

Investors of the Investment

Luke 19: 11 - 27

- What would you do, right now, if I told you that I had a sure-fire investment that would set you up for life?
 - o The sure-fire investment advice that I have for you is spiritual and eternal, and of such worth that no value can fairly be ascribed to it.
 - o I didn't come up with the strategy. Jesus, the wellspring of wisdom did. So, it would do us well to listen and take it to heart, or we might just miss out on something great, like I did in 2010, when Bitcoin first appeared.
 - When it debuted, you could purchase a single Bitcoin for about ten cents. At the time, Carey was working for a man who bought in. I shook my head and thought what a fool.
 - It felt completely unwise to risk even a dime on something so speculative. Fast forward to today: based on current market values, that single ten-cent Bitcoin would be worth around \$84,000, and a modest \$1,000 investment would be worth upwards of \$600 million. Sometimes you just want to kick yourself. Every earthly investment has a window of opportunity—once that window closes, it is gone.
- That high-stakes tension between opportunity and hesitation is precisely where Jesus meets us in Luke chapter 19.
 - o As Jesus and His disciples approached Jerusalem, the crowd was electric with anticipation, assuming the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately in external, political triumph.^{K1} To reshape their expectations, Jesus tells the Parable of the Ten Minas, framing the parable on a scandal ripped right from the headlines of their day: Herod Archelaus traveling to Rome to be made king while his subjects publicly protested his crown.
 - Jesus uses that real-world drama to reveal the "already-and-not-yet" reality of His kingdom: the King is departing to receive His crown, and He will return. But while He is gone, His servants are not called to wait passively or retreat. They are called to invest in the Kingdom.
 - o The window of opportunity is wide open for everyone who trusts the King's promises to take what He has poured into our lives and invest it boldly in building a Kingdom before a watching world.

- What would happen if we seized this window before it closed? Rather than shrinking back in fear to avoid rejection, what if you were set free to risk everything for the King who gave everything for you?

Luke 19:11–27 (ESV) As they heard these things, he proceeded to tell a parable, because he was near to Jerusalem, and because they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately. 12 He said therefore, “A nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and then return. 13 Calling ten of his servants, he gave them ten minas, and said to them, ‘Engage in business until I come.’ 14 But his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, ‘We do not want this man to reign over us.’ 15 When he returned, having received the kingdom, he ordered these servants to whom he had given the money to be called to him, that he might know what they had gained by doing business. 16 The first came before him, saying, ‘Lord, your mina has made ten minas more.’ 17 And he said to him, ‘Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in a very little, you shall have authority over ten cities.’ 18 And the second came, saying, ‘Lord, your mina has made five minas.’ 19 And he said to him, ‘And you are to be over five cities.’ 20 Then another came, saying, ‘Lord, here is your mina, which I kept laid away in a handkerchief; 21 for I was afraid of you, because you are a severe man. You take what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.’ 22 He said to him, ‘I will condemn you with your own words, you wicked servant! You knew that I was a severe man, taking what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow? 23 Why then did you not put my money into the bank, and at my coming I might have collected it with interest?’ 24 And he said to those who stood by, ‘Take the mina from him, and give it to the one who has the ten minas.’ 25 And they said to him, ‘Lord, he has ten minas!’ 26 ‘I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. 27 But as for these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slaughter them before me.’”

In this text, (Principle) The Lord calls His servants to invest the royal treasure of His kingdom to transform a watching world.

- To understand what Jesus is teaching in Luke 19:11–27, we have to grasp where this passage sits within the unfolding story of redemption. As Jesus approaches Jerusalem, the crowd expects the kingdom of God to appear immediately in final, apocalyptic glory. They are looking for a political revolution, a sudden cosmic showdown that will instantly overthrow Rome.
 - o Jesus tells this parable to reorient their expectations. The kingdom does not arrive all at once in visible majesty. It enters history through the suffering Servant-King, who will go to the cross, rise from the dead, and ascend to the Father’s right hand—what Jesus describes in the parable as a nobleman journeying to a “far country” to receive his royal crown.

