

LESSON 4: GOD HAS GIVEN US SO MUCH

Part 1: Monologue of a believer

A believer is having his devotional time and he reads Matthew 25: 14-30. Then he says, 'I wish I could be like the servant who was given 5 talents so I could do great things for God! But I feel sorry for the servant that was given only one talent. I think the Lord was too hard on him! Well, that's not my case because I don't think I have any talent or special gift to serve God and work for Him. Besides that, I am so poor! My reality is that I cannot help anyone else because I have so many needs myself. Oh Lord, please help me and give me a few talents to use...'

- What did you see in the drama?
- What did the poor believer say?
- Is he right about his perception?
- Why did he think that way?

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Read Matthew 25:14-30.

Verses 16-18

- What did the servants do with their talents?
- Can you identify yourself with the servants using their talents or with the one that is hiding it?

Verses 19-23

- What did the master do when he returned?
- What did he say to the ones who had multiplied their talents?

Verses 24-28

- What was the problem of the servant who hid his talent?
- What did the master say to him?
- Why do you think many believers do not use their talents?
- What can we do?

Part 2: Getting Past Our Excuses

Common excuses

Old Person = 'Oh, I wish I were still a young man. Then I would have the energy to serve the Lord with my talents. Now I am too old and tired.'

Young Person = 'Oh, I wish I were older. Then I would have more influence, and I could really lead people to serve the Lord with my talents. It's too hard right now because I'm so young.'

Business Person = 'Oh, I wish I had more time. I'm so busy with my work that I never have time to help others.'

Uneducated Person = 'Oh, I wish I were more educated. I don't know anything about theology. Only the pastor can really help others because he went to Bible school and has training.'

Poor Person = 'Oh, I wish I had more money. Then I could really serve the Lord. I'm too poor right now to help anyone besides myself.'

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

- Which of these excuses do you often hear from others in your church?
- Which of these excuses have you ever used?
- What was the excuse of the servant who hid his talent?
- Was this excuse acceptable to the master?
- Do you think our excuses are acceptable to God?
- What can we do to overcome these excuses?

Part 3: We need to start to see all that God has given us

3 Categories of resources:

1. Natural-Inside refers to all the gifts and abilities that God has given us. For example: the ability to speak, the ability to make decisions, the ability to cook food, and the ability to make a fire.
2. Natural-Outside refers to all the resources that God has given you in your community. For example: water, land, sun, and schools.
3. Spiritual refers to all of the things that we have because of our relationship with God. For example: miracles, prayer, and God's power.

Sort the Resource cards into 2 groups:

1. Resources you have in the community
2. Resources you don't have in the community

Think of 5 more things that you have in the community related to the 3 categories of resources we just discussed.. Write them on a card.

- Do you have all your resources in the 'we don't have' pile?
- What happens when we use what God has given us?
- Are we using all God has given us?
- How can we become even better at using all God has given us?

The Farmers story

In Constanza, an island in the Caribbean, the land is fertile. There is plenty of water and the climate is good for growing. After World War 2, Japanese who were escaping from the difficulties in Japan moved to this area. When they arrived, they had nothing—just the clothes they were wearing. They lived amongst the local people and farmed together with them. Both groups were poor and struggling to survive. After 20 years the Japanese farmers had become rich. They had large, beautiful houses. However, the local farmers were still poor and still struggling to grow enough to eat.

- How could this be possible?
- What happened?
- How important was the way the people thought? What category of resources is 'thinking' in?
- What can we learn from this story?