

# Helping students understand what it means to be a faithful steward/servant to the Lord.

SERVICE/MINISTRY/GIVING | TIER 2 DISCIPLESHIP | Matthew 25:14-30

Feb 9, 2020

## DISCUSSION GUIDE :: AT A GLANCE

### INFORMAL: (10 minutes)

Take attendance with the LEAD App and ask guests to complete a connection card. Allow for informal conversation with your group but be prepped to transition. REVIEW Memory Verse (Hebrews 4:15). Can anyone quote Hebrews 4:12-14? GOSPEL PRESENTATION: 1 person a Sunday. Encouragers, you're first. Keep it under 3 min. Research the provided Gospel presentations to decide what you like best.

### INTRODUCTION: (6 minutes)

OPENING QUESTIONS: Does anyone have any odd/hidden talents?  
PRAY: Ask the Holy Spirit to open our hearts to desire, see, understand, & live the truth.  
READ: Matt 25:14-30 out loud, give some background, then begin the DIG Method.

### DISCOVER - Asking Who, What, Where, or When (4 min)

HOW many talents did the master give each servant (v.15)?  
What did each servant do with the talents he had received from the master (v.16-18)  
What did the master say to each servant (v.20-21, 22-23, 24-27)?

### INVESTIGATE - Asking Why or How (4 min)

WHY would the master give each servant a different amount of talents?  
Did the master reward the first two servants based on production or faithfulness?  
In v.18, WHAT might “burying the talent” represent? And why did the servant do this (v.24)?  
Does the master seem cruel to the third servant? Why or Why not?

### GO - Asking Questions That Require Action (4 min)

Are you ever jealous of other people's talents, abilities, personalities, or other misc gifts? Why?  
What is the danger in getting caught up in this cycle of thinking?  
Do you tend to overlook how your talents/abilities, personalities, passions, & other misc gifts can be used for the Kingdom of God? Why?

### ACTIVITY: Skill/Passion/Ability Brainstorm (10 min)

Your group will help each other brainstorm how to use their own skills and passions for the good of others and God's Kingdom.

### COMMUNITY & CONCLUSION (10 min)

CLOSING QUESTIONS: Related to this morning's DIG study & the activity... How can we pray/encourage you this week? How can we hold you accountable this week? Close in prayer.

February's  
Memory Verse  
Hebrews 4:15

Provided  
Supplies  
3X5 cards



Sermon  
Connection  
Today's  
Discussion will be  
an application  
based upon  
Owen's Message.



Emmaus  
Connection  
When a  
connection is  
being made to  
our discussion we  
will outline that  
here.

# DISCUSSION GUIDE :: EXPANDED

## INFORMAL: (8 minutes)

Take ATTENDANCE with the LEAD App.

Ask GUESTS to complete a CONNECTION card. Find ways to learn about the guest.

Allow for informal CONVERSATION but be prepped to TRANSITION to allow time for Bible discussion & community.

REVIEW this month's Memory Verse (Hebrews 4:15).

**GOSPEL PRESENTATION:** In response to the Discussion Guide a few weeks ago we want your small group to carve out 3 minutes each Sunday for a different person to practice sharing the Gospel. I want our Encouragers to lead the way first as to model this for the students. Keep it under 3 minutes. Once all the Encouragers have taken a Sunday to give it a shot start asking a different student (a week in advance) to come prepared to share the Gospel the following Sunday. You may need to be more hands on with some than with others. Below I listed several ways to communicate the Gospel. The first three in the list are my favorite. Before you print your Discussion Guide click the link on the pdf so you can access the one you prefer.

- 3 Circles: <https://youtu.be/V7mURm-8c0I> (there is an App for this...Life Conversation Guide or Life on Mission)
- 4 Words - God, Man, Jesus Response: <https://www.9marks.org/answer/what-gospel/>
- Life in 6 Words: <https://lifein6words.com/the-g-o-s-p-e-l-message-explained/> (There is an App for this...same title)
- 3 Minutes: <https://ca.thegospelcoalition.org/columns/ad-fontes/sharing-the-gospel-in-3-minutes-or-less/>
- How to Know God: <https://www.cru.org/us/en/how-to-know-god/would-you-like-to-know-god-personally.html>
- Romans Road: <https://www.biblegateway.com/blog/2016/09/evangelism-the-romans-road-to-salvation/>

## INTRODUCTION: (7 minutes)

OPENING QUESTION: Does anyone have any odd/hidden talents?

- There may or may not be any takers here but if there are it could serve as a funny moment to help ease your group into more serious conversations about faithfulness and stewardship.

PRAY: Ask the Holy Spirit to open our hearts to desire, see, understand, and live the truth.

- We never want to approach God's Word like we approach books we read for school/learning. We are not merely acquiring information. We are encountering words that are alive and change people through the power of the Holy Spirit. Let's position ourselves in humility and ask God for His help and to transform us!)

READ: Matthew 25:14-30 out loud, give some background, then begin the DIG Method.

**Matthew 25:14-30** 14 "For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants[c] and entrusted to them his property. 15 To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. 16 He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. 17 So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. 18 But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money. 19 Now after a long time the

*master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. 20 And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me five talents; here, I have made five talents more.' 21 His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' 22 And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me two talents; here, I have made two talents more.' 23 His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' 24 He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, 25 so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here, you have what is yours.' 26 But his master answered him, 'You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed? 27 Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. 28 So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. 29 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. 30 And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'*

**BACKGROUND:** This is another parable of Jesus. Remember that parables were stories that Jesus used to illustrate truths he was teaching. Jesus' main point of this parable was the significance of faithfulness in His Kingdom; of being a good steward of what we have been given. In this parable the master gave his servants talents, which were like money, having monetary value; not necessarily talents, as in abilities. And yet abilities are still gifts of God among other things and we should faithfully use those gifts for the good of others and God's Kingdom.

