

OPEN BIBLE CHURCH

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SERMON TITLE

Well Done

SERIES

DATE

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KEY SCRIPTURE

Matthew 25:21

SYNOPSIS

The words we want to hear when we stand before the Lord. What is God looking for?

HIGHLIGHTS



👉 Well Done!

Just for fun...

A dog sees a "Now hiring" poster outside of a computer store. The poster reads: "Must be able to type. Must be able to program. And must be bilingual. We are an equal opportunity employer." The dog takes the poster in his mouth, and walks in. The manager spots the dog, and decides to humor it, pulling up a chair and a computer with a word processor. "Alright, if you want to work here, you need to first write a letter," and leaves the room. 30 minutes later, he comes back in, and the dog has typed out a completely error-free letter. "Well, I'll be. This is a smart dog. But can he program?" he asks himself. 20 minutes pass, and the dog has made a perfectly running website for the store. He looks at the dog, stunned, and finally speaks. "Look, I know you have the qualifications, but, well... you're a dog." The dog nudges the words "We are an equal opportunity employer" on the poster, and the manager sighs. "There's no way you're bilingual." The dog looks him in the eyes, and says, "Meow."

Review:

Three kinds of Church people: the Critic, the Consumer, the Contributor. Jesus set the example for serving, and we are all called to serve. The purpose of our gifts and abilities is to serve others. Kingdom greatness is measured by serving.

👉 Today... Matthew 25:21

'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things...'

In the story, the owner had gone on a journey, leaving his servants in charge while he was gone. They each had their own responsibilities and when he returned, he examined their performance and rewarded them accordingly. Jesus told this story to illustrate what the Kingdom of Heaven will be like.

The first thing to note is that the king will return (v. 19). The timing is uncertain, although there are clear signs of the times, so we know it will be soon. The return of the king will bring judgment and eternal consequences. His judgment will include how we have used all that he has given us.

👉 **What are the "talents" God has given us?** Our **skills** and abilities. Our **time**. Our material and financial **resources**. Our relationships. In short, our very lives!!! He expects us to do something beneficial with these. He will evaluate how much we benefitted his kingdom with the resources he has given us. In this story, we see two servants who did well by improving upon the resources they were given. The third one did nothing with his resources and was punished for it.

Some people are like that third servant, feeling that they don't have much to offer, so they do nothing. But we need to realize that whatever we have, however little, is a gift from God. It belongs to him, so he expects us to use it for him.



When God asked Moses to tell Pharaoh to let the children of Israel go, Moses used a number of phrases to complain about what he did not have: "Who am I that I should go? Suppose they do not believe me? I have never been eloquent." After listening to Moses' complaints, God said to him: "What is that in your hand?" In essence, God was saying: "Moses, I am not interested in what you don't have; I am only interested in what you do have. Reach out your hand and certainly I will be with you."

There are some observations right away. First, it will help us to keep in mind that what we have is **☞ not ours. It comes from God.** Also, we must **invest and use the things we have been given.** And, remember, **there will be a day of accountability.**

Verse 21...

☞ Well Done. Are you planning to hear those words?

The two faithful servants received: Affirmation, Promotion, and Celebration.

Affirmation: "Well done."

Promotion: "I'm going to give you even more."

Celebration: "Let's celebrate together!"

That's what I want to hear when I stand before the Lord. How about you? And, apparently it all depends on how we use the resources God has given us.

☞ There's a Danish proverb that says, "**What you are is God's gift to you; what you do with yourself is your gift to God.**" I honestly think that even this statement is too soft. Since everything we have comes from God, what we do with it isn't really a gift back to him. It's more like something we owe back to him. If we want to hear the words, "Well done," then we need to check our heart's motivation.

In John 17:4 Jesus desired to do God's work. He said, "I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do." Paul had a similar ambition in 2 Timothy 4:7-8: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 8 Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness..."

Using our gifts and abilities for the Lord is our obligation, *and* it brings him glory, leading to a reward for us. These are the words we all want to hear... Well Done!

☞ Good = admirable; **excellent**; distinguished; upright; **useful**

God wants us to do good things; it's part of why he created us in the first place. Ephesians 2:10 says, "we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."



God didn't create us to be self-indulgent and self-focused. Our culture teaches us to be that way, but God created us to do good. In fact, God doesn't want us to do good just because he said so. He wants us to want to do good.

☞ Titus 2:14 talks about us being people that are **eager to do what is good**. And 1 Thessalonians 4:1 asks us to please God more and more. How do you feel about doing good things for the Lord? Is it only an obligation, or is it something you *want* to do? And, is it something you just do the minimum of, or do you want to do more and more and more?

--ET... *Be good.*

☞ **Faithful** = **trustworthy; dependable**; reliable

--Bill Gothard... *Dependability: fulfilling what I agreed to do even though it requires unexpected sacrifices.*

It is better to wear out than to rust out.

I believe Christians should be some of the most reliable and dependable employees any business could hire. I also believe Christians should be people whose word is their bond.

☞ **Keep your promises!** Do what you say you will do!

--James Howell... *An acre of performance is worth the whole world of promise.*

God makes some great promises, and he keeps every one of them. We should too. Revelation 2:10 illustrates just how far we should go to keep our promises: "Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life."

Be faithful! Do something for God; do it well; finish what you start!

☞ **Servant**

...the term "doulos" focuses attention primarily upon belonging to God. There are also important positive overtones, since in some languages of the ancient Middle East the phrase 'servant of the king' was the title of an important person in the government.

A servant in God's kingdom is an important person. You're a representative of the King! You're not just a believer, but a God-servant. Being a servant involves one of my predominant subjects: ☞ **Surrender**. Luke 9:23-24 talks about giving yourself fully to the Lord and denying your own selfish desires. And as always, Jesus set us the example...



John 13:14-15

Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. 15 I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you

Philippians 2:5-8 NLT

5 You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. 6 Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. 7 Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, 8 he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross.

I said last week that we are all called to serve. It's the reason God appointed apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers – to prepare people to serve. Your gifts, abilities, and resources are not just for your own enrichment – they are meant to serve and bless others.

I mentioned this last week: It's a common saying that within the church 20% of the people do 80% of the work. Are you one of the 20%? Will you help that to become 30, 40 or more?

☞ What would the church be like if everybody served as much or as little as you?

Not where we serve, but whether we serve is most important.

What are you going to do with what God has given you? Are you going to settle for the status quo, or are you going to multiply your gifts so that they affect all eternity? Jesus said it is more blessed to give than to receive. It's so true! When you help someone else, you feel good about yourself. Proverbs 11:25: "He who refreshes others will himself, be refreshed."

Be a Good; Faithful; Servant!