

Unleashing your Divine Potential – Being Faithful in the Small Things

Often people don't want to "sweat the small stuff." They would rather take care of all the more important things in life. Things that guarantee profile, recognition and admiration. However, in **Matthew 25:31** Jesus said, *"Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come share your master's happiness."* Another translation says, *"The master was full of praise. 'Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling the small things, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let's celebrate together!"*

Note, "Sweating the small stuff" is the best way to get promotion! It is the key for unlocking greater opportunities, more responsibilities, and more enjoyable productivity. The truth is, the great things we long for (and search for), are for the most part found among the small things we so easily ignore or even discard. It is in being **faithful** to the small things that we unleash our divine potential. This is a fundamental truth! Success in God is a result of both divine activity and human effort. God promises to do what we cannot do for ourselves, but commands us to do that which He will not do for us!

There is a definite process in our becoming all that God has created us to be (in achieving our full potential in Him). This involves the miraculous working together with the mundane. Our transformation is a miracle of God which includes the stewardship of man.

There is a human side to every divine challenge! In the *"parable of the talents"* (**Matthew 25**) and the *"parable of the minas"* (**Luke 19**) this message is central. God entrusts us with His resources, and then holds us accountable for what we do with them. Each parable ends with the same spiritual principle emphatically declared, *"For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance."* (**Matthew 25:2** and **Luke 19:26**)

Jesus is laying out for us a principle for life that is so simple it is easy to miss. Whoever is faithful with the small things will be a candidate for expanded responsibility in the kingdom. Those who are most **faithful** with the most resources will create an abundance for themselves in God's Kingdom. It's not about how much you and I get; it is all about what we do with what we have! We were not created to be average or mediocre, or to merely exist. God created us to be unique. Being human was not intended to be a curse, but a gift. While you may dream of a better life or the better person you could become, only God knows the person you were intended to be. Only He knows the full measure of your potential! Conversely, only God knows the full measure of what has been neglected or lost when you do nothing.

Let's now read the parable in **Matthew 25:14-30**....

God's kingdom will also be like a man leaving home to travel to another place for a visit. Before he left, he talked with his servants. He told his servants to take care of his things while he was gone. He decided how much each servant would be able to care for.

The man gave one servant five bags of money. He gave another servant two bags. And he gave a third servant one bag. Then he left. The servant who got five bags went quickly to invest the money. Those five bags of money earned five more. It was the same with the servant who had two bags. That servant invested the money and earned two more. But the servant who got one bag of money went away and dug

a hole in the ground. Then he hid his master's money in the hole.

After a long time the master came home. He asked the servants what they did with his money. The servant who got five bags brought that amount and five more bags of money to the master. The servant said, "Master, you trusted me to care for five bags of money. So I used them to earn five more." The master answered, "You did right. You are a good servant who can be trusted. You did well with that small amount of money. So I will let you care for much greater things. Come and share my happiness with me." Then the servant who got two bags of money came to the master. The servant said, "Master, you gave me two bags of money to care for. So I used your two bags to earn two more." The master answered, "You did right. You are a good servant who can be trusted. You did well with a small amount of money. So I will let you care for much greater things. Come and share my happiness with me."

Then the servant who got one bag of money came to the master. The servant said, "Master, I knew you were a very hard man. You harvest what you did not plant. You gather crops where you did not put any seed. So I was afraid. I went and hid your money in the ground. Here is the one bag of money you gave me." The master answered, "You are a wicked and lazy servant!

You say you knew that I harvest what I did not plant and that I gather crops where I did not put any seed. So you should have put my money in the bank. Then, when I came home, I would get my money back. And I would also get the interest that my money earned."

So the master told his other servants, "Take the one bag of money from that servant and give it to the servant who has ten bags. Everyone who uses what they have will get more. They will have much more than they need. But people who do not use what they have will have everything taken away from them." Then the master said, "Throw that useless servant outside into the darkness, where people will cry and grind their teeth with pain."

This parable, and the other in **Luke 19**, establishes a framework for how the kingdom of God works.

The master distributes his resources among his servants not equally or proportionately, but rather, as he chooses. Nevertheless each servant is entrusted with the master's property. It is important to note that the master does not tell his servants how to manage the money or what to do with it. It does however say that he distributed the resources according to each individual's **ability**. In other words, he didn't give them more than they were capable of managing well. Therefore, each one was effectively positioned to 'succeed'. Each servant was given resources that were in line with his full potential.

