

Occupy Till I Come

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[0 : 00] pick up in Luke chapter number 19 here in this story as you turn back in your Bible to it. I'll assure somebody sent a video to me maybe a year or so ago, and maybe some of you could relate in the communication between you and your wife.

In the video, I think maybe it was Jeff Foxworthy or somebody like that that was on the phone, and it says, he gets off the phone and he looks at his wife and he says, Carl has been in a wreck, but he's going to be okay.

And his wife says, what? Carl's been in a wreck, he's going to be okay. Well, what was he driving? I don't know. It just said, Carl's been in a wreck and he's going to be okay. Well, which hospital did they take him to? I don't know.

They just said, Carl's been in a wreck and he's going to be okay. He wasn't driving his new pickup, was he? No, we don't know. All I know is that Carl's been in a wreck and he's going to be okay.

Maybe it's not the wife in that story. Sometimes it's the man, but they're always asking like, you feel like Stephanie does this. I'm just going to tell him, dear. All right. She always feels like I have more information than I'm sharing. All right.

[1 : 00] I'll say, all I've heard is they've been in a wreck, but they're going to be okay. Should we take them food? Where are they going to be at it? I don't know, dear. That's all I've heard. How many of you would say that your wife's like that?

Would you raise your hand? Would you break? All right. Brave men in here today. Good for you. Okay. Any wives, maybe the other way. Sometimes the men have all the questions. I tell you that because sometimes we do that to the stories that Jesus tells.

He says, this is what I'm telling you. I'm telling you a story because the disciples believe that when we're coming to this place that the kingdom is going to appear earthly. And so don't be asking questions that I'm not answering to you in this story.

And sometimes we ask questions of stories that weren't meant to be answered. So Jesus at the very onset of this tells us, because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.

That is the purpose of the story that he is telling. And just a side note here. Jesus shares a story in such a way that helps them understand. He leaves heaven and he comes to earth.

[2 : 01] And he speaks to us. He's seen as the carpenter's son. He walks among us. But he keeps stooping lower and lower to teach the truth and to bring it to people in a way in which they can understand.

And may God forgive me and others who would ever take the truth of God's word and try to fly so high with it to impress other people when the example of our Savior is taking it and laying it down so that people can understand it.

Would you pray for me? That's what I want to do with my life. I want to speak the gospel in a way that is understood by all people. And one of the things that some of you would say amen to would be, well, slowing down is a good way to start, Trant.

All right? And so I try to remember that. So Jesus' parables were always designed to capture people into the realm of what they understood, what was familiar, and move them to what is unfamiliar. And the stories are self-contained, meaning here this story is only found here in the book of Luke.

And so you don't mix parts of this with the story from Matthew 25. You just let it, it's self-contained, all right? What we need to know about the talents or what's giving is found here in this story.

[3 : 0 6] So a story from everyday life, from customs, from traditions, from farming, and from history Jesus uses. That's what we have here in this story. We know that there's a historical incident that would be familiar to the people in Jericho.

See, Rome rules over this part of the world. And ruling over Rome was a man named Caesar, who was ultimately ruling over the Roman Empire. But he would allow, pragmatically, he would allow in different regions for there to be a subordinate king, a person to be called king, but they were ultimately answering to him.

And so in Israel, we have a ruling class of people that are called the family of the Herods. And so the first one here, the Herods, we have no footage of the Herods, all right? No matter what they're playing in the back.

The Herods here were a family, and Herod the Great, which he gave himself that name, how arrogant of him, right? Herod the Great, he had negotiated with Mark Anthony that he would grant Rome, he would have Rome.

And when he dies in 4 BC, he's going to leave it to his three sons. And so as the kingdom was being divided, Archelaus, one of his sons, he's leaving him in the area that would include Jericho.

[4 : 2 1] And so these people would have known this man. He lived in that area where Jesus and them are walking. And he was going to Rome, and he would go to Rome, and he would ask for permission to write, to rule over this area.

But history would tell us that that didn't happen, or that when he went there, there was a group of people that were lobbying against him. Because he, instead of trying to make everybody like him by giving things out, he kills 3,000 Jews.

And so he's ruling by power. He's going to like, you're going to love me. I'm so powerful. And obviously that isn't how they responded. And so 3,000 people were killed.

And so when he goes to ask for to be the subordinate king over this area, there's a group of people lobbying against him, and they don't want him to be king. And so Caesar doesn't give him a rule over that, and he is given a different title for it.

