“Well Done, Good and Faithful Servant”

Central theme: What does it mean to be a faithful servant of the one true God, and how should disciples of Jesus prepare themselves for the coming Kingdom of God?

Main Scripture — Matthew 25:21

> “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.”

Brothers and sisters, peace to you all.

Today, I want us to reflect on a very important statement spoken by Jesus: “Well done, good and faithful servant.”

These words are familiar to many Christians. We often hear them at funerals, church gatherings and religious meetings. But have we ever stopped to consider the actual meaning of these words in the teaching of Jesus?

What kind of servant receives this praise? Is it someone who knows the most Scripture? Is it someone who has a large congregation? Is it someone who speaks beautifully about God? Or is it someone who remains faithful to the responsibility entrusted to him?

Jesus did not teach his disciples to pursue religious popularity. He taught them to seek God's Kingdom and righteousness.

Matthew 6:33: “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness.”

This gives us the foundation for today's discussion. Our subject is not simply how to become a good religious person. It is about becoming a faithful servant of the one God, following the teaching of His Messiah, Jesus, and living in preparation for His Kingdom.

Let us read Matthew 25:14–15. Jesus describes a man travelling into a far country. Before leaving, he entrusts his possessions to his servants.

One receives five talents, another receives two, and another receives one, according to their abilities.

Notice something important here. The master does not give everyone the same responsibility. Each servant receives something different.

This teaches us an important principle: God does not require every person to have the same ability, opportunity or responsibility.

Some people can teach. Others can preach. Some can support families in need. Others can educate children, encourage the weak, distribute Scripture or help people understand the message of the Kingdom.

Not everybody stands behind a pulpit, but everybody can demonstrate faithfulness.

The first servant trades with his five talents and gains five more. The second does the same with his two talents and gains two more. But the third servant hides his talent in the ground.

The difference between these servants is not how much they initially received. The difference is what they did with what was entrusted to them.

Question for reflection: What are we doing with the opportunities God has placed in our hands? Are we using them, or are we hiding them?

Let us look carefully at Matthew 25:21. The master says: "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Notice that the master does not say, "Well done, most successful servant." He does not say, "Well done, most famous servant." He says, "Good and faithful servant."

There is a difference between success in the eyes of people and faithfulness in the eyes of God.

Sometimes a person may preach to thousands, but fail to practise the very message he teaches. Another person may quietly serve a few families, teach children, encourage someone who is struggling and remain faithful to God's commandments.

Which one understands the responsibility of a servant?

We must be careful not to measure our service by numbers, popularity, buildings or financial resources.

Luke 16:10: "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much."

If we cannot be faithful with small responsibilities, why should we expect greater responsibilities? If we cannot speak truthfully in ordinary conversations, how can we claim to be trustworthy teachers of God's truth?

If we cannot show mercy to our own brothers and sisters, how can we represent the righteousness of God's coming Kingdom? Faithfulness begins in everyday life.

Now let us connect this parable with the central message of Jesus. What was the message Jesus came to proclaim?

Mark 1:14–15 tells us that Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the Kingdom of God. He proclaimed: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."

Brothers and sisters, notice the subject of Jesus' preaching. It was the Kingdom of God.

Jesus did not simply call people to become members of a religious institution. He called them to repentance, obedience and faith in the good news of God's Kingdom.

In John 17:3, Jesus gives us an important understanding of eternal life: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

Here Jesus distinguishes between the one he identifies as the only true God and himself as the one sent by God.

This is important for our understanding of biblical discipleship. We worship the one God, the Father, and follow His appointed Messiah, Jesus. Jesus himself said in John 14:28: "My Father is greater than I."

Our responsibility as servants is to listen to the one whom God sent and to take his teaching seriously. A faithful servant cannot ignore the message of his master. His message was centred on God's Kingdom.

Let us return to the third servant in Matthew 25. He received one talent, but instead of using it, he buried it.

Why? The parable describes his fear and his negative attitude towards his master. He did not fulfil the responsibility given to him.

This should make us examine ourselves. Sometimes fear stops us from doing what is right. We fear criticism. We fear losing friends. We fear rejection. We fear that people will disagree with our biblical understanding.

Sometimes we remain silent when we should speak. Sometimes we know what is right but choose what is comfortable.

Matthew 10:28: "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul."

A faithful servant must not allow human approval or fear to become more important than obedience to God.

However, faithfulness does not mean becoming argumentative, arrogant or disrespectful. We must speak truth with humility, patience and love.

Let us bring this teaching into our own lives and our ministry. If we are preparing ourselves for God's Kingdom, what should people see in us?

First, faithfulness to God's truth. Acts 17:11 describes the people of Berea, who examined the Scriptures daily to see whether what they were being taught was true. We should never

be afraid of examining Scripture. Our loyalty must be to God's truth, not to traditions simply because they are old or popular.

Second, faithfulness in our conduct. Titus 2:7 encourages believers to show themselves as examples of good works. Our behaviour should support our message.

Third, faithfulness in serving others. Jesus taught in Matthew 25:35–36 about feeding the hungry, welcoming strangers, clothing the needy and caring for the sick. Serving others is not separate from our religious responsibility.

Fourth, faithfulness in teaching the next generation. Deuteronomy 6:6–7 instructs God's people to teach His commandments diligently to their children. We should help the next generation understand the Scriptures, the commandments of God and the message of His Kingdom.

Fifth, faithfulness when nobody is watching. True service is not a performance. A servant should remain honest, merciful and obedient even when there is no audience, no financial reward and no public recognition.

Brothers and sisters, there is another important aspect of this parable. The master eventually returns and settles accounts with his servants.

Matthew 25:19: "After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them."

This reminds us that responsibility brings accountability. We cannot simply say that we believe in the Kingdom while ignoring the responsibilities that come with that belief.

Jesus repeatedly spoke about the coming Kingdom, judgment and the need to remain prepared.

Matthew 7:21: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

These are serious words. Jesus directs attention towards doing the will of his Father. Religious language alone is not enough. Calling ourselves believers is not enough. Knowing biblical terminology is not enough.

We must become people whose lives demonstrate obedience to God. Our hope is not in our own greatness, but in God's purpose and the Kingdom He has promised.

As we conclude, I want everyone to consider three questions:

1. What has God entrusted to me?
2. Am I using what I have received to serve His purposes?
3. If I were called to give an account of my life today, what would my faithfulness reveal?

Perhaps you have only one talent. Perhaps you have limited resources. Perhaps you cannot travel, preach publicly or financially support a ministry. But you can still be faithful.

You can teach your children. You can help someone in need. You can speak honestly. You can encourage someone who has lost hope. You can study Scripture and share the good news of the Kingdom.

Never underestimate small acts of faithful service.

Remember, the objective is not to become greater than other servants. The objective is to be trustworthy with what has been entrusted to us.

Let us not spend our lives building our own names while forgetting the name and purpose of the one true God.

Let us follow Jesus, the Messiah sent by the Father, and remain committed to the Gospel of the Kingdom.

May our lives demonstrate that we are not merely hearers of the Word, but faithful servants who put God's will into practice.

"Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

CONFERENCE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Is faithfulness measured by the size of our ministry or by our obedience to God?
2. What does the parable of the talents teach us about individual responsibility?
3. Can someone claim to be a disciple of Jesus while refusing to practise his teachings?
4. How can we demonstrate faithfulness while preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom?

Final statement

"Brothers and sisters, let us not compete to become the greatest servants. Let us work together to become faithful servants of the one true God, following His Messiah and proclaiming the Gospel of His Kingdom."

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