



Individual Responsibility Regarding Human Capabilities

Living in the Image of God
Module 03 Session 20

Banking Blessings Ministry
San Antonio, Texas
USA



Living in the Image of God

- God creates every person to represent him in interactions with others
- Be for others what God would be for them if he lived with us in human form
- He provides resources for people to perform the responsibilities
- He blesses those that do

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Living in the Image of God

- Program seeks to understand
- Meaning of *Living in the Image of God*
- Resources God has provided to guide us
- Human responsibilities
- Benefits of *Living in the Image of God*

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What We Will Learn

- Discuss the Parable of the Talents
- Understand God distributes his resources among people
- To perform individual responsibilities
- Grants capabilities to every person
- Expects every person to deploy theirs toward human responsibilities to self and others
- Expand and diversify capabilities through use

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What We Will Learn

- Recognizes two categories of people
- Based on what they do with the capabilities he granted to them
- The righteous: deploy, expand, and diversify
- God rewards the righteous
- The wicked: stagnate their capabilities
- God punishes the wicked
- Matthew 25:14–30

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Granted to All

- God grants capabilities to every person
- Distributes his resources among people according to his purpose for each person
- Resources for performing human responsibilities to self and others
- Described quantitatively in the parable
- Represents both quantitative and qualitative human attributes
- Matthew 25:14–15

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Matthew 25 (NIV)

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

15 To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey.

- Key Words and Phrases from Matthew 25:14
 - "Again"
 - "it will be like"
 - "entrusted his wealth to them"

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Wealthy Man and His Servants

- An interaction between wealthy man and his servants
- Describes human relationship with God
- Regarding distribution human capabilities
- Man was about to leave his servants by themselves for a while
- Gave a portion of his resources to each
- Different portion to each person
- Every person got a portion

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Expectations

- Wealthy man's expectation of his servants regarding resources he entrusted to them
- Conveys God's expectation of a person regarding human capabilities he grants them
- Wealthy man entrusted portions of his wealth to his servants as he departed for a journey
- Expected every servant to deploy wealth as the owner would if he was home

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Expectations

- God entrusts a portion of his resources to each person as human capabilities
- Expects every person to deploy their capabilities toward human responsibilities
- Responsibilities to self
- Responsibilities to others
- As God would if he managed human capabilities and responsibilities directly in human form

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Expectations cont'd

- Expects every person to expand their capabilities
- Increase value, effectiveness, and versatility
- Described quantitatively in the parable
- Represents both quantitative and qualitative enhancement of human capabilities
- Deployment leads to expansion
- Non-deployment leads to stagnation
- Matthew 25:16-18

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Matthew 25 (NIV)

16 The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more.

17 So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more.

18 But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

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Two Categories of People

- Matthew 25:16–18 describes two categories of people as God sees them
- The righteous grow and diversify their capabilities through use [Matthew 25:16–17]
- The wicked stagnate their capabilities by refusing to use them [Matthew 25:18]
- God rewards the righteous
- Punishes the wicked

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Rewards the Righteous

- The righteous grow and diversify capabilities through use
- Deploy and expand their capabilities
- Sensitive to needs around them: needs of self, others, and the environment
- Care for the needy
- Work toward providing goods or service to alleviate the need
- Through compassion or commerce
- Matthew 25:20–23 [20–21 read in session]

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Matthew 25 (NIV)

20 The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.’

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!’

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Punishes the Wicked

- The wicked stagnate their capabilities
- Typically insensitive to needs around them: needs of self, others, and the environment
- Either they recognize need but don’t care
- Or not attentive to recognize the need
- Make up excuses to dodge responsibilities
- Decline call to compassion or commercial opportunity
- Matthew 25:24–30 [Selections read in session]

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Matthew 25 (NIV)

24 “Then the man who had received one bag of gold 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 gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.’

- Make up excuses to dodge responsibilities

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Matthew 25 (NIV)

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?’

28 ““So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags.

30 And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

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What We Learned

- God grants capabilities to every person
- Expects every person to deploy theirs toward human responsibilities to self and others
- As God would if he were to manage human responsibilities and capabilities directly
- Expand and diversify capabilities through use
- Rewards those that do
- Punishes those that stagnate theirs
- Based on the Parable of the Talents

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Individual Responsibility Regarding Human Capabilities

Living in the Image of God M03S20

Christ teaching in the Parable of the Talents provides understanding that God distributes portions of his resources as grants of human capabilities to every person; which he expects all to deploy toward their individual responsibility to themselves, others, and the environment. He expects every person to do this the same way he would, if he were to manage human responsibilities and capabilities directly in human form. Further, he expects every person to expand and diversify their human capabilities by using them, rewards those that do, and punishes those that stagnate theirs by declining opportunities to use them.

We discuss Christ teaching in the Parable of the Talents to understand that God distributes portions of his resources among people as grants of human capabilities: to empower every person to perform their individual responsibility to themselves, others, and the environment. He expects every person to deploy the resources he grants to them toward their individual responsibility, the same way he would if he managed human responsibilities and capabilities directly in human form. Also, he expects every person to expand and diversify their capabilities by using them.