Luke puts a different spin on this part of the story. In the parable of the minas, a man of noble birth was going to a distant country to have himself appointed as King and then return to his people. So he called ten of his servants and gave them ten minas (each equivalent to 3 months wages). Then he gave them these simple instructions, "*Put the money to work until I come back.*" Again he left it to their discretion as to how they would invest the money they were entrusted with.

In these parables, each servant was measured not in comparison to the other, but by his own God-given capacity. In

both stories a test was necessary to ascertain the level of responsibility each servant could be entrusted with. In both cases the master intended to hand out greater opportunity and privilege but waited for them to pass the test. What's more, every person involved is not the same. God created us all equal but not the same! People have different capacities, and therefore, different potential. In all of us there is divine talent that is both waiting to be unleashed and yet fully dependant on us being a faithful stewards of what we've been entrusted with.

Each parable chooses a different word to paint a picture of the kind of person God desires for us to become: (1) 'faithful', (2) 'trustworthy'. When we are faithful we are trustworthy. A person who is unfaithful can never be trusted. These two character traits are inseparable! You can't stay the course without them. Perseverance is the ability to remain faithful for the full duration.

It doesn't matter how long the master is away (however long before the King returns), those who are **trustworthy** will persevere to the end and be commended on his return. Notice, your divine potential is being unleashed even when the master is away. Why? Because he can trust you with the small things!

The master's basis for evaluation is summarised in his statement, "**Because you have been trustworthy in a very small matter...**" The Lord's bottom-line is that the "small stuff" matters! While we may be unable to perceive it, great things are birthed when we take care of the small stuff. It is those small acts of faithfulness that unleash divine consequences. The master began by entrusting his servants with minas and concluded by giving them charge of cities! Their stewardship with the less significant things revealed their **trustworthiness** with those things of far greater importance.

But what about the servants who did nothing with what was entrusted to them? Both of them had an improper view of the master. The thought the master was a hard man, a thief who took what was rightfully his and reaped unfair profit from it. The servant given the one talent buried it in the ground. He didn't steal it, and without being asked, he quickly returned it. Yet his master condemned him with the indictment that he was wicked and lazy. Lazy I can understand, but wicked - no!

Is it possible that God views our negligence differently?

The servant was declared wicked when what he could have done was measured against what he actually did do! According to our common view of holiness, the third servant in both these parables did nothing wrong! He just didn't do anything. That's all!

These parables help to reveal God's measure for our lives. God sees not only who we are, but who we can become. When we neglect our God-given capacity. When we refuse to maximise our God-given potential, it is wickedness in the sight of God. To live our lives beneath our divine capacity is dishonouring our Creator. All of us have gifts for which God demands our stewardship (faithfulness). Whether you've been given one, five or ten; you have not been left empty-handed. The question is; "*What are you doing with what God has entrusted to with?*"

Every one of us has a God-given talent. And each of us is **unique** in the contribution we can make when utilising that talent. But bear in mind, there comes a point when we are not supposed to be full of potential, but rather, full of talent, capacity and productivity. Potential is only a glimpse of what we could be. Yet, there should be a definite shift from where we have potential to where we become potent! We are not supposed to die with our potential still in tact. A life lived

according to God's plan harnesses all the potential placed within and does something with it.

Remember this; when potential it becomes potent, it always produces great results.

However, potential has no where to go if it has not been energised with **faithfulness**. In God's eyes, when we are unfaithful we are a bad investment. We may find ourselves blaming others for our failures, but in the end, it's all down to us! If God cannot trust us with the small things, why should he take the risk? He would rather invest in someone who has proved to be faithful and trustworthy.

So how do you unleash your divine potential? First....

- + Do not be lazy.
- + Do not neglect your God-given capacity.
- + Do not refuse to maximise your God-given potential.
- + Do not shun responsibility.
- + Do not give up.

And here are the things you must do:

- + You must be trustworthy.
- + You must be a good steward.
- + You must persevere for the whole duration.
- + You must utilise you God-given capacity.
- + You must maximise your God-given potential.
- + You must become productive.

But most of all, you must be "faithful in the small things!" Whoever is **faithful** with what God has given them will find a special place in the kingdom - place of influence and expanded responsibility. Whoever is **faithful** will jump the queue and be fast-tracked to prosperity. The great things of God come out of the small acts of faithfulness.