

Sunday 15th November 2020

Opening Prayer

Dear Loving God,

as we gather to praise you for all that you are and all that you bring, we pray; our lives tell your story today and every day.

May now the light of your presence guide our worship we bring these prayers in Jesus Name. Amen.

Hymn: STF-446-I Will Offer Up My Life

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5tYEoDXcIE>

I will offer up my life

in spirit and truth

Pouring out the oil of love,
as my worship to you.

In surrender I must give my every part
Lord, receive this sacrifice of a broken heart

*Jesus, what can I give, what can I bring?
To so faithful a Friend, to so loving a King.
Saviour, what can be said, what can be sung
As a praise of Your name
for the things You have done.
Oh, my words could not tell,
not even in part...
Of the debt of love that is owed
by this thankful heart*

You deserve my every breath,
for You've paid the great cost
Giving up your life to death,
even death on the cross
You took all my shame away,
there defeated my sin
Open up the gates of heaven
and have beckoned me in

Time to Reflect- Theme: standard of living

Reading for the Day: Matthew 25:14-30

Please could you read along...

The Parable of the bag of golds was written in an eschatological style; This involved Predicting events of the last days. Examples of such events including the Rapture, the Second Coming of Christ, the Tribulation, Christ and his reign which will have no end, his Millennial Kingdom with his believers, and the rewards that come with his Future Judgments. we then wait with for that blessed hope, the great glorious come back of our

great God and saviour. The writer talks of a nobleman who before taking a journey calls his servants and distributes his wealth/treasure. The story is conveyed in a prophetic style of advent.

In **v15-18** the servants who received 5 talents and the one who received two talents went with enthusiasm. Perhaps this should be how the New Testament church could do to demonstrate obedience to the great commission by sharing out the story of God's love. COVID-19 has in many ways challenged how we do things. We are encouraged not to succumb to the cultural climate of fear, anxiety, and self-preservation. We should not just communicate measures, but also cast a vision for how to continue being the people of God during these hard times.

Strong leaders remind people that God is in control of every situation and there is never a reason to panic and bury down the talents given out by the Master.

Verse 19 of Matthew 25 ... "After a long time, the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them.

This Parable of the Bags of Gold is intended to make us aware how people deal with money. Few people are either privileged with unimaginable amount of money in this world; quite often ending using such large amount of money irresponsibly, even to larger extend use them in unethical ways.

This parable is told two days before the Passover festival in what we now call Holy Week. **We note in this gospel of Matthew 25 two things**, they could be more.

Firstly" (v. 16-17). There is a sense of enthusiasm in the first servants. He is excited to be trusted with such a great treasure—to do something positive—to prove himself. He puts his five talents to work, and gains five more talents., the (their investment was a gain of 100 percent).

Secondly, (v. 18). The one-talent servant, however, digs a hole and buries the master's money—an accepted way of safeguarding money. According to rabbinical law, the person who buries money in a hidden

location cannot be held accountable for its loss. It is a conservative form of safekeeping—**but accomplishes nothing!**

Three questions that arise from today's message

- 1). What do we do with the news of God's kingdom that has been entrusted to us?
- 2). How do we live each day in light our current situations and opportunities that knock on 'our doorsteps'?
- 3). Why is it so important not to allow being succumbed to the pressures of the present age?

Two Morals from this parable

1. **Good news** of God's kingdom have been entrusted to every child of God to share it and act upon it, take active role in creatively growing it reaching out to those wounded, to the hurting, directing them to encounter Christ the great physicians.

2. **When Christ's returns**, he will require of us and of our faithfulness and our stewardship. Trust that the two servants have in the master, in return, reflects the trust that the master has shown in them. Let's use what God has deposited in us, in the church to bring God's glory instead of as opposed to those who use their wealth to promote havoc and human suffering in the world we live today.

3. **The day of reckoning** is imminent. The return of our master is nearing and will reward everyone accordingly.

A time of prayer-Intercessory prayers

Loving God,
we ask that you provide us with guidance to have a discerning ear and open heart to hear and feel what you are telling us to do.

We pray that you will help us to understanding gifts and talents that you have placed in us to make best use of them in growing your kingdom, especially as we reimagine Northampton circuit during this tough times.

We offer our prayers for those in position of authority in leading our country and those who lead nations of the world.
Draw these leaders into a strong relationship with You and give them a true servant spirit, turn their hearts from distractions and

temptations that could bring harm to your people. surround them with godly counsellors.

May all Praise be to you O, God,
the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.

Govern the hearts and minds of your scattered church as they meet to worship and bring all the families of the earth that are divided and torn apart by the ravages of sin into repentance.

We bring these prayers in Jesus' name.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer, Our Father

Hymn: The Lord's my Shepherd 481-STF
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pN4tPkX0MG0>

The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want.
He makes me lie in pastures green.
He leads me by the still, still waters,
His goodness restores my soul.

***And I will trust in You alone,
And I will trust in You alone,
For Your endless mercy follows me,
Your goodness will lead me home.***

He guides my ways in righteousness,
And He anoints my head with oil,
And my cup, it overflows with joy,
I feast on His pure delights.

And though I walk the darkest path,
I will not fear the evil one,
For You are with me, and Your rod and staff
Are the comfort I need to know

A Prayer of Blessing

May the bless you and take care of you
May he be kind and gracious to you
May he look on to you with favour and give peace
Throughout the days to come
in Jesus Name, **Amen.**

15th November Sunday worship @home
by Revd. Francis Itiiri

Presbyter, Northampton Circuit