Further, Christ explains through the parable that God recognizes two human categories based on what a person does with the capabilities he granted to them. One category is the righteous. These are people that use their capabilities and expand and diversify them as a result. The other category is the wicked, which are people that stagnate their capabilities by refusing to use them. God rewards the righteous and punishes the wicked.

This understanding of the *Parable of the Talents* is based on Matthew 25:14–30 and enriched by our previous discussion of *Living in the Image of God*.

Human Capabilities Granted to All

Christ begins the parable with the phrase “Again, it will be like...,” by which he announces he is about to provide another description of human relationship with God using fictional events and interactions: “Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them” [Matthew 25:14]. The “man” in the opening statement represents God, his servants represent people, and the phrase “entrusted his wealth to them” conveys a message that God distributes portions of his resources among people.

Christ explains through the parable that God grants capabilities to every person. He grants a portion of his resources to every person according to his purpose for the person. He grants the resources as human capabilities to empower every person to perform their responsibilities to themselves and responsibilities to others. The grant and God’s expectation regarding the grant are described quantitatively in the parable. However, the description represents both quantitative and qualitative human attributes and the individual responsibility regarding the attributes [Matthew 25:14–15]: “To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey.”

Expectation Regarding Human Capabilities

The wealthy man was about to leave his servants by themselves for a period. He entrusted a portion of his wealth to each servant. He gave a different portion to each servant based on his judgment of the servant's need and ability. However, every servant received a portion.

Also, the parable describes the man's expectation of his servants regarding the resources he entrusted to them. Christ provides the description to convey God's expectation of a person regarding human capabilities he grants to them. The man entrusted portions of his wealth to his servants and expected every servant to deploy the wealth as the owner would if he was home.

Therefore, one lesson from the parable is that God has an expectation regarding the resources he entrusts to every person as grants of human capabilities. He expects every person to deploy the capabilities toward their individual responsibility to themselves, others, and the environment: the same way that God would if he managed human responsibilities and capabilities directly in human form. This expectation represents the individual responsibility regarding their human capabilities. God bequeath human capabilities to every person by entrusting a portion of his resources to them and expects you to deploy your capabilities toward performing your individual responsibility to yourself and others: the same way he would if he managed human responsibilities and capabilities directly in human form.

Further, he expects every person to expand their capabilities: i.e., increase their value, effectiveness, and versatility. This expectation is described quantitatively in the parable. However, the description represents both quantitative and qualitative enhancement of human capabilities. Deployment of capabilities leads to expansion, whereas non-deployment leads to stagnation [Matthew 25:16–18]: “The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more. So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more. But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.”

Binary Human Categorization

Through the parable, Christ describes two categories of people as God sees them. One category is the righteous: i.e., people that grow and diversify their human capabilities through use. In the parable, the righteous is represented by the two servants that expanded the resources entrusted to them. The other category is the wicked: i.e., people that stagnate their human capabilities by declining opportunities to use them. In the parable, the wicked is represented by the servant that refused to work with the resources entrusted to him. The categorization is binary: whoever is not righteous is wicked. There is no middle category. God rewards the righteous, but punishes the wicked.

The Righteous

The righteous grow and diversify their human capabilities by using them. Typically, the righteous are sensitive to the needs around them—needs of themselves, needs of others, and needs of the environment. They recognize the need, care about the needy, and work diligently toward providing goods or service to alleviate the need, through compassion or commercial enterprise. As we discuss in a previous study under [Call to Compassion or Commercial Opportunity](#), a person may provide goods or services free or for-fee to alleviate a need: for free to respond to a call to compassion or for-fee in responding to a commercial opportunity.

In the parable, the righteous is represented by the two servants that expanded the resources granted to them [Matthew 25:20]: “The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.’” God rewards the righteous, which Christ describes in the parable through the master’s response to the two servants [Matthew 25:21]: “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!’”

The Wicked

In contrast, the wicked stagnate their human capabilities by declining opportunities to use them. Typically, such people are insensitive to the needs around them: needs of themselves, needs of others, or needs of the environment. Either they are not attentive to recognize the need or they recognize the need but don’t care. They make up excuses to dodge responsibilities: decline calls to compassion or commercial opportunity [Matthew 25:24–25]: “Then the man who had received one bag of gold 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. So I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.’”

God punishes the wicked [Matthew 25:26, 28, 30]: “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? So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags. And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’”

Summary of What We Learned

Christ teaching in the Parable of the Talents provides understanding that God distributes portions of his resources as grants of human capabilities to every person; which he expects all to deploy toward their individual responsibility to themselves, others, and the environment.

He expects every person to do this the same way he would, if he were to manage human responsibilities and capabilities directly in human form. Further, he expects every person to expand and diversify their human capabilities by using them, rewards those that do, and punishes those that stagnate theirs by declining opportunities to use them.