- o Jesus' journey to the cross, the grave, a glorious resurrection, and ascension to heaven is the starting point of the church's interim mission.
- In this present age between Christ's first coming and His second coming, the ascended King does not leave His people idle or abandoned. As Paul tells us in Ephesians 4, when the King ascended on high, He poured out gifts of grace upon His people. As Acts 1:8 declares, He commissions us to be His witnesses to the ends of the earth.
 - o In this parable, Jesus is the Master, and the ten minas He entrusts to His servants represent the glorious riches of the Gospel we have received.^{K2}
 - o With this Gospel deposited into our lives, the King has not called us to retreat into guarded isolation, building spiritual bunkers while we wait out His return. Instead, He urges each of us to take what looks like a bold, vulnerable step: to invest the royal treasure of His kingdom in the world around us, carrying His grace directly into our circles of influence.
- The true wonder of this parable is anchored in a detail that is easy to pass over. When the King returns to settle accounts, consider the exact words of the first servant in Luke 19:16: *"Lord, your mina has made ten minas more."*
 - o Notice what the servant does not say. He does not announce, "Lord, look at what I accomplished! Look at how brilliantly I traded, how smooth my strategy was, or how hard I worked for your sake!"^{K3}
 - o The fruitfulness belongs entirely to the deposit itself. Our calling in the kingdom is not about our personal cleverness, or our ability to deliver a flawless spiritual presentation. It is about the living power of the Gospel.
 - Think of it like planting a seed in the ground. Planting a seed always feels like a loss. You take a valuable seed and deliberately bury it out of sight in the cold, wet soil.
 - It seems safer to keep the seed wrapped up in a drawer where nothing can harm it. But the only way to produce more seed is to place it in the ground. Once you plant it, you don't have to force the seed to germinate; the seed itself possesses the vitality to break through the soil and yield a harvest. In the same way, the Gospel carries its own supernatural power to bring life out of spiritual darkness.

- o Recognizing that the power resides in the King's mina brings profound relief to our everyday lives. If the servant had said, "Lord, look at what I produced," the pressure on each of us would be paralyzing. Our labor for Christ would become a test of our personal skill, salesmanship, and intellectual sharpness. We would live under the crushing anxiety of having to generate spiritual outcomes.
- o Instead, Jesus reminds us that we are called to faithfulness, not to the burden of producing results. The Lord invites us to the joyful responsibility of taking the Gospel invested in us and offering it freely to others us.^{K4}
 - That is something every single believer is empowered to do. You do not need an airtight apologetic argument or a slick, rehearsed script. All we get to do is lift up the name of Jesus through gracious lives and honest words, pointing people away from ourselves and toward Him.
 - Think about it, if God can speak His truth through Balaam's donkey, He can certainly speak His grace through any of us. Furthermore, when our message is met with indifference or rejection, we do not need to bear it as a personal defeat.

Luke 10: 16 The one who hears you hears me, and the one who rejects you rejects me, and the one who rejects me rejects him who sent me.

- The rejection isn't of us. It is of our King and his kingdom.^{K5} But that fear of rejection and fear that God will be disappointed in us if we mess up the opportunity often paralyze us with a desire to take the Gospel up and bury it.

Problem: Governed by fear and false views of God, we refuse to invest His treasure, withdrawing into safe self-preservation.

- When the nobleman returns as crowned King in Luke 19, he calls his servants to account. The first two step forward with glad, eager accounts of royal capital multiplied. But then comes the third servant, and the atmosphere in the throne room chills. (vv. 20–21).
 - o The word Luke uses for handkerchief is *sudarium*—literally a sweat-cloth, something typically used for wiping perspiration or wrapping the faces of the dead. Rather than working with this royal trust, the servant wraps the living treasure of the king in a burial shroud and hides it away.

