

“Give What You’ve Got”- Matthew 25.14-30 – Rev. Jeffrey B. Childs

You may be familiar with the phrase “**Jesus Saves**” I have seen it on billboards and simple signposts along highways. And it is so, for us who understand and believe, Jesus is our Savior, Jesus saves. But with this story that Jesus told, I would add a corollary to that phrase and say that “**Jesus Saves, but God Invests.**” Do you know that God has invested in you? Look in the very beginning of the Bible, not only are we made in God’s image, but God gave us a purpose and a job to do. *God created humanity in God’s own image, in the divine image God created them, male and female God created them. God blessed them and said to them, “Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and master it. Take charge of the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and everything crawling on the ground.” Then God said, “I now give to you all the plants on the earth that yield seeds and all the trees whose fruit produces its seeds within it. These will be your food.”* (Genesis 1:27-29)

We are to take care of the planet. Did you know that? **You are God’s Plan A, and there is no Plan B?** That is the title of a book by Dwight Robertson on evangelism. He quotes several scriptures to give us guidance today, such as these words from the apostle Paul, “*we are God’s accomplishment, created in Christ Jesus to do good things. God planned for these good things to be the way that we live our lives.*” (Ephesians 2:10) We are to share the good news by the way we do good things in our everyday lives. It is not so much about bringing people to church as it is bringing the church to people. His book is filled with illustrations of people doing their faith by loving their neighbors like James the Roofer who interacts with people while he works on their houses.

We acknowledge from the first story in the Bible that God gives us each day. And with one day to rest we are given six days to continue to do God’s work. **None of us can do everything, but everyone can do something.** Take some time during the boring parts of the sermon to mark down things you are willing and able to do for God, and then go out and do them this week!

You are God’s Investment Plan. What might you hear in the end when this life’s work is done? Like the first two faithful workers might you hear, “*Well done, good and faithful servant.*” If God is so invested in us, what might we do to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ and the love of God? I believe it was faith that helped the first two servants do something. They had faith in the One who had faith in them and in the abilities with which they had been gifted. The third one also had a gift or ability, affirmed by the one who left with him the one valuable coin. Do you remember what the story said? It is there at the beginning in verse 15, “*He gave to each servant according to that servant’s ability.*” The master had known there was an ability there. God had put it there! But fear seized this non-worker: fear of the master, fear of failure, fear of ridicule, fear of being judged. Do we have permission to try even if we might fail? As the church, the body of Christ, do we love and support one another and their faithful efforts? Or is it better not to try, lest we fail? We are a church of faith in the one who has entrusted to us the love of Christ and the work of the kingdom.

We are called to spread God’s kingdom, to share our works and our lives that others might come to know the love of God. God has invested in us. God has gifted us and blessed us and this week we celebrate and give God Thanks. As Christians our commitment is to do what these good and faithful servants did – ***Give What You’ve Got.*** Give of yourself and all you’ve got.

Give your time and your talents. Don't give till it hurts...give till it feels good! For the glory of God, give it all you've got! God is invested in us. And next weekend when we come back to worship we will commit to help paying off our building debt and to start living into God's future beyond indebtedness.

The parable today encourages us with an old familiar phrase, "Don't just stand there, do something!" Or maybe better yet, don't just sit there, do something. For many, church seems like a spectator sport, and their job is to sit in the pews. Christ called us to be workers not pew potatoes. We are not bench warmers we are invited and invested to get in the game. I am reminded of an old story of a football coach who was asked to explain the sport to someone who didn't understand the game. He thought for a moment and replied, "*Out on the field there are 22 people desperately in need of a rest, and in the stands, there are 50,000 people desperately in need of some exercise.*" Let's exercise our faith. Let's get to work. **We are God's plan A. And there is no plan B.** Alleluia and Amen.

With Unique Gifts the Lord Made You

Rev. Jeffrey B. Childs 11/13/23

With unique gifts the Lord made you.

With God's blessing you were made.

So that whatever you may do,

God's glory will be displayed.

Refrain:

Fulfill today the Lord's requests.

Jesus saves, but God invests.

Believe that God believes in you,

And gives to you your purpose.

Praise God through everything you do.

Put in a word for Jesus.

Refrain:

You yourself are the Lord's plan A.

Know that there is no Plan B.

Sharing Good News in the world today,

Is all up to you and me.

Refrain: