

Word notes Sunday 21--09/09/13 Tony Hodge
Life in the Kingdom - Fruitfulness

Summary (read this bit out to remind cell members what was said on Sunday)

Key Texts: Key Texts: Matthew 25:14-30

The Parable of the Talents is often used to encourage us to give financially but as a picture of the Kingdom it surely applies to much more of our lives than our money. God wants us all to be fruitful and not hide away the things of great value that we've been entrusted with.

All the servants were entrusted with something of value, each according to his ability and it would seem nobody had nothing. If you're a member of the Kingdom then you have been entrusted with something of value.

They were expected to be fruitful – two put their talents to work right away and were fruitful over the long haul, one didn't. Those who were faithful with a little (worked it as best they could) were given charge of much, while he that did nothing, not even the simplest small thing, was punished.

Jesus says the Kingdom of God is like that. The master who goes away is Jesus himself. The servants are us. The Talents are those things of value that we have received from him. These must surely include the Good News, our salvation as well as the Gifts of the Holy Spirit and our innate "gifts, talents or abilities. Each of us has received something that suits us.

Jesus has gone away but will return – how will we use our "talents" to bear fruit? Is it enough to simply hold on to them until He returns? No we should be those who are seeking to understand the treasure and gifts we have received and how we can put them to use for a fruitful harvest in the Kingdom. As Jesus' friends rather than His servants (see John 15:15) shouldn't we be even more ready to continue His work for the Kingdom?

Application (this is the bit where cell members get to participate. Lead discussions around these points)

Look at Matthew 25 and identify the three main points Jesus was making. I suggest you consider it in the following sections: vv1-13; vv14-30 & vv31-46.

Do you agree that in essence Jesus was saying 1, Always be ready; 2, Don't sit on your behind - invest for a harvest & 3, While meeting the needs of the needy our attitude is as if they were Jesus himself?

Looking again at the whole chapter who are the following groups. In each case which group or neither or both might Christians fall into – can you back that up from scripture?

- In vv1-13 the wise versus the foolish virgins?
- In vv14-30 the faithful versus the unfaithful servant?
- In vv 31-46 the sheep versus the goats?

What does this tell you about God, the Kingdom and our responsibilities individually and together?

How can we ensure that we are among?

- The wise – how do we keep our lamps full – give practical examples?
- The faithful – what do we have and how do we bear fruit – be specific?
- The sheep – what is our response to the needy? Also are these needs physical, spiritual or both?

How will you implement these things in your life?

Witness (this is the bit where the cell talks and prays about how to share the Good News)

New Cells: Spend some time sharing the opportunities you have as individuals to witness, what is your current mission field? Do you need help?

Continuing Cells: Take time to redefine the groups or groups the Lord has laid on the heart of the Cell. Don't worry for now how you will reach them but instead try to identify needs and pray for them.