



THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS





Prayer

Spend 5 minutes in prayer. Use this opening prayer as a prompt if you want a place to start.

Lord Jesus, open our eyes to see and open our ears to hear where you are in these scriptures. We pray your Holy Spirit living in us would reveal its wisdom to us and point us towards you and how we may be generous and live generously. Amen!

Reading

Before you discuss the questions on the next page as a group, spend 5 minutes reading aloud as a group or listening to Matthew 25:14-30



LET'S Talk



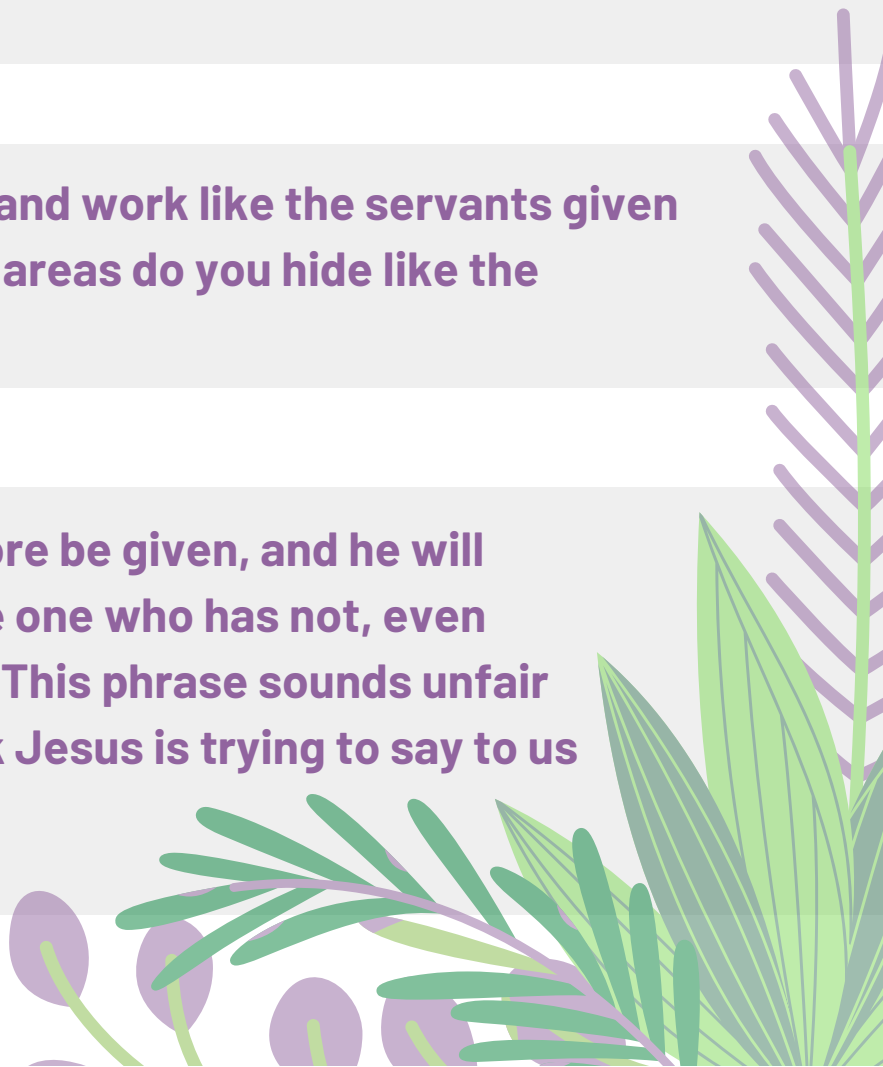
Spend 15 minutes discussing the questions below

The servants were given an amount each according to their ability. What do you make of this? Which servant would you be?

The priest and the Levite found it difficult to love this man by passing him on the street. Who do you find it difficult to love?

What areas of life do you invest and work like the servants given two and five talents and in what areas do you hide like the servant with one talent?

“For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away”. This phrase sounds unfair at first glance. What do you think Jesus is trying to say to us through the Master’s words?





