abilities. Now there's people. That can play guitars. That I didn't know. Could play a guitar. In our church.

That there's different people. With lots of talents. And skills. And abilities. And many. Ways. That they can. Be a blessing. And minister. And be a joy.

[19:01] To others. And how can we use. Those many gifts. That we've got.

To one another. It says. Use them for one another. Minister the same. One to another. As good stewards.

1 Peter 4. Verse 10. So what kind of stewards. Will we be. Will we be. Careless stewards. Being concerned. Only with the here and now. And you know. Making a buck.

We can all get. Caught up in that. You know. It's nice to have. Something in the bank. You know. More than. Something that's in the red. Something at least in the black. You know. We can all get worried. And fretting.

And worried. And fussing. About making a living. That it. Just dominates. And. And. Overwhelms us. And. Just.

Preoccupies us. Such that we miss out. On. What we can do. With our day. And so. Rather.

Brother. Sister. Let's faithfully use the gifts. That God has given to us. God has given you gifts.

[19:56] Each one of you. Each one of you uniquely. A unique. Smorgasbord of gifts. That he has given you. A selection. That's different from mine.

And. We can compliment one another. As we. Faithfully use the God. Given gifts. That he has. Put in our charge. And strive each day.

To be more faithful. In how we put those gifts into. Use. God expects faithfulness. Doesn't he?

Faithfulness. Not perfection. Now sometimes.

We can make the mistake. Of thinking. I'm not perfect. Or I'm not. As good as this. Or that. And so. I'll wait. It's a trap.

Isn't it? It's a big trap. To think. I'm not going to measure up. So I'm not even going to try. Or. Maybe in a year or two. Or three. Or four. Or five.

[20:52] Then I'll. Then I'll do something. Don't do that. It's better to.

Be an amateur. And do something. You know. Just use what you have got.

Use those limited. Capacities that you have got.

Because God. Expects faithfulness. Not perfection. And so. Don't hold back. From. Using those gifts. That he has given to you. We're stewards.

Stewards over our lives. Our very lives. As I said. 1 Corinthians 6. 19 through 20. We are. Not. You are not your own. You are bought with a price.

What a price. You're priceless. Really. Aren't you? You're priceless. Each one of you. Each one of us. Priceless. As a Christian. We're bought with a price. The precious blood.

Of Christ. What great a price. Our lives. We need to be aware of. The opportunities that we have. To influence others. You know.

[21:50] Bless God. For the Sunday school. For the youth group. The opportunity that you have. To minister to young lives. As a father. As a mother. The opportunity that we have.

To shape. Lives. Will we be selfish. Using our gifts only for our own benefits. Or to the benefit of others. You know.

We're all building a bridge for others. There's a story that goes like this. You may have heard me say this before. There was an old man. Travelling a lone highway. And he came at evening.

Cold and grey. To a chasm vast and deep and wide. The old man crossed in the twilight dim. The sullen stream. Had no fear for him. But he turned.

When safe on the other side. And built a bridge. To span the tide. Old man. Said a pilgrim standing near. You're wasting your strength. In building here.

[22:50] Your journey. Will end with the closing day. You never again will pass this way. Why build this bridge. At even tide. The builder lifted up. His old grey head.

Good friend. In the path I've come. He said. There followeth after me today. A youth. Whose feet must pass this way. The chasm. Has been as naught to me.

To that fair haired youth. May a pitfall be. He too must cross. In the twilight dim. Good friend. I'm building. This bridge. For him.

We're all building a bridge. People are watching us. We that are older. Even we that are younger. Have others watching us. Copying us. Mimicking us.

Adopting the thinking. That we adopt. Using the language we use. Going the places we go.

Listening to the music. We listen to.

[23:45] People are watching us. Younger ones. Are watching us. We're building a bridge. For others. Through our lives. So how does our influence. Affect others. How does our influence. How does our influence.

Affect others. To be a better Christian. Or not. If they follow you. Will they attend church regularly. What will be their attitude.

Will it be negative. Or positive. Stewardship. Stewardship. It's an action word. It's a doing word. You cannot manage properly. And do nothing. Being a steward.

Means doing something. Do something. In 1 Corinthians 4. 1 through 5. It says it is required. That we be faithful to God.

Faithful to God. Be found faithful. You know. Faithfulness in church. Is one dimension. Now there's a Mrs Craig.

[24:44] No relation. A Mrs Craig in the USA. She received a plaque one day. To recognise her record of. Regular attendance in church. Regular attendance in church.

And. The story goes. She's not Mr Sunday. For over 60 years. 60 years. And the question arises here.

Mrs Craig. Didn't friends ever drop in. And keep you from coming to church. Mrs Craig. Didn't you ever get a cold. And have to stay home.

She must have shared her bucks. When she came instead. Mrs Craig. Didn't you ever have to take a week off. Because you were so busy. All week. The questions could go on and on.