- Notice the environment he inhabited: he was surrounded by citizens who openly declared, "We do not want this man to reign over us" (v. 14). Surrounded by cultural hostility and paralyzed by an inward dread of failure, he chooses safe self-preservation over kingdom risk.
- His stated motive reveals the root of the rot: "I was afraid of you, because you are a severe man." He disbelieves the generous, lavish nature of his lord. He projects cruelty, greed, and harshness onto the king.
 - o Driven by this orphan spirit, his distorted theology produces a paralyzed life. He treats the king's capital not as an exciting invitation to participate in royal advance, but as a dangerous liability to be managed.
 - o It is remarkably easy to look at the third servant with disdain, yet his actions mirror our daily instincts pretty closely, don't they? We look out at a world that often rejects the reign of Christ, and our reflex is not missional engagement, but defensive retreat.
 - We build our own modern Christian bubbles, convincing ourselves that retreating from our neighbors into safe monastery like spaces is the same thing as preserving our spiritual purity.
 - When providence places us directly beside people who need Christ what do we do? We pull out the handkerchief of polite social etiquette. We wrap the gospel up tightly, tuck it into our pockets, and keep quiet. We tell ourselves we are simply being discreet, but in reality what we are really doing is refusing to invest the Master's treasure because we fear the risk of failure and loss.
- Why do we do this? What drives this quiet refusal to invest? Beneath our silence is the real desire of our hearts for approval and control.^{K6}
 - o The idol of approval operates through what Scripture calls the fear of man (Proverbs 29:25). We treasure the fleeting affirmation of our social tribe, our coworkers, and our peers far more than the commendation of the returning King. To experience social awkwardness or outright mockery from our peers feels like emotional death. To protect ourselves from that sting, we lock the gospel away.
 - We slip into believing the servant's lie: we imagine God is an exacting auditor rather than a lavish Father. We suspect He is

standing over our lives with a clipboard, waiting to condemn us for our blunders.

- Then the accuser comes and whispers in our ear that our own lives are too fractured, our theological knowledge too small, and our walk too inconsistent to ever speak of Jesus. We dread being unmasked as people who cannot fully practice what we preach, so fear keeps us quiet, and we become trapped in paralyzing shame.
- o The result is that rather than walking in the open sunshine of kingdom freedom, we retreat into emotional and relational isolation.
- o We hold the eternal hope of glory, yet our persistent silence leaves us with an ache because we know that we are withholding life from dying people.
- When we look for relief from this fear and insulation, cultural and religious worldviews offer solutions that only deepen our captivity.
 - o Our culture tells us: "Just privatize your faith. Leave your beliefs at home."
 - o The religious establishment says, "You need to do more! Souls are on the line, and their eternity depends entirely on your boldness and technique." Turning evangelism into a frantic performance to prove our worth and stave off God's displeasure. Leaving us crushed under anxiety, viewing every interaction through the lens of performance pressure.
- It is no surprise that our culture doesn't get it, but it is shocking that we often miss the foundational reality of the kingdom: the mina was an unmerited gift of royal grace from the start. We must engage, because our king calls us to engage. But we do not engage a watching world to earn our standing we engage because we are the recipients of a royal generosity that we simply cannot keep to ourselves.
 - o If our lives are ever going to be liberated from the paralyzing grip of self-preservation, we cannot merely be told to try harder or be braver. Anxious hearts are never healed by commands; they are transformed only by grace as we behold a greater King and receive a greater love.
- When we look honestly at the third servant in Jesus' parable, we recognize our own dark suspicion that God is a harsh, demanding taskmaster who is watching for our missteps and demanding a harvest where He never sowed. Under the reign of such an imagined

tyrant, the only rational response is self-protection—wrapping our lives in a shroud and attempting to hide to survive.

- o History provided Jesus' original hearers with a terrifying flesh-and-blood image of that kind of ruler. When Herod Archelaus journeyed to Rome to secure his crown, the Jewish people sent an embassy pleading that he not rule over them. Upon his return, Archelaus consolidated his throne with brutal vengeance, executing his political opponents in cold blood.
- o Into that bloody, anxious world stepped the true Nobleman, Jesus, who did not resemble the harsh caricature invented by the fearful servant.
- Luke explicitly anchors this entire parable in the story of Zacchaeus, where Jesus declares His true mission: "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost" (Luke 19:10). Jesus did not enter our world to exploit the vulnerable. He is not an extracting master; He is a lavish, self-giving King.
 - o Where our instinct has always been to protect ourselves,

Gospel: Jesus did not protect Himself but chose to invest His very life unto death to secure our eternal place in His kingdom.

