

Put It to Work Small Group Guide

Warm-up Question: (Choose one, make up your own, or skip this part all together, depending upon the nature of your group.)

1. Describe one great opportunity you have had in your life.
2. If you had the opportunity to spend one day with somebody you have never met before (still living), whom would you choose?

Read the following passage: Read Luke 19:11-27.

Jews living in the first century were looking forward to the day when God would re-establish his reign in the earth through Israel and an anointed king, the Messiah. They expected God's kingdom to come quickly and dramatically. Israel would be exalted and the pagan nations would be humbled. But, as it turned out, God's plan did not exactly fit into their mold. Although Jesus was re-establishing God's kingdom through his life, ministry, death, and resurrection, there was going to be a delay before he returned in power to judge the nations and exalt his people. And what Jesus explains in this parable is that this interim period between Jesus' resurrection and return is full of responsibilities and opportunities.

Questions for Discussion (Choose several that are relevant for your group):

1. In this parable, disciples of Jesus are compared to servants entrusted with a sum of money (a mina was roughly equivalent to four months of wages). This metaphor tells us something important about our identity: We are servants of Christ. How might seeing ourselves as servants of Christ impact how we live? Does such an identity suggest that we should not have much ambition or that we should take a passive approach to life? Explain.
2. In general, what are some ways that our self-identity affects our behavior?
3. The servants were told to put the nobleman's money to work until he returned. What does that mean for followers of Jesus Christ? What has Christ entrusted to us?
4. As the parable makes evident, putting Christ's "capital" to work often involves taking risks. What are some ways we need to take risks for God's kingdom? Are there areas in your life in which you feel fear is holding you back?
5. Do you ever think about life after death? If so, do you think about it with excitement and expectation? Explain. How should a biblical view of the afterlife affect how we live in the present?
6. What are some kingdom opportunities that you can start embracing this week?

Pray