Why Mrs Craig. Believed the benefits of faithfulness. Outweighed the other things. That can occupy us. The benefits of faithfulness.

[25:41] Outweighed all of the other considerations. All the so called pleasures. Of going somewhere else. Doing something else. Now faithfulness in church. Is just one dimension. Of course you can be faithful in church.

Morning, night, midweek. And still go to hell. Because it's no. It's no. Reflection. On whether you're saved or not. But.

As a Christian. Oughtn't we to be faithful. Faithfulness. Stewardship. Stewardship of time. Think of time. We need to be faithful to God. In the use of our time. Are you a good steward. In how you use your time.

What if we kept track of. What we do over a period. You know they do that with some jobs. Don't they. They do this kind of reckoning. Of how do you spend your day. And you realise how many. Minutes you wasted through your day.

Even at work. Don't they. You know what they call it. The time and motion study. And. I dread to think how many. How much time I waste doing work emails every day.

[26:37] Just. Get about a hundred emails a day at work. And you just. Time just evaporates. Doesn't it. It's what life can be like. And what if we kept track of what we do with our time.

Over a period of time. And how we use those. Moments of time we could have used better. What would it show. What would we be ashamed of. When we look back and think. Oh where did that day go.

I didn't really. Seem to. Achieve much. Are we spending too much time on. On our business matters. On. On. On recreation. Or simply worrying over this life.

And missing out on what. Might be. What we could do. You know time is one of those precious gifts isn't it. We've only got. It's a finite.

Amount of time. For all of us. It's finite. And so. When we think. How we use that time. So we've got time for work. We've got time for rest. Time for relaxation.

[27:37] Time for service. Time to be a blessing to others. And real joy as a Christian can come. As we employ our time. And use it for his service.

For his glory. So. We can all consider the stewardship of time. How do we. Measure it. How do we. Fill up our calendars. Our diaries. Our schedules.

Our deadlines. Our agendas. Such that. We miss some of the things that we could do. Like reaching out to others. Like those priorities of.

Of time with God. Of time in fellowship. What. Use of our time can we make that will bring God glory. How we can grow in our Christian faith.

Reading a good Christian book. Putting ourselves out for others that need a hand. It's so easy to get too busy. And yet not do the things that count.

[28:35] And friends. I put to you. Each one. Each of us. To consider the stewardship of time. Are we ready to serve our Lord. You know. There's some people.

I know I can ring. At a moment's notice. And they'll be. Ready to serve. Ready to serve. Night or day. And we should tell the world no.

And Jesus yes. When it comes to a choice. And if family or friends drop in. Bring them to church. Bring them along. Let's be ready to serve.

It's not a matter of my will. It's what would you have me to do. That should dictate. How we spend our time. Where we should go. What we should do. Another stewardship is of talents.

Christians need to be faithful to God. In the use of their talents. We know Matthew 25. From 15 to 17. Again. A parable of stewardship. And of a calling to account.

[29:34] And of. A use of resources. Some wasted. Some employed. Matthew 25.

15 through 17. The stewards were called to. Account for their use of their talents. And. Likewise for each of us here. We've all got gifts of God.

We've all been given gifts. And our talents are gifts for God. To be used for his glory and honour. You might have a talent. To. Aspire to a particular vocation.

You know. Social work. Is a great. Kind of occupation. That you can use for the glory of God. Certain occupations.

But there's a whole wide array of them. Isn't there? You know. Even as a. A trades person. Going into people's homes. Or. Going about your work. There's opportunity to witness. To a wide array of people.

[30:35] So many ways. We can use our talents. And callings. For God's glory and honour. So what are we doing. With the gift that God has given to us. You have a gift.

Or gifts. Plural. From God. And sometimes. But these are seen as talents. Even playing a musical instrument. Giving an item in song. And these were not just given for our own benefit. But it's for the benefit of everyone. And so let's allow the spirit of God to use us. Each one. And be a volunteer. Be willing to learn.

You know. I think I learnt to play the guitar in my 30s. You're not too young. To take up and learn something new. Do something different. Use something for the glory of God.

And extend yourself. Go beyond what you can do now. And ask God to give you more. To help you learn more. To be more for God. To use those abilities God has given to you.

[31:31] To edify the church. So are we cultivating our talents? Or are we sitting on them in silence? And we can put our talents on the shelf. And miss out on using them.

Miss out on bringing glory to God. We are servants and stewards of God's gift. What are we doing with them? We've talked about time.

Talents. Treasures. Stewards. Of treasures. As Christians we need to be faithful to God. In the use of our resources. Our money. Our treasures. Now I don't usually talk much about money in this church.

Because it's kind of logical that it follows on. Isn't it? That how we use our substance. In Deuteronomy 8 verse 18.

