

# Story 10: The Three Servants

This Bible study focuses on a passage in the Gospel of Matthew in the New Testament. Stories that Make You Think:

## **Matthew 25:14-30**

### **Objective:**

To understand that God expects us to use wisely the gifts and resources that he has entrusted to us to achieve his purposes.

### **Introductory Question:**

Difficult responsibilities in life can seem like fearful obstacles or exciting challenges. What is a difficult challenge you have had to face in your life?

### **Introduction:**

Jesus told many stories to describe what the kingdom of heaven is like. The context of the story that we are going to discuss is important. Jesus has spent three years traveling with and teaching his close followers, called the disciples. Jesus knows that he will soon leave his followers behind. He had predicted his death by crucifixion and his rising from the dead; he knows that soon after this he will return to heaven. One day he would come again. He told this story to prepare his followers for his departure. See if you can understand from this story how he wants his followers to conduct themselves while he is not with them.

### **Reading the Passage:**

Have the group read the passage as a role play. Assign the following parts:

- Narrator (Jesus)
- Master
- First servant
- Second servant
- Third servant

Have the group read the passage silently to find out their lines. Then have the group read the passage aloud.

### **Questions:**

1. The master entrusts each of the servants with money to invest. Why do you think he does this?

2. What does he expect from them?
3. Does he have any reasons for doing this other than to get a return on his investment?
4. What is he expecting to learn about his servants from this experience?
5. Two of the servants are successful in their investments. What happens to them?
6. How are they rewarded?
7. How would you feel if you were one of those servants?
8. How would you feel if you were the last servant?
9. Why did he bury his money?
10. What happens to him?
11. How do you react to the master's treatment of this servant? Is he fair? lenient? harsh?
12. Why is the master so hard on the servant?
13. Suppose this servant had deposited his money with the banker and received interest. What do you think the master's reaction would have been in this case?
14. What if he had risked the money in an investment and lost it?
15. What is the final situation for the servant who did nothing (v 30)?
16. What do you think Jesus means by "outer darkness, crying, gnashing of teeth?"
17. Why does the master invest more with some servants rather than others?
18. Does he value the first servant the most?

**Thought Questions:**

1. Who does the master represent? the servants?
2. If the servants represent Jesus' followers, what would the investments (the money) entrusted to the servants represent?
3. What kind of return do you think Jesus is expecting for his spiritual investment?

4. What might the reward from God be for faithful service?
5. What kind of attitudes and world view does a good investor need?
6. What kinds of attitudes make for a poor investor?
7. What kind of servant pleases God?
8. What kind displeases God?
9. At the time Jesus told this story, he was going to leave his followers soon. What does the story tell his followers about how he wants them to live when Jesus leaves them?
10. What do you think is the main point Jesus was trying to make?
11. Whom do you identify with in the story - the successful investors or the do-nothing servant?
12. What is the primary fault of the poor investor?
13. Can a person who is fearful change? How?
14. What type of person needs to hear this story the most?
15. What do you think Jesus' intent was in telling it?
16. How would you apply this story to your life?
17. How do you think Jesus wants you to live?
18. What's your favorite excuse for not using your talents and abilities?
19. What would motivate you to get started using them?

**Closing:**

Ask if anyone has any comments or questions about the story. Close with a prayer thanking God for his gifts to us and asking for his help in making wise use of his gifts.