

What Has God Got Out of Your Life?

Luke 19:11-27

Has God made a profit on your life? What God put into you, has He and will He, get more out, or the same? All of us live like this: You put something in, you want to get something out. You put in hour of practice on the piano, you want to get out, better piano playing. You put in hour of cooking, you get out a good meal. Put in study time, get out good results. Put in an hour behind the mirror, what do you get out? You be the judge.

We put in, expecting to get something out. If someone spent a million rand on you, you can predict they want to receive a return on that. They thought it would be worth it and spent it on you. Do you know God is the same? He puts in, to get something out. He put into your life to get something out of your life. He invested a lot in you, and He has the right to expect a return on His investment. In today's parable we learn that. God puts in a lot into our lives, and one day, He will cash it in. One day, He will call you to the table and say, "what have you got to show me?" I wonder what you and I would say? If God had to call you home today, and ask you that question, what would you say?

In the Scripture, we find three categories of people, three types of people who respond to God differently. Two of them are bad, one is good. All of us fall into one of these categories. As we go through them, you choose and honestly place yourself in the correct category. That way, you'll be able to answer the question, "Will God receive any profit from my life?"

The Lost

This first category is quite simple. They reject the man's lordship over them entirely. They send a delegation after him to say, 'You won't rule us'. This represents the unsaved, the lost, the unbeliever. The unbeliever says to God, "I don't want you as my Lord. I will rule my own life. I will live life my way." Notice the Lord does not deal with them as He does with His servants. He deals with them in v 27, terrible judgement. Believers will be judged for what they have done for God. Unbelievers are judged for their sin, for rebelling against God. The first category of people is the worst to be in. It's to reject Jesus Christ and say, "I will live life my own way". God has a judgement awaiting people who say, "I don't want your laws in my life". God will judge. He will judge such people at the Great White Throne. He will show you your life, until it is completely obvious that you are a rebel, a sinner, and that you deserve His justice, His sentence of separation from Him in hell. God offers salvation to the world, but it is on His terms, not on ours. He offers forgiveness, and it is only in the person of Jesus Christ.

Now I want you to know that if your heart resembles what these people said "I don't want Him as my lord", then you are in danger. Many people sitting in our churches today, say, "Yes, I accepted Jesus", but their life says "I don't want Him to rule my life". There's a problem. Listen, if you were told that God wants you to go to heaven, and just raise your hand and it doesn't matter about repenting and coming under Him, someone lied to you. God is not standing around with a million tickets to heaven, saying 'Do you want one? They're free, you know!' He is standing there as the Lord,

the Sovereign God, 'who says, "Come unto me! Repent, turn from your wicked ways, come to me through Jesus Christ, and I will forgive. Take my yolk upon you, i.e come under my authority, my lordship." God is offering you a relationship with Himself, not a change of location when you die. He is not selling eternal real estate. He is interested in reconciliation. And too many people show that they never truly got saved, because their life has the fruit of rebellion. 'But I accepted Jesus way back on etc etc..' If your life says, "I don't want Him to rule my life' then you didn't accept Him. You accepted what you thought was a free ticket to heaven, but He was never offering that. He was offering Himself, all of Himself, Saviour and Lord.

He was offering a new life, a life of slavery to Himself, He saves you from hell, gives you heaven, but at the same time a new life, new purpose, new direction, new reason for living. One of the biggest problems in the church today is the weak Gospel that is being taught.

People take in this weak gospel, think they are saved, but never are. Like vaccination, a weak germ nullifies the real disease.

Because they are not truly saved, they never really bring forth fruit for God, and how can they? You can't make a goat behave like a sheep. We're expecting them to act like servants, but they're still rebels. A rebel is the opposite of a slave! Too many pastors are trying to train goats to behave like sheep, instead of just saying to them 'you don't seem like you're saved. Are you?'

I believe that once you're saved, you can never lose your salvation, but you have to be genuinely saved in the first place! "Oh, well, we mustn't question our salvation", says one. The Bible doesn't teach that. It teaches the opposite. It says in 2 Cor 13:5, 'Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith. Test, see, look, am I saved. The Word says this is what a believer is, am I like that? Matt 7:21-22 speaks of how shocked some are going to be to hear that they were never saved.

Go through the book of First John and examine yourself. There John tells you what eternal life in a believer looks like. Loving God, obeying His commands, having fellowship with Him, hating the world, loving your brother, imitating Jesus, believing the truth and others. If you find you fail John's test of a true believer, forget about the decision you think you once made, get saved now! 'But what will people think?', you may ask. Who cares! This is your soul we're talking about.