It says that God gives us the power to get wealth. And he's committed to our charge. Money. Will we use it for purposes our Lord has commanded us to?

[32:29] Now what is money? It's a measure of value. It represents our labour. We put time into making that money. It's a payment for work. It represents a portion of our life.

God expects us to earn our money by honest means. And in 2 Corinthians 9 verse 7 it says. To share our treasure with the work of the Lord. It says. Every man according as he purposed in his heart.

So let him give. Not grudgingly or of necessity. For God loveth the cheerful giver. 2 Corinthians 9 verse 7. We give as we purposed in our heart to give. Not out of a grudging or of a necessity.

So there's a freedom in our giving. Now our Lord told an account of a poor widow woman. Who could have easily not given anything. And she just had one tiny little coin.

The farthing. Which was the tiniest coin of the day. And no one would have cared or even noticed. But she gave that. And she gave it out of love.

[33:34] And the Lord wanted her to experience the blessing of giving. Now the Lord could have said. Lady keep your coins. The temple system will be meaningless in just a few days. When the true Lamb of God gives his life.

But the Lord Jesus also wanted her to experience. The full measure of God's blessings through giving. And so she gave everything. She showed a total trust in God to sustain her.

Now how do we use our money? Do we benefit our soul by maybe buying a good Christian book? Giving to a Christian ministry that we can trust?

How can we use our money wisely? Maybe blessing another brother or sister. There's many needs we know. I know someone felt moved to help. A need for those pastors that wanted a motorbike. You know there's different needs that we can't grasp it here. The needs are boundless aren't they? But we've got a stewardship. Let's use what we have wisely.

[34:32] We've also got a stewardship over the gospel. The master has entrusted his business to us. His business. We're entrusted with the gospel. We thank God for those going out Thursday afternoons.

And Fridays I believe that some go out witnessing publicly. I know there's others here that go witnessing. Praise God for that. We've all got that stewardship of the gospel.

And it may not be necessarily in that confrontational evangelism. It can be in those day by day by day opportunities. Those passing moments when we have an opportunity to share a word.

To spread a word. We've entrusted each one of us with the gospel. The message of salvation. And we've been given orders to preach.

Go preach. Go declare. Evangelise. Give my word my gospel. The gospel is a responsibility for each of us. It's not just a select few that have that opportunity.

[35:34] It's every believer. Go ye. Plural. All. Go all of us. Invite your neighbours. Invite people to study the Bible. Keep tracks handy that you can just pass through those passing moments.

Pass them out. You know there's a bumper sticker that says Jesus is coming. Look busy. Is that our theology? Or do we think Jesus is coming.

I am busy. Busy doing his business. Realising that my very life is a stewardship. My whole everything that I have and am is a gift from God.

And so I want to be busy. Because I want to please him. To be ready to meet him. To hear his well done. They are good and faithful servant.

And readiness for Christ does not mean passively waiting for the event. There's a readiness that is that responsible activity that we have for the kingdom of God.

[36:39] And so as faithful servants and stewards we see those many responsibilities we have. We see the accounting time to come. And we see there is a reward.

A reward. Not that we work for our salvation. You know there's some people that knock on doors and think every door they knock is going to get them closer to heaven. And as if certain works that they perform and certain activities that they do somehow gets them a greater measure of salvation. When they don't even know what salvation is. Our works don't earn us any degree of heaven.

Nothing at all. None of your works get you to heaven.

None of mine. All of his. All of his work. His work. His finished work gets us to heaven. But in the light of that it motivates us to want to live.

To honour. To please. To serve. To be stewards. As faithful servants and stewards we can expect a reward. There was an old missionary couple that worked in Africa for many years.

[37:47] And it was time to retire so they headed back to their homeland. The USA. To New York. Where they were choosing to retire. And they had no pension. They not had any savings there.

They'd given their all over there in the continent of Africa. And they were feeling a bit low. A bit defeated. A bit discouraged. And afraid. What was their next season of life going to be like as retirees?

And so they were coming back. Travelling back from Africa to the USA. On this great big vessel.

And it happened to be that the president of the time. President Teddy Roosevelt.

Was also on this same ship. And he'd been on some big game hunting expedition. And no one paid any attention to them. As the ship approached the dock. And they tied it up.

And put the boarding planks down. And it seemed like no one was even watching. Or even knew that they were there. And they watched the fanfare. And the trumpets. And the music.

[38:46] And the displays. And the streamers. And the banners. And the what. You name it. Was all out there for President Roosevelt. Everybody was looking. Where's the president? Where's the president?

And their eyes were focused on the president's entourage. Passengers were trying to catch a glimpse of the great man. And as the ship moved across the ocean.

The old missionary said to his wife. Something is wrong. Why should we have given our lives in faithful service to God. In Africa for these many years.

And have no one care a thing about us. And here is this man. Coming back from a hunting trip. And everybody makes a big deal about him.