So he's a person who leaves to come back. And so he's telling the story that would seem familiar with him. But if none of that's true historically, and if they didn't know any of that that was being said, and if you didn't know any of those things, as I didn't know much of that as before I was studying this, those type of things aren't necessary because inside of the story you understand that there's a nobleman who's going to go, and then when he comes back he will be the king over the area.

[5 : 4 1] And we're watching the three responses of people to the way that they're responding to this. You have the faithful, which should be who we should be following in here today, is that while the nobleman is gone, they're taking the talents that they've been given, or they're given the pounds that they've been given, and they've been investing them so that they have a good return.

You have the fake, which took it but did nothing with it, and then you would have the foolish, who would say, we do not want this man to rule over us. So we have these lessons by these disciples on a journey into the unknown, which is just wonderful for us as we start off the new year.

Lessons on a journey into the unknown. So Jesus is teaching them one thing. He's helping them have an expectation about the nature of discipleship. Verse 11, They heard these things, and he speak a parable unto them because they thought the kingdom of God would immediately appear.

And he's going to teach them about preparing them for endurance. When it says immediately appear, this comes up twice in the New Testament, this word that we get.

It's also in the book of Acts. Told that it's a nautical term. It's as if it's the come in the sight, in the view, in the horizon. So when they are walking the 17 miles, and they believe that as they're going to come, and they're going to go past the Mount of Olives, and they're going to get to a place where they see Jerusalem, they are believing that the kingdom is just right there.

[7 : 05] It is going to immediately appear in front of them. And we shouldn't be too hasty on our judgment. How did they come to this conclusion? Old Testament prophecy prophecy points to a coming kingdom that we will know about.

The miracles that Jesus had been performing in front of them. Or even statements like we saw in Luke 17 where he says that the kingdom of God is within you. It's right here. The kingdom of God has come.

And so overlooking the prophecies that we'd have that would foreshadow, overlooking the purpose of the sacrificial system, they are ready now for the kingdom to be all that is going to be, a full culmination of all of it.

So he's preparing them for endurance. Secondly, he's also preparing them for rejection. It says when the citizens hated him and they sent a message saying, we will not have this man to reign over us.

They're going to get into town and for briefly they're going to hear Hosanna and they're going to say, well maybe the kingdom is here and everything's good. But that same crowd very quickly are going to say, crucify him, crucify him.

[8 : 08] And still today there are people that are telling Christians that we are supposed to be leading a victory parade. Follow Jesus and you'll be healthy. Follow Jesus and you'll be rich. Follow Jesus and you won't have any problems.

And if you do this or if you do that and you don't receive it, it's simply because you don't have enough faith. It isn't because that God has called us to take up a cross and to follow after him.

It's a misunderstanding of discipleship that Jesus is setting in order. But look at the testimony of those that we have that walk this path before us. Those that have followed after Jesus. How does the Apostle Paul speak about his life?

It says Christ is rejected. If they rejected him, if they hate him, they're also going to hate all of those that follow him. So that should be an expectation of endurance and rejection. But here's Paul explaining his life at the end of it.

He says, in 2 Timothy 4, 7, he says, I have fought a good fight. I have finished my course. I have kept the faith. He said, I fought a good fight. You know, I was speaking to somebody recently about cruise lines and I said, they're basically like hotels on the water.

[9 : 10] They vary. I mean, you got nice hotels and you have different types of hotels, but they vary in length of it. If you were on a cruise ship and people were shooting at you and bombs were coming at you and you'd say, this doesn't seem like a carnival cruise line.

Where am I at? And you looked there and it says, USS something or another. I'm not on a cruise ship. I'm on a battleship. All right? Well, that would be surprising to you. As disciples of Christ, you ought to be realizing we did not board a cruise ship, but we have boarded a battleship unto the Lord.

So church, I have no open word of prophecy. I have the word of God that is here in front of you. And I can't tell you that this is going to be your year, but I can tell you this, it's going to be a worthy fight and that he is going to be with us and that he's going to lead us and he is going to guide us.

And so he's preparing them, teaching them about discipleship. And then it says, occupy till I come. He told them the 10 servants, delivered them 10 pounds and said unto them, occupy until I come.

When you hear those words occupy, you may think of occupy Wall Street or occupy Portland in the last so many years. And it's actually longer than I thought. I thought it was just a couple of years ago, but it's farther back than that.

