

# THE HUMBLE ARE INVITED TO THE TABLE



PSALM 123 1-4 // MATTHEW 25:14-30

## **MONDAY 11/20/23**

Psalm 123 1-4 // 1 I look to you, heaven-dwelling God, look up to you for help.

Matthew 25:14-30 // 14 “Again, the Kingdom of Heaven can be illustrated by the story of a man going on a long trip. He called together his servants and entrusted his money to them while he was gone. 15 He gave five bags of silver[a] to one, two bags of silver to another, and one bag of silver to the last—dividing it into proportion to their abilities. He then left on his trip. NLT

**REFLECTION** This week we are going to reflect on Jesus’ parable about what the “Kingdom of Heaven” is like. In this story there are four main characters: the rich man and three of his servants, who are given an opportunity of a lifetime. The master chose each one according to their ability. Their “ability” is the focus of Jesus’ teaching. Jesus does not distinguish between natural gifts (whether or not you can throw a football 75 yards) and the gifts of the Spirit. 1 Corinthians 12:2 says, “You know that when you were still pagans, you were led astray and swept along in worshiping speechless idols. 3 So I want you to know that no one speaking by the Spirit of God will curse Jesus, and no one can say Jesus is Lord, except by the Holy Spirit.(NLT)” The focus is on which servants are using the gifts rightly before God. The master graciously grants gifts to his servants to manage his affairs. He trusts them and has faith in them. Each is given according to their ability. In our relationship with God, He does not gift us according to our ability or virtue. No person is found by God to be suitable until God has made him so. That is why Jesus Christ was born as a gift to all of humanity to make us right and suitable.

**PRAYER** I look towards you O’ Lord my heaven-dwelling God. From there my help truly comes. For you are to be praised for turning me into one of your servants. In Jesus Name, Amen.

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## **TUESDAY 11/21/23**

Psalm 123 1-4 // Like servants, alert to their master’s commands like a maiden attending her lady.

Matthew 25:14-30 // 16 “The servant who received the five bags of silver began to invest the money and earned five more. 17 The servant with two bags of silver also went to work and earned two more. 18 But the servant who received the one bag of silver dug a hole in the ground and hid the master’s money. 19 “After a long time their master returned from his trip and called them to give an account of how they had used his money. NLT

**REFLECTION** The first servant took the risk, invested the money and earned 5 bags of silver. The second servant also invested and earned 2 more bags of silver. If you have ever invested in the stock market this is a great deal. We would all love to double our investments. Then the third servant was timid, insecure and filled with fear that he would make the wrong investment. So, he hid the gift and did not take advantage of the master’s gift. He is a huge disappointment. When asked to give an account of the gift he stupidly said he buried it the ground to keep it safe. I wonder how many times we have refused God’s gifts by burying them in the ground. Not everyone has the same level of natural gifts. I am never going to throw a football 60 yards, nor will I ever be a Billy Graham. Those are not my gifts from the Lord. Yet I have been given gifts to lead God’s people. I am always humbled by that, and certainly would never hide those gifts under a bushel; likewise should any servant of God hide their gifts. Find your gift and be a blessing to others.

**PRAYER** Lord I pray I am using my gift to build the kingdom and show others the love you have shown me. May I never get lazy and bury my gift. In Jesus Name, Amen.

### **WEDNESDAY 11/22/23**

Psalm 123 1-4 // We're watching and waiting (for the Lord) holding our breath, awaiting your word of mercy.

Matthew 25:14-30 // 20 The servant to whom he had entrusted the five bags of silver came forward with five more and said, 'Master, you gave me five bags of silver to invest, and I have earned five more.' 21 "The master was full of praise. 'Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let's celebrate together!' NLT



**REFLECTION** I once was a spiritual coach for a man who taught 30 business owners that God has committed them to be engaged in all sorts of trades. As Christian owners, they were responsible collectively for the livelihood of over 700 people. They engaged in receiving goods and offering services based on God's direction and teaching. To maintain this line of order, these

men learned and accepted God had assigned them a great responsibility for these families. This responsibility is a calling from God. The reward the servants received is an illustration of the glory of God. Let's be mindful God is not enriched, nor has any gain, by our labors - this is for us. We richly profit when the gifts of our salvation are applied to our relationship with others. Our heavenly Father highly values the redeemed. In their business, they contribute by demonstrating trust, grace, mercy, compassion, and forgiveness in their daily operations. All of these gifts are sharing the essence of the gospel. Let us never be weary in doing good. Christ teaches us in the parable that being a faithful servant in business is a very important calling. Galatians 6:9 says, "So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up. (NLT)"

**PRAYER** Father may I bring you glory in sharing my gift with others. Thank you for the gifts you've given me. I pray others may benefit by what I share through you. In Jesus Name, Amen.

