

LENT 2007 #2 THE GOD WHO RISKS---PARABLE OF TALENTS

Matthew 25:14-30

Today we are looking at the God who risks.

A cocky Department of Agriculture representative stopped at a farm and talked with the old farmer: "I need to inspect your farm". The old farmer said, "You better not go in that field. "The Agriculture representative pulled out his card and said in a "wise" tone, "I have the authority of the U. S. Government with me. See this card. I can go on any agricultural land. "So the old farmer went about his farm chores. It wasn't much later that the farmer heard loud screams and saw the Department of Agriculture man running for his life with the farmer's prize bull behind him. He shouted "What should I do?" The old farmer, hooking his thumbs in his overalls, said:" Show him your card."

Our world is full of risk takers

People risking in the stock markets

People risking in real estates housing

In foreign investments.

Or in commodities -Betting on the future price of corn, beans, or goods.

How many take the risk of gambling at the casinos

Betting on odds that always favor the house.

And loosing their families.

Risk is reality.

Starting a business or maybe starting a family involves risk,

Some of you have known the pain in miscarriages.

Yet our world is hooked on risk taking.

Our extreme videos each push the other's

The latest craze I saw were the Mexican bull riders.

These people tie themselves onto a 1200lb bull

And wonder why they have to be carried away on a stretcher or in a hearse.

God Risks for us.

Without risk takers where would our world be?

Robert Fulton, an artist and engineer was responsible in the early 1800's for putting sailing ships out of business. He made the steamboat a standard on the open seas. When he first presented his idea to Napoleon. Napoleon looked it over and is reported to have said: "What, sir, you would make a ship sail against the wind and currents by lighting a bonfire under her decks? I pray you excuse me. I have no time to listen to such nonsense."

As we look at this parable of the Talents

We discover that God risks for us.

And he expects us to risk for others.

And playing it safe and doing little or nothing

Is not an option God leaves us.

What are you risking with the talents God has given you?

Lets look at this parable of the talents..

First of all notice:

I. EVERY PERSON IS GIVEN SOMETHING!

14"Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his property to them.

Notice it doesn't say he called SOME

Or he selected his most trusted servants.

He called all his servants.

All of them and entrusted his property to them.

15To one he gave five talents^[a] of money, to another two talents, and to another one talent, each according to his ability. Matthew 25:15

You and I are servants of God.

God has called every one of us and

entrusted each of us with his property.

What might that property be?

In the parable it was money.

But that is not God's most valuable property.

The treasure God gives to us to invest is

His Love given us in Christ.

God so loved the world.

When you come to know God,

You come to know God's love

For God so loved the world that he gave

And just as we have observed what God has done with his love.

We are under command to love as God loved.

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son.

And we killed him. We crucified the love of God on a cross.

But that didn't stop God from loving us.

Forgiving us.

He risked it all.

So what are you willing to give, to risk?

If you're a Christian you have a gift to share.

And you have the vehicle to share it.

Your self.

Your body,

Your mind and soul.

your business,

your incomes and possession all become a vehicle for God's glory,
That's the property were entrusted with.

Notice it says:

Each according to his ability.

No it's not all equal.

We're not all as smart as one another,

We're not all as rich as one another

We're not all as athletic, or talented, or gifted, or disturbed as one another.

But we have been equally entrusted with the property of God.

The master knows you and what you can do.

The key issue is that no one is exempt from the risk taking.

II. GOD EXPECTS US TO RISK AND INVEST.

“You've got the property, now DO WHAT IS RIGHT.

Jesus said: Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. Mark 16:15

We live in a world of hurting people

They are empty

They are sin-sick.

Filled with self-hate and world-hate and neighbor-hate.

We're killing each other,

They need to know they are forgiven.

And how to forgive

They need to hear they are loved.

And how they can love.

The only resource that God has planned for this mission is us—you and me.

We are his trusted possession.

God has already demonstrated how to do it.

16The man who had received the five talents went at once and put his money to work and gained five more. 17So also, the one with the two talents gained two more. Matthew 25:16-17

This Steward was an investor.

Everyone knew that his man was a risk taker.

He was one who risked to rule.

They had seen it.

They knew how ruthless he had been.

The first two servants followed the example of the shrewd Steward.

They risked and invested.

When They came back:

20The man who had received the five talents brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more.'

And look at what the man said with the 2 talents:

22" The man with the two talents also came. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with two talents; see, I have gained two more.'

But the third man froze

24" Then the man who had received the one talent came. 'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. 25 So I was afraid and went out and hid your talent in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.'

Burying it in the ground demonstrated fear of failure Fear of loss

This steward had an opportunity.
But his fear froze him.

I remember the old windmill on our farm
Stood about 60 feet in the air.
It pumped our water.
It had a steel ladder on the side and a platform on the top.
My brother and sister would climb that ladder
I could see them sitting on the top looking out over all the bottom land.
I decided at 10 years of age to climb that windmill.
I got about 15 feet above the ground.
I was looking up.
Then I was looking down.
And I froze.
I remember that terrible feeling of pure panic.
I was going to die.
I couldn't go up
I couldn't go down.
Stuck like a tongue on a cold pole.
Mom had to come out and climb up and pry me off.
How embarrassing.