[10 : 19] And that was the occupy. That was a group of people that were protesting. That was anarchy against an economic inequality worldwide. At least that's what it was their stated purpose is that.

Occupy means the opposite. It doesn't mean to destroy, but it means to build up. It means to engage, be in the work that's happening here. Don't be tearing down, but doing what God has given you to do.

Engage in business till I come. We don't use the word business much like that. The word business often has a negative connotation about it, but we have other portions of scripture where it's where Jesus would use the word business, right?

In an honorable fashion. There is as a young man, and they come to the temple, and his parents say, where have you been? And he says, did you not know that I would be about my father's business?

And so it's very appropriate for us to say that we're going to be engaged in the business of the Lord, that all of us are involved in a family business together. We're all involved in the father's business in this world.

[11 : 18] And so the way that it's put here is it says, how much every man had gained by trading. And so that's what they had done with the pounds that they had been given. They had gained by investing it and by working in it, and they took what they had, and they had a good reward.

And so the big picture is very clear. Jesus is speaking of the servants being given a task where they were engaged in business until the master comes. And the picture rewarding them for doing their business is all designed to point to the one thing, and that is their devotion to their king.

And let's not be like the wife in the story that I told at the beginning where we're asking details and focusing on secondary matters. What we're supposed to be seeing here is that the way that the people lived out their lives was a direct reflection of their understanding of who the king is.

And so those that were faithful were people that recognized that he is the king. So Luke 19, 16. Then came first saying, Lord, thy pound has gained ten pounds.

Perhaps stewardship reflects understanding of authority. Thy pound has gained ten pounds. How many of you can say that's your testimony from 2022? Don't raise your hand.

[12 : 29] How many of you gained ten pounds in 2022? And you're saying, Now, Lord, what am I going to do with this? All right? Hopefully your pound hasn't gained ten pounds, each pound you've had. But ten pounds has been given to them, and they said, What am I going to do that?

We're told that this is approximately three months' wages of a regular-day laborer. So it's a sizable amount, three months of what would be given there.

And so the difference in the servants, we don't find one of them had an uncle who knew Warren Buffett, so they made great investments. We don't find that one of them said, I'm going to short the stocks on the sale of animal sacrifices because I hear that's coming to an end.

All right? We don't have any of those things happening. The difference that we have is that some had respect for the one that was returning, and others did not. And because those that had respect lived their lives differently than those that said, I will not have this man rule over us.

So three responses. First of all, and every one of you today will leave, and you'll be in one of these three categories. The fourth one is not an option. You're going to be in one of these three categories.

[13 : 35] The faithful. And he said, Likewise to him, but thou also over five cities. Likewise to them. Both the servants, those that got a five and ten return on their investment, will hear, Well, thou good servant, because thou hast been faithful in very little.

So likewise, the one that had five heard what the one that said had ten, that they had been faithful in those little things. But the whole point of the image is not a message about financial stewardship.

It's a message about the stewardship of your entire life. That includes finances as a reflection of our time, but your entire life, what it is that you're doing with it.

So they realized that it was the king's money that they were investing. I love this. I never saw this till recently. It says, Verse 16, Then came the first saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds.

He's speaking with such humility. He's saying the thing that you gave me and the environment that you gave it into me, it has grown, and it has multiplied. He didn't say, I did this.

[14 : 40] My wisdom, my cleverness, my hard work, all that I did, it is as, No, Lord, the thing that you gave me and the place that you gave it to me, it has grown, it has multiplied.

It shows the humility, the way that he viewed it. He was a person that saw it. He says, Thy pound, he realized that it was never his, that it remained to the Lord, and that it has grown.

And then secondly here, so the faithful, it's the fake. Verse 20, And another came. The word another points out it's of a different type, all right, as a different category of people.

Another came, not like the five and the ten person. Another one came saying, Lord, behold, here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin. And so this, a different variety of person, a napkin.

You don't throw \$18,000 in your pocket, all right? I'm just going to take an estimate here, a little bit of the wages that are being given here. But nobody comes up to you and says, Hey, I'd like you to invest this to me, and you just put it into a napkin and stick it into your pocket.

[15 : 43] The detail that we're given that they put it into a pocket is not a small detail. It's to show the respect that they gave towards it. They should have buried it, right? Or they should have put it in the bank system, as Jesus said, so that it would have been protected and drawn interest.

