

THE FORGE

Letting Scripture Inform Our Thinking and Identity as Young Men

Session #3

- Review

- Discussion
 - In your meeting with your dad or mentor, what was the most interesting answer you got?
 - How did your prayer time in the Psalms go? What is God speaking to you through those times?
 - What is the one main thought you had when you read Matthew 25:14-30?
 - In the book, he talked about Elder-Brother Lostness, defining 3 main characteristics:
 - 1. You're angry and bitter when things don't go your way;
 - 2. You're given to competitive comparison in order to achieve a sense of significance, which leads to being judgmental and unforgiving;
 - 3. Your obedience is made up of duty all the way down...no joy or love for God.
 - Can you relate to any of those tendencies?
 - Are you surprised that they ring true in you?
 - Were you convicted about how those are as much "LOSTNESS" as the open rebellion of the other brother?
 - What other insights or thoughts hit you in the book?
 - Were you able to act on the command to be a servant of all this week in one of the primary categories we talked about: Family, Church, Friends?

- Man as Steward
 - Parable of Talents: Matthew 25:14-30
 - Stewardship Assigned
 - 1 Talent = 20 years wages: Point? God gives us ALL big gifts to steward.
 - Evaluate the gift primarily based on where it came from. If God defines our gifts as significant and worth guarding well, we should, too.
 - Stewardship Executed
 - No ordinary generosity should beget any ordinary stewardship. Do you believe that Jesus has shown you extraordinary generosity? You should. And if you do, you should be motivated to steward the generous gifts he's given well.
 - Stewardship can't be passive. Excellence is not steady state. Having achieved _____, what's your next move?
 - We know the first two servants were right to take risks for God with the entrusted gifts he gave them. No investment comes without risk, and yet they are vigorously commended for their investments, despite the risks.
 - If you're not moving toward growth, you can be assured you're in disobedience.
 - Stewardship Rewarded
 - Master was gone long enough to fully expect there to have been results, assuming faithful work.
 - In this life or the next, we will be rewarded for active, faithful stewardship by being given more to steward
 - The lazy steward's actions reveal his perspective of the Master: that he thought the Master's intention in giving the gift was to snap in anger at error in management, rather than to generously reward work well done. His actions impugned the character of the Master...laziness in stewardship paints and false picture of our Master, and reflects incorrectly on His Character.

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 - What stands out to you about this story?
 - Do you see yourself the way God indicates He sees you...as someone to whom he's entrusted a Major investment?
 - What part of how this depicts God is most confusing or perplexing to you?
- Two Main Areas of Stewardship (we're going to talk about more areas next week):
 - Time
 - Make the most of every opportunity...time just goes faster and faster. Maximize your days.
 - Be intentional about fun
 - Exercise: 1. Write down the top 5 things you do during a week that are fun. 2. Go back through that list and write next to each one "why" its fun.
 - Go back through and ask, "Can I thank God for that gift of fun, can I reasonably finish it and immediately say, 'God, thank you for _____'?"
 - How can you be more intentional about aligning even your fun time to help you steward it for God?
 - Plan your days, prioritize your relationship with God, your family, your church, and your friends/co-students/co-workers.
 - Managing your time will only get harder as you get older...so build that habit now.
 - Purity –
 - Nothing is outside the reach of God's grace to redeem. Don't think you're the only one who struggles, and don't struggle alone.
 - The Bible says "not even a hint"...it should not even be NAMED among you. Do you live up to that standard?
 - When you get married some day, you'll either enter that pure or you won't...there's no reset button. God can redeem you, can even paint a beautiful picture of restoration and grace, but there are still real-world earthly consequences for our decisions.
 - Write down these questions in your journal, and answer them with a simple Yes or No.
 - Am I the only one other than God who knows my temptations in the area of purity?
 - Are my struggles or failures in this area unique among my friends?
 - Do I doubt that God can rescue me from this temptation and give me victory?
- Homework
 - Prayer: 15 minutes of prayer each day. Keep a journal of things that come to mind to pray as you pray through the Psalm of the day.
 - Reading: Chapters 6-7 of "Prodigal God": write down at least one thing that stands out to you from each chapter.
 - Parent/Mentor Interaction: Initiate a meeting with your dad (or if your dad isn't available, your mom or a godly man in your life), and ask them and dialogue about these three questions:
 - "I am called to carefully and intentionally steward the gifts God has given me. What is the stewardship are where you see me most fulfilling this command?"
 - "Where do you feel I should most immediately adjust my life to be a more faithful steward of what God has given me in the areas of Time and Purity?"
 - "Will you help me, through prayer and accountability, to better pursue the stewardships I have been given in these two areas: Time, Purity?"