That what happened to the man with the one talent
Embarrassing.
He froze up.

The question Jesus is asking is, are you froze up?
What are you doing with your treasure?
What are you doing with the life God has given you?
With the money and possession?
With the knowledge of eternal life.
What are you doing with the gift of forgiveness?

Are you froze up?
 Are you hiding it in the ground
 Or investing it in your kids, and family, your business,
 Your church, and your community.

Are you holding on for dear life to this world and its possession?
 Are you afraid to give because the taskmaster of ill health might come
 and you need it for medical expenses.
 Are we hiding and hoarding our stuff in property and 401ks
 When God is needing you to take a risk.

I know of some snow birds who go south for winter and north for summer.
 They live in two places and make excuses so they don't have to give in either location.
 They don't have to serve in either location.
 They are somehow disconnected from life
 And live somewhere in between.

The third servant did something he never saw his master do.
 Bury his treasure in the ground.

But God is calling us into the game

That game here at First Church involves
 Building a ministry for the future.
 This kind of excitement and risk
 Only occurs once in our lifetime.
 Once in our lifetime we get to be involved in a
 Experience that is massive and demands greater sacrifice.
 And we are called to risk to invest.
 Sure it's going to take sacrifice.

The Master in this Parable not only gave his
 Servants his property,
 But he gave them the excitement of investing in what went with it.

Like wise God gave us the gift of his Son to save us.
 And then he gave us the excitement of investing that good news in
 Others around us.

**18But the man who had received the one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground
 and hid his master's money. Matthew 25:14-17**

Friends you and I may think we can get away without sharing and investing our faith in
 others but this parable tells it differently.

**III. RISKS REAP A CONSEQUENCE.
 THERE ARE REWARDS FOR WHAT WE DO WITH OUR LIVES.**

RISK reap rewards

19"After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them.

If there was a time to settle accounts

Then there had been an understanding as to what was expected.

There's no settling accounts if there no expectation.

The first two men got it.

20The man who had received the five talents brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more.'

The second man.

22"The man with the two talents also came. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with two talents; see, I have gained two more.'

Risk reaps rewards:

The master got it.

21"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'

It was repeated word for word to the both men.

Both were called faithful

Both were put in charge of many things.

Both received their master's blessing and were rewarded with a share of the masters happiness.

Even though the investments we unequal
the rewards were the same.

That's God's faithfulness in action.

It's the tithing principle all over again.

It's not equal giving, but equal sacrifice.

Tithing 10% is the same percentage for everyone.

And we learn here its equal rewards.

Then the parable become harsh

Then the man with the one talent came.

24"Then the man who had received the one talent came. 'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. 25So I was afraid and went out and hid your talent in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.'

Nothing was lost of the original gift.

But nothing was made of it either.

Because of his lack to invest in others.

26"His master replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? 27Well then, you

should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest.

Now hear come the real danger.

28" 'Take the talent from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents. 29For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. 30And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

We cringe at this kind of master, this kind of steward.

Many Christians want to leave this parable out of scriptures.

I mean Jesus is too loving --he would never cast us in to outer darkness.

But this is Jesus story.

And it's about the kingdom of God.

We all have been given the stuff of life.

If you're a Christian you have been given a treasure of life.

You have also been given opportunity to use it.

When you and I don't risk for the kingdom.

God begins to look elsewhere for those who will.

When the church doesn't risk for the kingdom.

God looks for another church that will.

Are we willing to risk for the kingdom of God.

That "Stuff of life" you have been given is a mix of our influence, contacts, networks, abilities, money, time and energy that make up life.

We all have the same 24 hours per day.

God has trusted us with talent

And resources.

We have the same options as the servant.

Risk it or lose it.

Are we willing to risk time, talent and resource for the sake of the Lord Jesus

Christ And his church.

Every field moves forward at the point of those willing to take risk.

In the 19th century, Dr. David Kane O'Neill had a hunch that surgery performed under local anesthesia might be safer and the recovery from it quicker than surgery performed under general anesthesia. The problem was only monkeys wanted to help him prove his point. Then he did a risky thing. He administered to himself a local anesthesia and removed his own appendix. From that point on Medicine moved forward.

Once again

The people of this church who have gone before us counted the risk.

And ventured out and built what we enjoy today.
They didn't have health insurance at that time.
They didn't have nursing homes.
They didn't have medical knowledge and medicines we have today.
They didn't have retirement centers.
They didn't go south for the winter.
They didn't have 401 Ks.
They trusted God.
And built for the kingdom.
And can you imagine how many children, teenager and adults
Have come to know Jesus in this very building
Because of their faithfulness in the past?

They were entrusted with the masters gifts
And they risked all to share it with us.
Will God add your name to the faithful,
Who gave and prayed,
And shared and rejoiced in the blessings?