- Though he is God, Jesus didn't consider equality with God a thing to be grasped, but instead, made himself the perfectly faithful Servant. He possessed all the unsearchable riches and eternal glory of heaven, yet He did not wrap His glory in a handkerchief of self-insulation. He did not avoid the pain of our broken condition or keep His holiness quarantined in a monastery.
 - o Instead, He stepped directly into our hostile territory. He sat at the tables of tax collectors and prostitutes, touched lepers, and walked openly into the teeth of human opposition. He did not hoard His divine life; He freely chose to invest His very being among broken sinners.
- This difference between the world's kingdoms and the kingdom of Jesus becomes clear when we look at the climax of the parable. In verse 27, the king issues an unsettling decree: "But as for these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slaughter them before me."
 - o To our modern sensibilities, those words sound terrifying. Yet think about what happens just days after Jesus spoke this parable.
 - Who was taken to be executed? Not the rebels who rejected Him, or the fearful servants who hid His truth in self-protective silence.

- The holy judgment against cosmic treason fell entirely upon the King Himself. On Calvary, Jesus hung between two outlaws, condemned as a perceived rebel against Caesar and an outcast from Israel.
- o The curse against our treasonous refusal of His rightful reign, and the holy wrath against our sinful self-centered, self-preservation, was gathered up and poured out upon the Son of God. He took the horrific execution described in verse 27 into His own flesh.
- o His face was wrapped in the shroud of death, so that we, who have so often buried His treasure in silence and fear, might receive His royal status, His boundless wealth, and His everlasting vindication. Through His substitutionary death, Jesus settled the debt we could never pay and canceled the condemnation we rightfully deserved.
- He did not remain in the grave. The true King rose triumphantly from death, ascended to the right hand of the Father, and now lives forever to intercede on our behalf. He has not left us alone to manage on our own; He has poured out His Holy Spirit upon His church, sealing us as His own and filling us with His life.^{K7} And he graciously commands us to be part of his ministry of gospel reconciliation by taking the Christ-life given to us and sharing it with the world.
- o And we can do that without fear, because we are united to the risen King by faith, and our eternal standing is settled. We are beloved children and co-heirs with Christ. As the Apostle Peter reminds us, we possess "an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you" (1 Peter 1:4). Our ultimate wealth doesn't rise and fall on our daily successes or failures. It is safely secured in the living Christ.^{K8}
 - When that truth sinks from our heads into our hearts, the psychological tyranny of rejection by the world loses all its power. If the King of the universe has already approved of us, declared us righteous, and invested His very life to secure our place at His table, what power does human rejection have over us?
 - The raised eyebrow of an unbelieving neighbor cannot strip away our adoption. The mocking disdain of a cynical colleague cannot diminish our royal inheritance. The awkwardness of an uncomfortable gospel conversation cannot rob us of the peace we have in Christ.
 - The paralysis of performance failure has been broken.

Response: Resting in the security of Christ's investment in us, we are now free to invest our lives boldly in kingdom risks and sharing with others the reason for the hope that is in us.

- The security of Christ's love frees our hearts to step out of the shadows. Instead of wondering: *"How can I protect myself?"* Resting in the finished work of our Savior, we are joyfully empowered to ask a brand new question: *How can I freely invest what Christ has entrusted to me for His glory?*
- The Apostle Paul reminds us how God delights to work through ordinary, frail people: "We have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us" (2 Cor. 4:7). You do not need a slick presentation, or an airtight life before you can speak of Jesus. Our cracks and weaknesses do not disqualify us; they simply display His all-sufficient glory.^{K9}
 - o Think about what this means. You don't have to have your life perfectly together to bring the light of the Gospel to those walking in darkness, because the Gospel shines most brightly through the cracks in our lives. You are not going into the world to tell others how to be practically perfect like you are. You are going out to tell them that Christ is the hope for all those who know they are not perfect.
 - The best way to share the hope that is yours in Christ is to be willing to share why you need that hope every day.
- Notice in this parable, the faithful servants did not hesitate, withdraw, or calculate their personal safety. They stepped directly into the open market, traded their master's minas, and multiplied his royal capital (Luke 19:16, 18). They trusted their king's character, and that confidence allowed them to boldly invest the resources the master had entrusted to them.
 - o This same freedom and boldness animated the early church. Paul proclaimed with unshakeable resolve, "I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes" (Rom. 1:16). He later reminded Timothy, "God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control" (2 Tim. 1:7).
 - o Because the King has already secured our eternal standing, we are completely freed from thoughts of self-protection, so we can go on the offensive. Honoring Christ as Lord in our hearts, always ready to give a reason for the hope within us with gentleness and respect (1 Pet. 3:15).