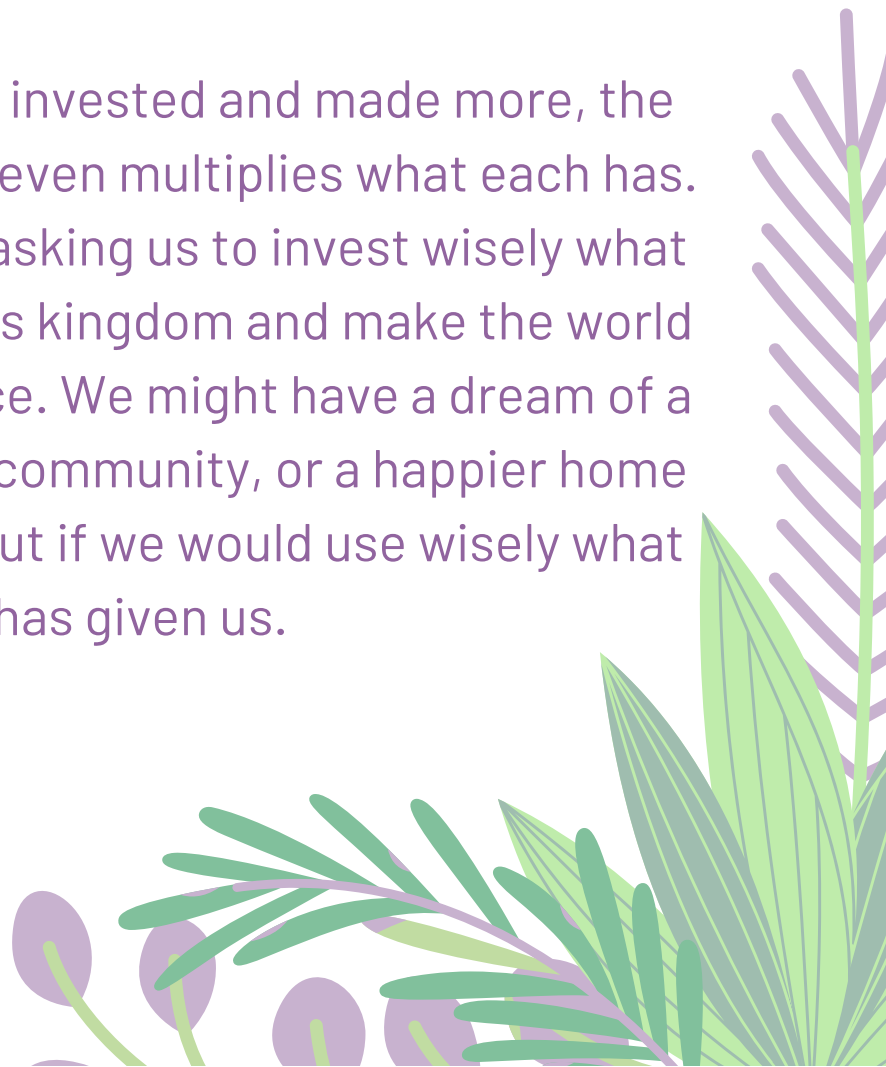
Reflection

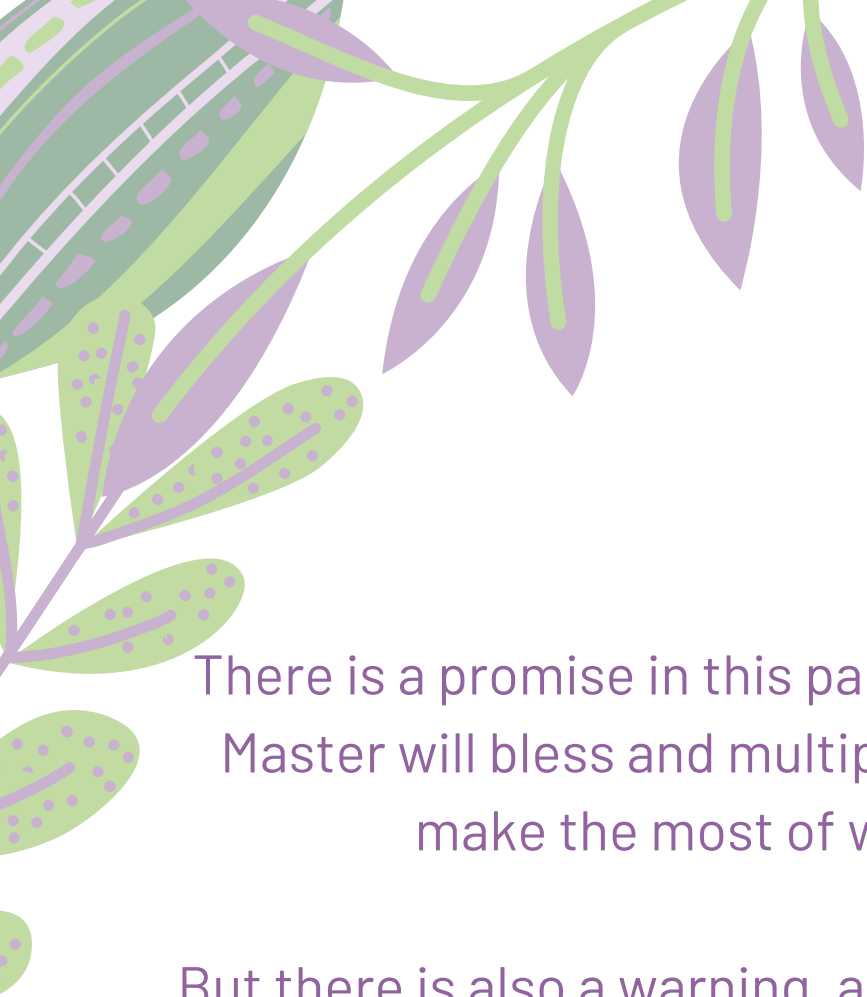
Spend 15 minutes in reflection as a group. As part of this time please read the reflection below and/or listen to the sermon from Libby Culmer (Church Operations and Generosity Development Team Leader)

What does Jesus say about generosity in this parable?

