

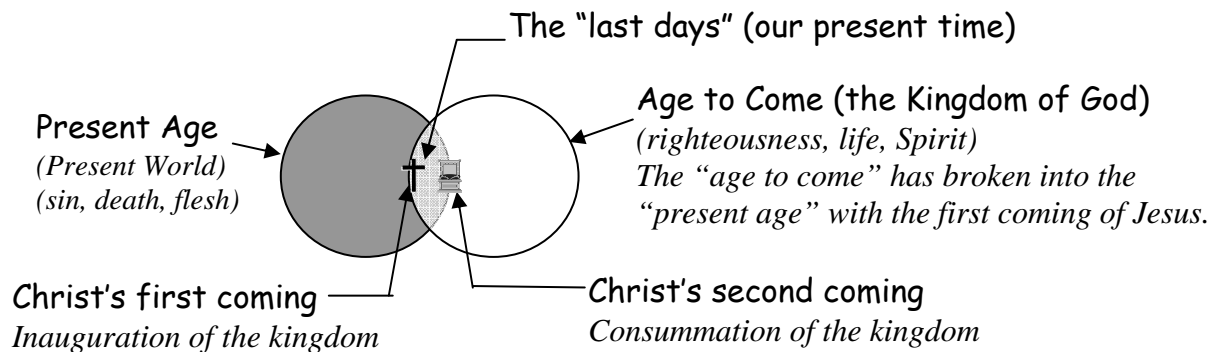
# Faithfulness While Waiting

Luke 19:11-27



## The Kingdom of God

- ❑ On his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled through Jericho (19:1). A wealthy tax collector named Zacchaeus wanted to see who Jesus was, so he climbed up in a tree. Jesus saw Zacchaeus and initiated a meeting with him, which led to Zacchaeus' repentance<sup>1</sup> and salvation (19:2-9).
  - 📖 Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house... For the Son of Man<sup>2</sup> came to seek and to save what was lost" (Luke 11:9-10).
- ❑ While Jesus' followers listened to this, they thought about the kingdom of God. Upon Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem, they expected the establishment of the kingdom. They believed that Jesus was the Messiah (the long awaited king), and Jerusalem was the capital of the kingdom. But they did not understand the two-stage view of the kingdom.<sup>3</sup>



## While We Wait

- ❑ The people would learn that the kingdom of God was *not* "going to appear at once" (19:11). The full establishment of the kingdom must await Jesus' second coming; in the future. In the meantime, what should Jesus' followers do? Jesus told them a parable. Read Luke 19:11-27.<sup>4</sup>
  1. The characters include the nobleman (to be king), "his servants," and "his subjects (citizens) [who] hated him." Whom do you think is represented by these different characters?<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "repentance" – changing one's mind and life direction; turning from self-centeredness and sin, toward God and faith.

<sup>2</sup> "Son of Man" – this title pointed not only to Jesus' identification with mankind but his Messianic status (Daniel 7:13).

<sup>3</sup> In one sense, the kingdom of God has come because the King has come (Luke 11:20; 17:20-21). The kingdom, as "the dynamic reign of God," is not yet visible, but can be realized in the hearts of those who submit their lives to the King. Those who have entered into God's kingdom (through faith) experience many of its blessings – forgiveness, salvation, joy, peace, and the presence of God in the Holy Spirit. In another sense, the kingdom is future (22:17-18), because the kingdom has not yet been consummated (completed). When Christ returns, he will establish his kingdom, and his reign will become visible to all. Those who have entered the kingdom (through faith in Christ) will experience it in full!

<sup>4</sup> The story in the parable would sound familiar to many of Jesus' listeners. After the death of Herod the Great, his son Archelaus went to Rome to seek the right to be king. The Jews rejected Archelaus as king, so they sent a delegation to Rome to protest his authority. Caesar Augustus compromised by giving Archelaus only half his father's kingdom, and the title "ethnarch" (governor) rather than "king" (Josephus, *Antiquities* 17.11.1 §§299-317).

<sup>5</sup> The nobleman (king) represents the Messiah Jesus. The servants represent those who claim to follow Jesus. And the "subjects who hated him" represent those (especially the Jews in this context) who had rejected Jesus as the Messiah.

## Responsibility & Faithfulness

❑ Before going away, the nobleman gave his servants a responsibility. He gave them ten minas,<sup>6</sup> and said, “Put this money to work until I come back” (*Luke 19:13*).<sup>7</sup>

❑ In a general sense, the nobleman gave his servants resources,<sup>8</sup> and he expected them to be faithful in the use of those resources until he returned. In like manner, God has given believers resources, and he expects them to be faithful in the use of those resources until Christ returns.

2. What kinds of “resources” has God given to believers?<sup>9</sup> In what ways are believers to use these resources in a responsible and faithful manner?<sup>10</sup> What are specific examples?

❑ When the king returned, he called his servants to account. Had the servants been responsible and faithful? The first servant did well. The king replied, “Well done, my good servant!” (*19:17a*) The second servant also did well. However, the third servant was called “wicked” (*19:22*).

3. What did the first and second servants receive because of their faithfulness?<sup>11</sup>

4. In what ways did the third servant fail? Why do you think he failed? What does this indicate about his relationship with the king?<sup>12</sup>



## Blessings & Judgment

❑ The faithful servants were blessed, while the third servant was judged (*19:22, 24*).<sup>13</sup> Verse 27 seems very harsh, but it emphasizes the reality of judgment on those who reject the King.

## Reflection & Application

- Which one of the three categories – faithful servant, unfaithful servant, or subject who rejects the King – best describes you? Are you happy with that category? Why or why not?
- As a believer, are you a good steward of the resources that God has given you? When Christ returns, do you think he will say, “Well done, good and faithful servant!”? Make a list of these resources, and determine how you can use each one in a more faithful way for God’s glory.

<sup>6</sup> “mina” (*mna*) = 100 drachmas, which would be equivalent to about 3 to 4 months wages for a basic worker.

<sup>7</sup> “Put this money to work” (*pragmateusasthe* - “engage in business trade”) – that is, make a profit. The servants were to carry out their responsibilities effectively and profitably until the nobleman returned.

<sup>8</sup> “resource” – a possession, property, supply, substance, device, means, ability, talent, etc.

<sup>9</sup> Our resources include time, money, other material possessions, position, opportunities, relationships, abilities, talents, spiritual gifts, etc. The use of God-given resources is called “stewardship,” which is an important responsibility.

<sup>10</sup> In the parable, the servants are given the responsibility of money management. Their purpose is to invest the money to earn a profit. Likewise, followers of Christ are given resources to manage for God’s purposes in accordance with His will (as recorded in the Bible). We are to know God and make Him known; love God and love others; point people to God with our lives and words; share the gospel; build up the church; help those in need, etc. We are to glorify God.

<sup>11</sup> Not only were they commended, they received more resources and responsibility (management of cities).

<sup>12</sup> He was not faithful. His excuse was fear because the king was a “hard (strict) man.” The servant either lied or misjudged the king. If he really felt that way, why didn’t he put the money in the bank and at least earn some interest. “Some people reject God or his agent on the unfounded premise that ‘if God is so harsh, then I do not want to know *that* kind of God.’ Of course, if he is sovereign and is in fact that harsh, then that is even more reason to respond to him” (Darrell Bock, *Luke* [Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996], 1539). Apparently, the servant did not really *know* the king.

<sup>13</sup> The parable *does not* suggest that salvation can be earned by human effort, but it does suggest that faithfulness will be rewarded. The third servant may represent a person who claims to follow Christ, but lacks a genuine faith in him.