

# Leader Guide

## Entrusted

Fall 2024 | Week 7

Message Date 10/27/2024

### THE GOAL

This week, Pastor Craig is back, and we are diving back into his series *Entrusted: God's Heart on Money*. This week we will be unpacking the passage of what is known as “the parable of the talents”. My prayer for you this week is that you don't allow familiarity to cloud what God wants to share with you. As I've been putting together the study, I asked God to show me something different. The goal will be look at this passage through fresh eyes and ask God to reveal anything in us that is like the last servant in the story.

### MY STORY

- 1) What is your favorite and least favorite holiday dish, and why?
- 2) Would you rather live without heat and AC or live without social media?

### QUICK REVIEW

- 3) What caught your attention from Sunday's message?

### DIGGING DEEPER / TAKING IT HOME

Matthew 25:14-30 (NLT)

<sup>14</sup>“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. <sup>15</sup>He gave five bags of silver to one, two bags of silver to another, and one bag of silver to the last—dividing it in proportion to their abilities. He then left on his trip.

<sup>16</sup>“The servant who received the five bags of silver began to invest the money and earned five more. <sup>17</sup>The servant with two bags of silver also went to work and earned two more. <sup>18</sup>But the servant who received the one bag of silver dug a hole in the ground and hid the master's money.

<sup>19</sup>“After a long time their master returned from his trip and called them to give an account of how they had used his money. <sup>20</sup>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.’

<sup>21</sup> “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!’

<sup>22</sup> “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.’

<sup>23</sup> “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!’

<sup>24</sup> “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.

<sup>25</sup> I was afraid I would lose your money, so I hid it in the earth. Look, here is your money back.’

<sup>26</sup> “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, <sup>27</sup> why didn’t you deposit my money in the bank? At least I could have gotten some interest on it.’

<sup>28</sup> “Then he ordered, ‘Take the money from this servant, and give it to the one with the ten bags of silver. <sup>29</sup> 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. <sup>30</sup> Now throw this useless servant into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’<sup>i</sup>

- 4) What is the main lesson of the parable of the talents? How can we use the talents? God has given us for his kingdom this week?

The main lesson is that God entrusts us with resources, abilities, and opportunities. We are to steward them faithfully, knowing they ultimately belong to Him. Faithfulness and productivity are rewarded, while laziness and fear are condemned.

- 5) Why does the master give each servant different amounts, and what does that tell us about people?

The master gives each servant different amounts based on their abilities. This tells us that God creates us different from one another. The idea of perfect equality is not biblical. Your abilities are different than my abilities, so God may have given you 10 talents, whereas He is only giving me five. Or I may be the person who gets only one.

- 6) What do the first two servants have in common with what they did with their talents?

They got a return on the money their master had given them.

- 7) Where are you seeing progress in what God has entrusted to you, even if it feels small? How does this encourage you to keep being faithful?

(Justin) I don’t want to brag, but I want to be honest. When I was young in my faith, I struggled with giving. I very much had the scarcity mindset – that I wouldn’t have enough money or that I would run out of money and not be able to pay my bills. God really convicted me on that. He told me to trust Him, and so I took a step of faith. Now, Heights Church is evidence of what God has entrusted me with. I know I don’t support the whole bill for the church (obviously) but I do my part. That means I have a share in the work that God is doing here at Heights Church. Every kid that meets Jesus, every student that is baptized and follows Christ, every adult that’s in a life group and finding

healing... I have a share. That's how I stay encouraged. What are some other ways that you can come up with as a group?

- 8) What did the last servant do? What assumptions did he make about the master's character or what he thought the master's character was? Have you ever had a similar assumption about God's character?

He buried the money and returned it to his master because he didn't trust his master. It's different because he made assumptions about the master. His assumptions were that the master was a hard, unrelenting man who doesn't do any work for what he earns, so he didn't want to lose any of his master's money.

- 9) What was the truth about the master?

The truth is that the master was generous. In the end, he doubles the reward of the first two servants by giving them charge over more. If the last servant had only invested his portion, he would've been rewarded too. He uses the servant's assumption against him and gives it to the one who is a better steward. The truth is, this is Jesus and he's calling us to trust him with all that we are given. Too many of us have a misunderstanding of what stewardship means and that God is generous with what he gives us. He's asking for a small portion back, not all of it.

## CHAIR TIME TOOLS

Think and pray through the following:

- 1) Is there anything in your heart that is like the last servant? Do you have a misunderstanding about the heart of our master?
- 2) Is there something that God wants you to start or to stop with your relationship to money?
- 3) Who can you reach out to and encourage this week?

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<sup>i</sup> Tyndale House Publishers, *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2015), Mt 25:14–30.