If you are rejecting God's lordship over your life, you cannot be saved, for a believer submits to God. Not always, not necessarily completely or totally, but a true believer does not outrightly reject God's authority. Please, make sure of this one. Don't put it off. If God is pressing on your heart to make sure, you do that. Today is the day of salvation, don't harden.

The Labourer

The next category of person is the kind we should seek to be. This person is not like the last, who refused to come under the Master's lordship. They are said to be his servants v 13. (slaves). True believers today are like this. We have come under His lordship, His authority. True believers are those who one day saw that they were rebels against God, and instead of saying 'We will not have Him to reign over us' said, "I am

a rebel. I need forgiveness. Please forgive through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Make me new, a servant of yours”.

They have been called, equipped and commanded, “Occupy”. Keep busy, trade. Like us today, God calls us, He then equips us with all that we will need for this life, and commands us, do my work. Serve me, keep busy. Like in the parable, there will come a day, when Jesus will call us to evaluate what we did with what He gave us.

Unlike the final category, these slaves do something good, they return more money to their master. The master invested money into them, when he returned, they had more to show for it. They had increased what they had been given. They had multiplied for their master.

Now in the same way, a believer like this is the one who multiplies for God’s glory everything he has been given. One day when he/she stands before God, God will look at what this person returned to the kingdom of God and will say, “Well done, you good and faithful servant”. They will be rewarded eternally, with great authority and responsibility, because they were good and wise believers here on earth. They multiply for God’s glory, all that He puts into them.” What is their secret? How can we be like them?

Faithful servants of God see everything they have as being from Him. What is a slave? Slaves have no rights, no will, no life of their own. Slaves didn’t own anything. So when the master gave them all ten pounds, he wasn’t giving them pocket money, or paying a salary; he was entrusting them with his money. Now that is true of us; we have nothing of our own, we are not our own. We are bought with a price. You don’t ‘give it to God’, you give it back to God, it was wrong to take it in the first place. We are never given anything. We are entrusted with God’s things, to manage, to use, to multiply for God’s glory.

Giving God a return means saying, God loaned me today. He did so because He wants a return on investment. Otherwise He would have taken me home yesterday. What I do with my time, talents, my abilities, my body must all be done with the thought that it belongs to God.

We think we are doing Him a favour when we give Him time, money, service, Romans 12:1, giving Him everything is our reasonable service, it’s logical, rational, it’s the least we can do. Not how much of my time I give to God, how much of His time I keep for myself. Lord I’m giving you 1 hour today, but if you need the other 23, they’re yours already.

To whom much has been given much will be required. Do you have your health, you have much. Do you have enough to eat? You have much. Can you read and write? You have much. Do you have a job? You have much? Do you have some education? You have much. How is God’s investment in you repaying Him?

Not the amount, it’s returning an amount in keeping with what God has given you. If the last fellow had brought back only one, he still would have been faithful. It’s not about quantity. Parallel parable in Matthew, He gives more to some, less to others. God will not demand from you what you weren’t given. God knows if He’s given you less, He expects from you a return in keeping with what He has put into you. Nothing more, nothing less.

Being a labourer lies in understanding you own nothing, you’re not living for yourself

anyway, you belong to Him completely, so you do everything for His glory. You're not being super-spiritual when you say that; you're being a realist. Because it's true. The one who thinks he belongs to himself, and he "lends things to God" is out of touch with reality. Romans 14: "For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's."

The Lazy

The final category of person is also a true believer. He is a servant of the master, but he never returns anything for God's glory. God puts much into him, but it never comes back. It just sits there, gathering dust. God invests, but the person sits on his talent, he hides it, buries it, and returns it to the master. This kind of person thinks that to return to God what He gave you undamaged will be good enough. Thought that 'not damaging it' was good stewardship. 'Saved the money' or 'I never lost my voice'. 'Never scratched the car'. What will God be more impressed with, a car without a scratch, or a scratched-up car that was used to bring kids to Sunday School, where they got saved?

Never multiplied what he had for his master. The master disagreed. He called him 'wicked'. To do nothing for God, to hide what he has given you, to bury your gifts and abilities is wicked in God's eyes. It's not yours, it's His, who are you to keep it to yourself? He blessed you to be a blessing! To hoard the blessing is evil, selfish and lazy. Christians like this will stand before Jesus ashamed. They will be saved, but 'as by fire'. No rewards, nothing to crown Jesus with. God will not praise them at the Judgement seat of Christ, He will more than likely rebuke them. They will confess their sin there, so that every man can have praise of God. Why do some believers end up like this? The answer is in v25.

He had a problem with his view of the master. He had a relationship problem. Notice, he wasn't unsaved. He didn't reject the lordship of the man, but he had a poor relationship with him, and it affected his work. It's not that he couldn't work, it's that his poor view of the master discouraged him from working. Notice that the other two didn't say anything about how unfair he was. They seemed to have a good relationship with Him. Now it's the same with us. No reluctant servant ever produced excellence. No servant who didn't really love his master was able to really multiply his master's money. Your view of God will affect your work for Him.