But they just took it and they put it there in their pocket as showing a careless attitude towards what had been given to them. Here's a person driven not by love, but by fear.

And then we know that because he says in verse number 21, the reason that I did what I did is because I feared thee because thou art an austere man.

His view of the nobleman changed the way that he handled what was given to him. Here's a person that is driven by fear for I feared thee. He accuses him of a couple things.

He says, you take up things that you don't lay down. You reap things that you do not sow. That's what this man is saying towards him, towards the future king.

[16 : 45] This truly is not a believer. Some would say they're not sure if this guy is a believer or not and I'm going to say that I'm quite sure. No true believer calls the Lord a liar, a thief, or austere.

That is not who our Lord is. He has never reaped what he hasn't sowed. He has never taken what didn't belong to him. He can't take what doesn't belong to him. And austere is not the word that would be given to him.

That's proud, that's arrogant, that's foolish-minded, that is not him. And so the king questions the legitimacy of this lame excuse that is different.

If you say that this is true, then why didn't you put it in the bank? If what you're saying is the reason, why didn't you just simply put it in the bank and get me 3% or whatever's going at the time on the interest of them?

And so, and so I've shared with you before how I once told an older gentleman told me, I said, why don't you come to church?

[17 : 43] You say that you read the Bible all the time and I'll say, why don't you come to church? And he says, I don't come because I don't have any peanut butter? And we said, what do you mean you don't have any peanut butter? And he said, well, I thought one excuse was just as good as another and so I'm not coming to church because I don't have any peanut butter, alright?

And that's kind of comical, right, that a person would say that and it is true if you're going to make excuses for not serving the Lord, not attending church, not reading your Bible, might as well say I don't do it because I don't have any peanut butter because that excuse is just as good as another one.

And so this man said, I didn't do it for these reasons and as funny as it is to me that this man would say that, there is nothing that is funny about apathy towards the things of the Lord. There's nothing that is funny about despising the birthright that you've been giving in the Lord.

And so we see here a person that has a carelessness about the things of God, a carelessness about what's been given to them. And that's a fake person, that's a person that said, yeah, he comes through town, I'll take that ten pounds and we'll do something with it and then just afterwards when it's out of sight, when the service is over, when there's nobody around, when it's just a personal decision, a daily decision, this person says, I have no interest in the nobleman, I have no interest in that at all.

And then lastly, the foolish. But those mine enemies which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither and slay them before me.

[19 : 06] Reject the nobleman and he is still the Lord. Many think that if you reject Christ, then Christ has nothing to do with them. Even if you reject Christ, he has everything to do with you.

You don't want him to reign over you, he reigns still. Those who ignore God's word are those who will not let this man rule over him. You can recognize his Lord. We often use wording like make him the Lord of your life and that's an understanding from the perspective we're speaking but the truth is he is the Lord.

He always will be the Lord. You can recognize that he's Lord and we can invite you to kneel with us today to confess with your tongue and you can do that today with us or you can do it at the end of time with us but one day will come where everybody will recognize that he is Lord and so these people said we don't want him to be Lord, we don't want him to be king, he's not our king, right?

As they would say, well he's still the king to them and so it was foolish of them and then lastly here, this disproportionate generosity of the king. If you'll notice that the reward is not going to come from the world, their reward is going to come from the king.

They didn't just get what they had worked in, it wasn't you invested 10 pounds and now you have 15 pounds and so take from that, the reward that is coming is coming with the king.

[20 : 24] I say disproportionate, the whole point is that the disproportionate generosity of the Lord. If you don't know what 10 pounds is, you definitely understand that a city is greater than 10 pounds, right?

Whatever the exchange rate is, you realize that is much bigger than what I have ever done. David Brainerd, who's a missionary to Native Americans and he had this prayer and he said, Lord, let me make a difference for you that is utterly disproportionate to who I am and his life most certainly did.

If you read his biography and if you read about all the influence of the people that had come to Christ from him, Jonathan Edwards studying his life writing and just the continued effect on American history because of David Brainerd's disproportionate God, what God did with him, that's all that God can do with us.

He can only make a difference in our lives that's disproportionate to who we are. It's proportionate to who he is, but it's not proportionate to who we are. I can make no difference in this world and I definitely couldn't make an eternal difference, which is what we desire to make.