- What does this look like in the rhythm of ordinary life? It looks like stepping out of our comfortable Christian bubbles and choosing to invest in real relationships.
- Ask yourself this week: Who will be your one? Who is the one person the Holy Spirit might be impressing on your heart over these coming months? You do not need an elaborate strategy. They are not a potential sales target. They are people that you get to love as you have been loved by Jesus.
 - o Simply begin to pray for them by name. Look for tangible ways to invest your relational, emotional, and financial capital to serve them in their everyday burdens. Open your front door. Share a meal. Step out into authentic, patient friendship.
 - o Early next year, our church family has a wonderful, low-pressure opportunity for each of you to connect someone in your circle of influence with Jesus, called *Christianity Explored*. It will offer an easy setting to invite friends to a free dinner at a restaurant, explore the Gospel of Mark together, and talk honestly about the big questions of life and faith.
 - o Today is our window of opportunity to begin tilling that soil with intentional love and prayer for that one that the Holy Spirit lays upon your heart.
- As you move toward your one, rest in the deep relief of the Gospel: God is completely sovereign over the results. Jesus does not call you to manufacture outcomes or engineer conversions.
- We do not share Christ out of anxious, guilty obligation, nor to win God's approval. We get to invest our lives as faithful stewards because the King has already invested His very blood for us. Our witness is simply the joyful overflow of gratitude. We plant and water in open-handed freedom, resting in the promise that God alone gives the growth.
 - o What an opportunity for each of us. "Would've, could've, should've."
 - One thin dime invested in Bitcoin back in 2010 would be worth over \$84,000 today. It is easy to look back on a moment like that, shake our heads, and feel the sting of a missed earthly opportunity—counting pennies that slipped through our fingers because we played it safe.
 - Yet how much more tragic would it be to spend our entire lives clutching a handkerchief that shrouds the treasure of Christ from a world that desperately needs to see that hope of glory?

- o How heartbreaking to let false views of God and the fear of risk paralyze us into self-preservation, only to hear the King say: *“I will condemn you with your own words, you wicked servant!... Take the mina from him, and give it to the one who has the ten minas”* (Luke 19:22, 24).
- Freely sharing Jesus—the King who freely poured out His very life for us—carries an eternal return. Because of His grace, we are headed toward that glorious day when we get to hear Him say: *“Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master”* (Matthew 25:23).
- On the cross, Jesus took our timid, self-protecting guilt and suffered the brutal condemnation we deserved for our unfaithfulness. He traded places with us so that we might receive His perfect record of bold, loving obedience and be crowned with His royal inheritance. We are not performing to earn His favor; we are standing in the unshakeable reality of His favor right now.
 - o I remind you often that Jesus endured the cross for you because you were the joy set before Him. He looked upon you in your brokenness, loved you, and gladly invested His life to redeem you.
 - o Now, rest, live, and serve in that love, and think of the profound joy that will one day be yours—not only hearing Jesus say, “Well done, good and faithful servant” but having that one person you invested your life in turn to you and say, “Thank you for bringing Jesus, the hope of glory, into my life.”
- You are completely secure in Christ’s finished work for you. In view of all that He has given for you and to you, you are now free to step into the world with open hands. Receive His boundless grace today, rest in His finished work, and go find that one person with whom you get to share His royal blessings.