Through this parable, Jesus is displaying a core tenet of living generously - how we steward the blessings we receive from God. Although the parable talks about money and how to invest it, the underlying message is how to use what God has blessed you with in terms of money, time, skills, possessions and potential. The Master provides each servant with an opportunity to do something with the "talents" they have received.

For the servants who invested and made more, the Master is pleased and even multiplies what each has. Jesus, the Master, is asking us to invest wisely what we have to advance his kingdom and make the world we live in a better place. We might have a dream of a business, a friendlier community, or a happier home life waiting to break out if we would use wisely what God has given us.





There is a promise in this parable that Jesus as the Master will bless and multiply what we have if we make the most of what we have.

But there is also a warning, as the master scolds the one who does nothing with the money, taking the talent from him and giving it to him who has the ten talents. The Master was not angry with the servant for the outcome but because he lacked faith and didn't try. The servant could have invested and lost all the Master's money. Still, he hid his resources and potential and wasted his one shot at pleasing the Master, and it was gone forever. Jesus has given us this one shot at life; let's not waste it!

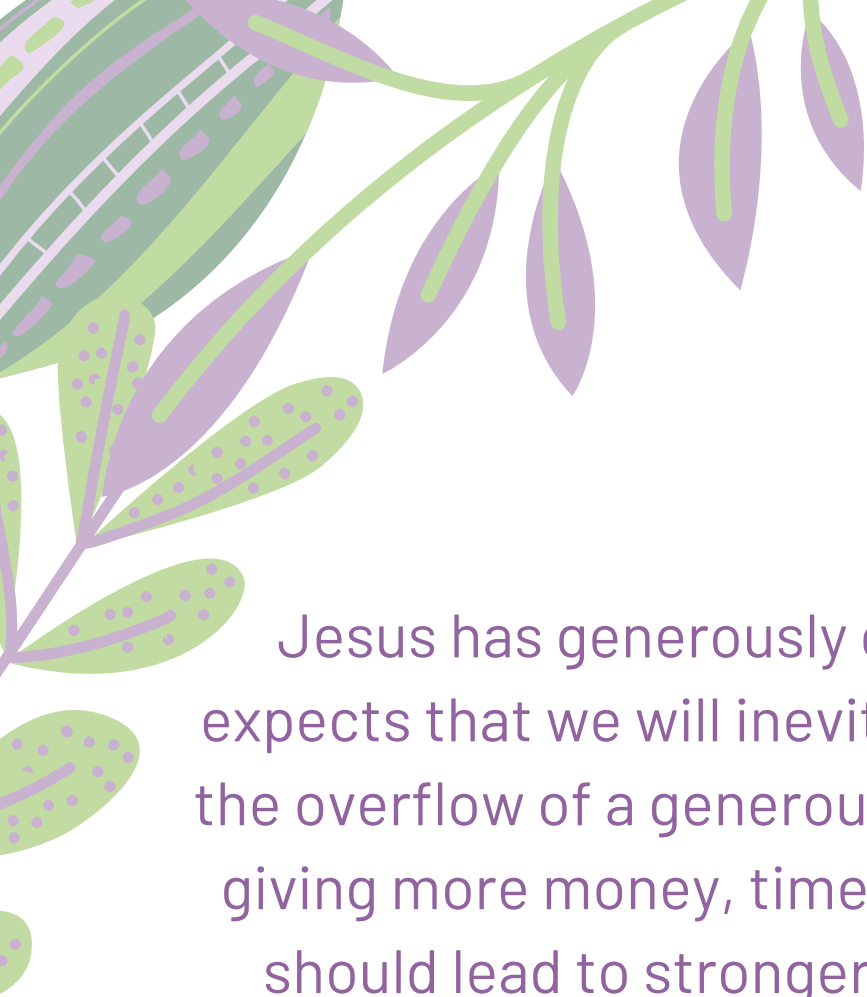
How might we respond?

A life stewarded as Jesus teaches in the parable is one intended to bless our lives and to bless the lives of others. Jesus has given each of us resources of time, treasure (money and wealth) and talents (skills and knowledge) with the responsibility to do something with them and increase the blessings we have.

We should aim to use the money we have to generate financial or social return; we should use our time to add value and use our skills to love and serve others effectively. In doing this, we will make the most of opportunities that come our way.

**What areas (time, treasure, talents) do you think Jesus is challenging you to steward better?
Where could you make one change today?**





Jesus has generously given us to us. He expects that we will inevitably bless others as the overflow of a generous heart. More people giving more money, time and skills to others should lead to stronger families, growing churches, and healthier and more prosperous communities. As we as God's people aim to build God's kingdom here on earth, as in heaven.

Who is Jesus calling you to bless? Can you think of one way you could help them this week?

Prayer

Spend 5 minutes in prayer and gratitude. Use this closing prayer as a prompt if you want a place to start.

Jesus, thank you for all the blessings you provide for us. Lord, we pray that you can teach and encourage us to use all you have given us wisely and not waste our gifts and opportunities. Thank you for being so generous that you promise us even more blessings if we steward well the blessings we have. Help us use these blessings, our time, talents and treasures to bless others and build your kingdom here. Amen!