And so when David Brainerd says, Lord, make a difference in my life that's utterly disproportionate to who I am, the Lord could answer and say, of course, because that's the only type of difference I can make in this world is one that is disproportionate to you.

[21 : 46] And so more opportunities are provided. Verse 24, and he said unto them that stood by, which is there's seven other servants that we don't get to hear about that are there because there's ten all together. And so the seven that are there take from him the pound and give it to him that hath ten pounds.

And they complain. They say, this isn't good math. Verse 25, they said, Lord, he already has ten pounds. Why are you going to give that to them? And what are they thinking? They're thinking that the Lord is over the top gracious to them.

Now much you've already been given, you're going to get more. And that's how grace operates. It never stops. It never ceases. It's lavish. It's undying. It's unending. It is undiminished.

And so there's a quick review here. They're saying, this man didn't deserve the first investment he was given. And then he didn't deserve such a good environment in which to invest it that it brought a return. And then the man didn't deserve to get ten cities.

And now on top of that, you're going to say, hey, here's ten more pounds that you can invest. It's just grace upon grace that is being given to the servants.

[22 : 50] And so the opportunity is lost by the servant, but it was not lost by the king. That was the test. That was the devotion this morning in our offering devotion that David gave is that you have an opportunity in which that God would give you in a manner in which you can do it.

And there's so many things that are going to be done, but the question is, will you get to be involved a minute? Verse 24, And he said to them that stood by, take from him the pound and give it to him that hath ten pounds.

So some of you in here are very real and clear way, know the joy and the opportunity afforded to you of what happens when somebody else forfeits it.

What was showed was a proper respect by others is now being raised in your own home. What one person did not appreciate as an opportunity, you now get the raise in your home.

The opportunities we know we didn't deserve that were handed to us simply because we remained faithful and we showed up. That is the testimony of our softball team, all right? We just showed up and we won two games because the other teams didn't show up twice, all right?

[23 : 59] And so we remained faithful. And some of you in here know of the incredible opportunities that we have. I have never been the most talented person in the room. I've never been the smartest person in the room.

But there have been opportunities that maybe some of you God had designed for you, but you didn't take it. And so a person like me got the pick of that opportunity and has the honor and joy of serving and doing it.

Don't leave anything on the table that God has for you. A devotion. So what is taken from this opportunity, privilege, influence, a chance to make a difference in this world and the world to come?

We received the devotion this week from a friend and yes, anything that you share with me is fair game for sermon material. Remember that, all right? And just ask my kids. All right. And so this is a tough passage.

All Hebrews is a tough passage for me, but Hebrews 9.1 says, Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service and a worldless sanctuary. That's what my good friend said.

[24 : 59] The promises of God merge the divine into the human world. Only God can do that. The things we do to serve God are the place we get to share in the world of the Most High God.

Though they were ordinances, commandments, or laws, they were also divine fellowship made possible by God's grace. This was not just the mode of the first covenant with Israel, but in all the places of service and worship.

These earthly things were made holy by the presence of God. Let the children of God always be reminded that though the task may resemble some worldly chore, not unlike what they may do for their employment, it is divine service.

That's why it was funny today when David spoke about we need casseroles, right? Because a casseroles seems like one of those things in the world that just seems like a worldly chore, but it can be divine when it's a representation of God's love to somebody else.

All right? And that's wonderful that we get to be part of something that is otherworldly. We get to be part of something that is supernatural and rewarded in the world to come. Teaching the concern during the millennial reign of Christ.

[26 : 14] 1 Corinthians 6.3, Know you not that we shall judge the angels how much more things pertain to this life. In the future, someday when Jesus comes, there will be a reward for the time of faithfulness.

Much can be said about the Bema judgment, about when the gold and silver and precious stone that is there after all the selfish, ambitious things that are taken away from us. And I often, and I don't, this isn't a correct way to think, but I often don't think about the reward of faithfulness.

Because in my opinion, I'll take the cheap seats in heaven, alright? It doesn't matter to me where you place me. I don't have to have the rewards and all that. I'll just take, I'll just be glad to be there.

But what we're talking about here is we're talking about a stewardship in which God has given you so that you can say that you have invested all that He has given you well.

It's not appropriate for a servant just to think, I'll just be happy when the king comes back. It doesn't really matter if I've done anything with what He's given me. That is not a proper honor and respect for that nobleman that will come back and be king.

[27 : 17] And so we have such a great theme for us as a passage today as we start off a new year. And as Kristen comes to the piano here in a second, I'm going to have you have an opportunity to respond to God's word.

