

1. Words of commendation from Jesus

- a) Share a time when you were encouraged by some words of commendation.
- b) Matthew 25:21a—“Well done, good and faithful servant.” Imagine Jesus speaking those words of commendation to you. What is your response?
- c) Matthew 25:14-23 Why did the master in this parable of Jesus speak these words of commendation to two of his servants?
- d) How has Jesus called you to serve Him as you wait for His return in glory?

2. A heavenly reward for faithfulness

- a) The Bible clearly teaches that salvation is not a reward—it is gift of God’s grace through faith in Jesus our Savior. Ephesians 2:8-9, Romans 6:23, etc.
- b) However, the Bible teaches us that there is also a heavenly reward for faithfulness. Revelation 22:12, Isaiah 40:10, 62:11, Matthew 5:11-12, etc.
- c) What reward was given to the faithful servants in the parable of Jesus? Matthew 25:21 (also v.23)
- d) What heavenly rewards will be given to faithful servants of Jesus in addition to the gift of salvation? Revelation 21:1-4, 22:1-5
- e) What are your thoughts about the heavenly rewards given freely to those who are redeemed by God’s grace?

3. The tragic consequence of unfaithfulness

- a) There is also an unfaithful servant in the parable of the Talents. What is the tragic consequence of this servant’s unfaithfulness? Matthew 25:24-30
- b) What is the root problem with this unfaithful servant? (See also Matthew 25:12, 7:19-21)
- c) Jesus told another parable about two servants, one faithful, the other unfaithful. What additional lessons can we learn from this parable? Matthew 24:45-51

4. Pressing on toward the goal

- a) The apostle Paul experienced many hardships on his journey as a follower of Jesus that might have distracted him from his goal. 2 Corinthians 11:24-27
- b) What was Paul’s testimony to Christians in Philippi who were experiencing some of the hardships that he himself had experienced? Philippians 3:12-14
- c) What encouragement does Paul give to each one of us as we press on toward the goal? 1 Timothy 6:12, Romans 8:16-18, etc.
- d) What is your response to Paul’s confession in 2 Timothy 4:6-8?
- e) What is your personal response to this study?