### DISCOVER - Asking Who, What, Where, or When (4 min)

HOW many talents did the master give each servant (v.15)?

- Servant 1: 5 talents, Servant 2: 2 talents, Servant 3: 1 talent

WHAT did each servant do with the talents he had received from the master (v.16-18)

- Servants 1 & 2: got to work and used what had been given to them. Servant 3: did nothing except for burying what had been given him.

WHAT did the master say to each servant (v.20-21, 22-23, 24-27)?

- Servants 1 & 2: Well done good & faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Servant 3: You wicked and lazy servant, among many other things as can be seen in the text.

### INVESTIGATE - Asking Why or How (4 min)

WHY would the master give each servant a different amount of talents?

- This question may be hard to answer (especially for the younger minds). Help them through it and let them talk it out. Verse 15 seems to be the only clear connection as to why he gave different amounts..."each according to his ability." The thing we want students to understand is that God gives us what He thinks is best for us. This is about trusting His wisdom, not questioning Him or comparing ourselves to others.

Did the master reward the first two servants based on their production or faithfulness?

- According to v.21-23 the word "faithful" is used multiple times. Therefore the importance is not focused on what each servant produced but on his faithfulness to honor what had been given to him.

In v.18, WHAT might "burying the talent" represent? And why did the servant do this?

- Again, this might be a hard question to answer. In ancient times burying valuables was common practice. There were no safes or banks. The talents, no matter the quantity were valuable but only when they are used to produce more. Burying the talent is like having some kind of valuable thing and **WASTING** it because it was never used. Think of an unused talent that is never developed or used.
- Verses 24-25 tell us the reason this servant wasted his talent was because he had wrong view/understanding of the master. And this wrong understanding contributed to his laziness and bad stewardship.

Does the master seem cruel to the third servant? Why or Why not??

- To some he may seem cruel but the consequences for this servants neglect were appropriate. It was a blessing to be this master's servant. The master was generous in his care for his servants. Unfortunately, the third servant thought little of his master's care. He thought little of his return and became lazy.
- TRANSITION: As we begin to start applying this text the ultimate blessing we have been given from God is His kindness to us in His Son Jesus. Despite our sin and rebellion against Him, He shows great patience and love towards us so that we might trust in Jesus for forgiveness and turn away from our rebellion and toward His original creative design. Are we neglectful of God's goodness by refusing Jesus and taking serious the call to trust Him and repent of sin? The Master (God) will return to completely restore all that has been broken and shut our from His kingdom those who neglect His goodness and reject His Son.

## GO - Asking Questions That Require Action (4 min)

Are you ever jealous of other people's talents, abilities, personalities, or other misc gifts? Why?

- The point is for students to not be distracted by the abilities of others, but to rejoice and celebrate God's goodness to them but also to recognize His goodness to themselves and equally rejoice.

What is the danger in getting caught up in this cycle of thinking?

- When we focus on others abilities and become bitter and jealous it proves that we have misunderstood why God blesses us with abilities to begin with. They are not merely for our worth, our own reputation, or our own success. These good gifts are for the Glory of God, the good of others, and our joy in God.
- Servant 2 didn't look at Servant 1 and say, "That's not fair!" He joyfully received from the master and used it faithfully.

Do you tend to overlook how your talents/abilities, personalities, passions, & other misc gifts can be used for the Kingdom of God? Why?

- Pay close attention to responses to help you know how to care/disciple each student in your small group. Don't downplay your role in their life.

## ACTIVITY: Skill/Passion/Ability Brainstorm (10 min)

EXPLAIN: Give each student a 3X5 card and some time to write down a talent/ability/passion or other misc gift/blessing they have in their life. One by one let each student share their thing and let the group brainstorm together how that particular gift can be used for the good of others and the Kingdom of God. Encourage the person being discussed to write down these encouragements on their card and to take it home with them.

## COMMUNITY & CONCLUSION (10 min)

**CLOSING QUESTIONS:** Related to this morning's DIG study or other spiritual struggles... How can we **pray** for you? How can we **encourage** you this week? How can we hold you **accountable** this week?

- Please use the above questions & **refrain** from stating, "Does anyone have any prayer requests?" This is too general & doesn't ask the student directly about spiritual issues. Until your group develops greater community invite students to connect with you individually.

**PRAY:** Spend time in prayer as a group.

- This will depend upon the life of your small group and the willingness of the individuals. A big win would be that everyone gets prayed for and every person prays. However, if your group isn't there yet take small baby steps throughout the year.

**ENCOURAGE:** Pray for each other & check in with each other for encouragement & accountability.

- As the adult encourager set the tone and be the lead prayer warrior this week. Give them an example to follow by checking in with your small group via text, GroupMe, or whatever means your small group has adopted for regular communication.

### POST SMALL GROUP STUDENT CONNECTION

**CONNECT:** With your small group or the students as individuals this week by...

- Create a jpg (picture) through YouVersion App for the verse Matthew 25:21 and share it with your small group.
- Pay close attention to the responses (or lack of responses) given this morning, especially during the activity. How can you pray/encourage/disciple the individual students in your group?