But I want us to look at the opportunities and consider the respect that the work should be shown as we wait for the return of the most noble of all noblemen.

We're headed into a portion in which we often say that the pastor is giving an invitation. But if I have faithfully fulfilled my assignment today to teach God's word, then today it is God that is extending an invitation to you.

That is the word of God in which you have to respond to. And so who is He extending an invitation to? He's extending an invitation to all of us. To the foolish in here today, you're given an opportunity to recognize that Jesus is Lord.

And that you can say I don't want to be underneath this man. I don't want him to rule in the rain over me. I can reject His word today. But He's still the Lord of the universe. And you will not delay His return by a day or deny His place upon a throne because you resist.

[28 : 29] One day every knee will bow and every tongue will confess and you will be part of that. And we invite you to join us in doing that today. Recognize He is Lord. So to the foolish there's an invitation from God today.

That's the difference of simply teaching something and preaching is that I am not inviting you into my life. I'm inviting you into the kingdom of God from His word. Here is the invitation to you and to the faking here.

Those that are sitting there with truth in your hands, you know the opportunity that is in front of you. You desire to be associated with the Lord and His people. But other than a few fleeting moments here and there in a church service, you have a fairly careless attitude toward the things of God.

I call on you to wake up. Realize that your apathy towards the things of God is apathy towards God Himself. That your reflection of the work of the Lord, your reflection towards wanting to be in the word, your reflection towards wanting to live out the principles that are given God's word is not a reflection of your view of this church.

It's not a reflection of your view of your Christianity. It's a reflection of your apathy towards the God of heaven. And He's going to return someday. And He is going to know those that have been faithful and He's also going to know those that are foolish but He's also going to know those that were fake and that took the talents and pretended the pounds and pretended that they were part of this group but in your heart you weren't.

[29 : 51] And my heart most breaks for you the day that are in that. And then to the faithful, let us not look at the word of God and the work of the Lord as has been given to us begrudgingly.

Moms and dads in here, that's not a sink full of dishes. That's a monument to you having been able to feed your family all week. It's not another volunteer role to fill.

It's an invitation to invest our lives as we wait for the King's return. The people God brings into your lives are not problems for you but they're opportunities to serve the nobleman who is going to return very soon and be the King.

Right now counts forever so you have to live right now in light of forever. Would you pray with me and every one of you in whatever category you're in today respond to God's Word.

Heavenly Father we thank you for the clarity in which you spoke to those disciples Lord. We often, Lord, I often miss what you are saying but the day you have made clear to us that you will return and that our respect towards you should be demonstrated in the life that we are now living.

[31 : 05] And Father I ask that you be, whether it be honesty among the people with the conviction of the Holy Spirit allow us Lord to respond to you in an honest manner. With every head bowed and every eye closed would you mind standing with me?

I want to put you in a position where you might be able to respond to the faithful or to the foolish or to the fake. The altar is open for you today to pray here at the altar but as you're there with your heads bowed and your eyes closed can I just speak to you in each category?

If you're in here today and you're part of that foolish today is the day of salvation for you. Tomorrow is not promised. We do not know when the king will return but today you could recognize that he is Lord and you could put your faith and trust in him.

And not just so that I have the opportunity to pray for you so that the God of heaven you would acknowledge before him that you have not recognized him as Lord. Would you raise your hand towards heaven today letting the Lord know that you're going to become honest to him in your relationship?

The foolish or to the fake would you respond in that manner? By our testimony or a group of people who came here the day to celebrate Jesus and we want to be part of that faithful would you take what God has given you today not begrudgingly?

[32 : 20] Would you recognize that it belongs to him and that the way that you handle it and the way that you invest it will one day will bring honor and glory to that king? Heavenly Father I thank you for this opportunity to be in your word with your people and Father I thank you that you would extend the invitation to all of us that you would give us an opportunity today Lord this first day of the year Lord I'm praying for those right now that will make decisions that may be after this service Lord that they will make a commitment to you that they're going to read through your word Lord I pray for those in here that serve in different ministries that they're just taking a look at the work that you have given them to do and they're not doing it begrudgingly Father you have searched my heart and found so many areas Lord in which I have not lived as if I was waiting for your return Father I pray that you would do a sanctifying work Lord give us great joy to get to serve you as we wait Father may it be true of us as a church that we will occupy until you come