But nobody gives two hoots about us. Dear. Dear. You shouldn't feel that way. The wife said. I can't help it.

[39:42] It doesn't seem right. And when the ship docked there in New York. The band was there. The mayor. The dignitaries. Everybody was talking about it. The papers were talking about it.

But nobody noticed. This old missionary couple. And they slipped off the ship. And found a cheap apartment. On the east side. Hoping. To. See what they could do.

The next day. Living in the big city. And that night. The man's spirit broke. He said to his wife. I can't take this. God is not treating us fairly. And his wife replied.

Why don't you go in the bedroom. And tell that to the Lord. And a short time later. He came out from the bedroom. But now his face was completely different.

His wife asked. Dear. What happened? The Lord settled it with me. He said. I told him how bitter I was. That the president. Should receive this tremendous homecoming.

[40:38] And. Yet no one met us. When we returned home. And when I finished. It seemed as though the Lord. Put his hand on my shoulder. And simply said. But you're not home yet.

Amen. You're not home yet. Now that might seem that way for us. When we see. People get praise. The worldly fame. And razzmatazz. That some. Gain.

And. It seems like. There's not a lot of recognition. Or reward. That we can. Count on. To speak of. But we're not home yet.

Amen. We're not home yet. Brother. Sister. You may not get any reward. You may get no reward. You may just get. You might just get attacked. You might just get hate mail.

Or hate calls. Or. Gossip against you. Or. Venom. Hatred. And be persecuted. He said to expect that.

[41:39] Didn't he? But we're not home yet. People of God. You know. You might be a Christian. And you. And you're having a hard time. Being a witness at work.

You're surrounded by. People who don't know the Lord. And hate God. And hate the gospel. And hate the Bible. And hate. The thought that there is a creator. That they've got to reckon with. And you can expect. To be lambasted. And attacked. And backstabbed. And cursed. And kicked in the guts. Because you're a Christian.

And family and friends might not realise. Or. They may not appreciate your testimony. And what you stand for. And who you stand for. But we're not home yet. We're not home yet.

And one day. We will be home. And we'll hear his voice. And we'll receive his welcome. And we'll know his. Great grace.

[42:37] Even greater then. When he says well done. Good. And faithful servant. You know this. There are rewards for faithfulness. But not necessarily down here.

You might have a hard time. Serving God. You might have. Who knows what happens here. In some countries. And.

But the greatest reward. Is still to come. How great is my faithfulness. Does the Lord see me. As one of the faithful diligent. Servants.

Whom he will be glad to bless. Or do I lack faithfulness. I know that I lack faithfulness. I could be more faithful. How are we.

How are we making our life count. Are we investing our lives. In the kingdom of God. In the great purposes of God. Let me leave you with one.

[43:33] Thought. Further. Leftovers. Leftovers. I had some leftovers last night. I couldn't. I couldn't get through. What was on my plate. And there were leftovers there.

They ended up in the bin. But in some countries. The leftovers go to. Maybe someone else. At least the dog might get some. You know. Leftovers. Think about leftovers.

For a moment. Leftovers. Are such humble things. We would not serve them. To a guest. And yet. We serve them. To our Lord. Who deserves. The very best.

We give him. Leftover time. Stray minutes. Here and there. Leftover cash. We give to him. Such few coins. As we can spare. We give our youth.

To the world. To hatred. Lust. And strife. Then in declining years. We give him the remnant. Of our life. Leftovers. Let's not make that mistake.

[44:29] Let's use the time we have now. Don't give God leftovers. Give him your all. Give him your best. God wants servants. And stewards. Who are faithful.

Trustworthy. Reliable. Dependable. Are we faithful? Or do we just give him. Just leftovers. His Lord said unto him.

Well done. Good. And faithful servant. Thou hast been faithful over a few things. I will make thee ruler over many things. Enter thou. Into the joy.

Of thy Lord. Let us pray. Lord God. We thank you that we can call you Lord. Lord. And when we call you Lord. We're saying that we are your servants.

When we call you Lord. We're saying we're at your service. We're here to serve. When we call you Lord. We're saying you are our master. And we are at your service.

[45:27] Lord help us to have that heart. To be faithful servants. To be faithful stewards. Of our time. Our talents. Our treasure. Of our very lives. Of the gifts and talents and callings that you've given us.

Of our moments. Of the gospel. Lord help us to have that heart. That mind. That seeks after the kingdom of God. And his righteousness. Lord help us to have that heart.

Pray for every believer here today. Lord that we'd all be challenged to a greater walk. A deeper walk. A stronger faith. Lord not out of condemnation. But out of joy. Because it's a joy to serve. And it's a blessing to know. The reward. Though not so evident. Perhaps now. Will be one to come. And it will be great. And awesome.

To see your face. Lord. And to hear your well done. In Jesus name. Amen.