You can predict the spiritual future of a believer if you see what they think of God.

He thought the master was -'Austere'= strict, rigid, harsh, Wants the impossible. Now that sounds like a lot of Christians today, "God expects too much from us, this life is too hard." But 1 John 5:3 says "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous." God will never ask you to do anything without giving you all the power and resources you need to accomplish the task. He never asks you to serve Him with your own things. All that you'll ever need to obey God, He supplies you with. So this excuse was poor. As the Lord said to Him, since you think I'm too harsh, why didn't you take it to someone else who could have added money to it."

The thing is, because we don't get into His Word and learn of Him, we think the wrong

thoughts about Him. "O taste and see that the Lord is good." You need to get into the Word to see Him for who He is.

"Where your heart is, there your treasure will be also". In other words- whatever you value the most in your life is where you will be passionately labouring, working, thinking, studying, spending time, money. For some, it's a hobby. Others, a sport, interest, or even a human relationship. You're passionate about something. That thing is the thing where your heart is, and it's where your treasure is, it's the thing that is prospering in your life. The key is, are you passionate about God? If not, taste and see. Relationships take time. Getting to know God is not a 'drive thru' experience. It's not instant Christianity. You need to spend as much time with Him as you would with any human that you wanted to really get to know and love.

Because He didn't love the master, he became selfish. Once he was selfish, he was afraid of losing the pound.

Problem with risk, saw it as his (maybe) and never worked for God. Afraid of loss. Once you lose your love for God, you don't trust Him anymore, you begin to see everything in your life as your own, and your goal in life becomes 'protect, gather more for me.

Use it or lose it. God loves you, but He doesn't need you. And if you do not use what God has given you, God will remove it and give it to someone else. E.g Israel. Eg churches in Revelation. God blesses you to be a blessing. Hoard it, God may remove it, and give it to someone who will be a blessing. Hide your ability to sing, to teach, to drive, to lead, to organise, to give, to plan, to help behind the scenes, to encourage, to show mercy, God will give the privilege to someone else. Listen, God won't lose out in the end, you will! He will get the glory from everyone's life, as vessels of honour or dishonour. The choice is up to you to be a vessel of honour or dishonour. Hoard what you have, God will simply pass the opportunity on to another. Hoard your time, God may take that away too.

It's more blessed to give than to receive.

Isn't it strange that we think that if we 'protect it, don't use it too much, guard it' then we will hang on to it. But the opposite is true. You do that, that's exactly how you'll lose it, because it belongs to God, and not using it for Him means He'll take it away. It's become an idol in your life. But use it for Him, serve Him with it, and He gives you more. The Christian life is like that, you die to live, you surrender to get the victory, you suffer to be rewarded, you humble yourself to be exalted, and you give (of your life) to gain. Matt 16:25 "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it."

People who end up like this either think that everything in your life is theirs and you 'lend' it to God or they don't believe He will really have a day of reckoning where He'll evaluate what you did for Him. Both errors lead us to 'hide' our gifts, to protect them from harm, and never multiply them for the Master.

Which group are you? Lost? Rejecting God's authority over you entirely? Resisting Him completely? I urge you, don't fight God. He is going to win in the end. See that God loves you and wants to help you, not harm you. He has made a way for you in Jesus Christ to come back to Him and live a fruitful life, useful to Him.

Lazy? Holding on to your possession, your reputation, your time? Hiding your talent, your ability, your life? Thinking maybe it's yours. Holding back on serving God, afraid of losing? If you don't use it for God, you will lose it. Worse, you'll stand there ashamed before Him, with no excuses. Stop being a nervous spectator. Just make yourself available to God. Give it all back to Him. Get into His Word, taste and see that He is good. He's a great Master to have. Serving Him is a delight, not a drag. But you must find that out for yourself. Get into His Word. Learn about Him, who He is. Pray, walk with Him personally. Your view of Him will affect your work for Him.

Labourer? Praise God. Be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing your labour is not in vain. Allow God to show you where there might be areas that are still not on the altar. Give it all back to Him. And guard your walk with Him. If you really are a labourer for God, it's because you know Him and delight in serving Him. Don't let that slip. Stay in His Word, in prayer, in fellowship, in service.

Ultimately, God will judge each one of us. For some, it will be a terrifying judgement of being a rebel about to be punished for eternity. For others, it will be a terrible shame of standing before Him with nothing to show for all He put into us. For others, it will be a great delight to have His eyes look into yours and warmly say, "Well done."