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### **THURSDAY 11/23/23**

Psalm 123 1-4/// (We are) holding our breath, awaiting your word of mercy. Mercy, God, mercy!

Matthew 25:14-30/// 22 "The servant who had received the two bags of silver came forward and said, 'Master, you gave me two bags of silver to invest, and I have earned two more.' 23 "The master said, 'Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let's celebrate together!' NLT

**REFLECTION** A few years ago churches were growing because they were using the biblical principle of multiplication. In this parable the trusted servants did well with little and their gift doubled. This is an illustration of when a church is faithful to the gospel of Christ in little things, God multiplies the ministry. Many churches today fear the loss of members and wonder what they are going to do. The simple and just answer is for them to take a risk, keep their eyes on Him and trust God will provide. When we give way to fear of failure and become stressed with anxiety we are saying God is not going to bless our risk. The Master is in total control and understands all our affairs. By stepping up our faith we will enjoy the fullness of Christ's abundant blessings of all good things. That is what "let's celebrate together" means.

**PRAYER** Dear Lord when I see how your multiplication works, I begin to understand that I must step out in faith in order to see this work in my own life. I pray I continue to move forward and trust in your outcome. In Jesus Name, Amen.

### **FRIDAY 11/24/23**

Psalms 123 // (Come Lord have) Mercy, God, mercy!

Matthew 25:14-30 // 24 “Then the servant with the one bag of silver came and said, ‘Master, I knew you were a harsh man, harvesting crops you didn’t plant and gathering crops you didn’t cultivate. 25 I was afraid I would lose your money, so I hid it in the earth. Look, here is your money back.’ 26 “But the master replied, ‘You wicked and lazy servant! If you knew I harvested crops I didn’t plant and gathered crops I didn’t cultivate, 27 why didn’t you deposit my money in the bank? At least I could have gotten some interest on it.’ NLT

**REFLECTION** The third person of the parable is the one that most of us reflect. That is so very sad. The reason is also obvious; the man was in fear of the master and afraid he would do something wrong. Therefore, he did nothing. The land owner called him a wicked man for not investing the money in a bank. I understand this fear for the landowner. I too was afraid to approach God, my creator and master. It was not until I understood God’s gift of grace in Jesus Christ, that I also understood that God welcomed me into his presence. I remember a few years back I began to tell people, “if you have accepted Christ as your Savior, all past, present and future sins are forgiven. Therefore God’s wrath, and God’s anger is no longer upon you as a person who repented of their sins. In other words, God is not “mad” at you.” Some people would say they did not know God was ever angry at them. I am always shocked when I hear this line. God hates our sin and the wrath of God is still upon all unrepentant sinners. Without Christ’s saving works we remain under the wrath of God. That is plain and clear in the parable about the lazy servant. That man denied the gifts of the Spirit, and in doing so deprived himself of the glory of the good things that come from God. I know people who remain in this wretched state of fear of God. As a result they live in a state of spiritual poverty. The little faith they once had, over time, is completely lost. And after a time they can no longer hear the good news of Christ. Their ears have been shut. Proverbs 1:28 says, “When they cry for help, I will not answer. Though they anxiously search for me, they will not find me. 29 For they hated knowledge and chose not to fear the Lord. 30 They rejected my advice and paid no attention when I corrected them. 31 Therefore, they must eat the bitter fruit of living their own way, choking on their own schemes. 32 For simpletons turn away from me—to death. Fools are destroyed by their own complacency. 33 But all who listen to me will live in peace, untroubled by fear of harm. (NLT)”

**PRAYER** Lord forgive me if I have not opened and used the gift you have given me. May I never close my eyes to your leading. Thank you for the gift too of the Holy Spirit. In Jesus Name, Amen.

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### **SATURDAY 11/25/23**

Psalms 123 // We’ve been kicked around long enough. Kicked in the teeth by complacent rich men, kicked when we’re down by arrogant brutes.

Matthew 25:14-30 // 28 “Then he ordered, ‘Take the money from this servant, and give it to the one with the ten bags of silver. 29 To those who use well what they are given, even more will be given, and they will have an abundance. But from those who do nothing, even what little they have will be taken away. 30 Now throw this useless servant into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ NLT

**REFLECTION** This is what happens to lazy people who have not prepared to meet their Maker. They try to hide their guilt from God through means of self-gratification. They refuse any submission to Christ which always gives a certain uneasiness. Yet they still do not give way to God’s love and they ignore it. After the master of the house returned he held the servants accountable. This was to impart courage for the ones who took a leap of faith. One was idle or careless with the gift. Let us hold ourselves accountable to use these gifts from God. These gifts are important to be used for the glory of God. Do not waste them.

**PRAYER** Lord Jesus, protect me from being numb to that I know what is true and right for the Kingdom. I long to make you proud, as a child of the Father. In Jesus Name, Amen.

