



## Week of November 17, 2019: Downstream Generosity and “Who’s Next”

### Discussion Questions Set #1

“Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more. So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more. But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money. After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five [and] the man with two bags of gold also came. [To both] the master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness! Then the man who had received one bag of gold came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. So I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.’ His master replied, ‘You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest. So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags. For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’” (Matthew 25:14-30)

“... my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.” (Isaiah 55:11)

In sermon, we discussed the idea that the above parable is rarely read with an eye to evangelism. Though all aspects do not perfectly line up, there is a sense that we have been entrusted with the good news of Jesus and ought to be investing it in the world around us.

- 1) Have you ever considered that the gospel you’ve received is something that ought to be invested in others? How does this idea affect your understanding of the gospel and/or evangelism?
- 2) If we think of evangelism as “gospel investing”, what kinds of “investment returns” might we expect? What form might these returns take?
- 3) In service, we suggested that we sometime fail to invest the good news in others because we are fearful of a lack of return or wary of apparent risk involved in investing in others. How does Isaiah 55:11 address this concern? Who has entrusted us with the good news? From whose mouth has the good news of Jesus Christ originated?

### Discussion Questions Set #2

“What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus. Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you—guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us ...you then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others”. (2 Timothy 1:13-14, 2:1-2)

“One way to preserve the gospel is by working hard to pass it on to others.” (theologian D. A. Carson)

- 1) Is our faith a “guard it or lose it” sort of faith? How might a “protectionism” around one’s faith negatively impact one’s evangelism?
- 2) Discuss how it might be possible to “guard the good deposit” by entrusting it to others? How does this idea affect your view of evangelism?



### Discussion Questions Set #3

“Even when I am old and gray, do not forsake me, my God, till I declare your power to the next generation, your mighty acts to all who are to come”. (Psalm 71:18)

“A good person leaves an inheritance for their children’s children ...” (Proverbs 13:22)

- 1) In sermon, we talked about a “Hezekiah syndrome” whereby one’s focus is placed upon the enjoyment of one’s spiritual blessings without concern for the inheritance left for future generations. Do you agree that we sometimes see a lack of investing in who’s next because we are more concerned with enjoying the fruit of our salvation than we are with inviting others to join our experience of salvation?
- 2) In sermon, it was stated that *“a person’s significance as a follower of Jesus is evaluated not within his or her present generation, by the wake they leave for the next”*. Discuss this thought and its impact on our engagement in evangelism.

### Discussion Questions Set #4

“It is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” (Ephesians 2:8-10)

“Continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling” recognizing that “it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose”. (Philippians 2:12-13)

“It is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ”. (2 Corinthians 1:21)

- 1) In sermon, it was suggested that part of our lack of engagement in evangelism might be due to a misunderstanding about salvation – namely that we have to a) earn it and b) perform to maintain it. What do the above verses suggest about earning one’s salvation or performing to maintain it?
- 2) Have you ever felt the pull of an “invest in yourself” mentality when it comes to your faith? Have you ever felt the pull to engage in doctrinal pursuits, join Bible studies or attend church services, house-to-house groups or the like, or even engage in evangelism because you think this will make you more or better saved? Discuss.
- 3) In contrast to our “invest in yourself” culture, Scripture reveals that any self-improvement that comes from following Jesus is only of value because it enables us to better invest in someone yet to follow Jesus. In what ways might you see this at work in your own life?

### H2H Group Challenge

Take time as a group to brainstorm who are the “who’s next” in your group – i.e. in whom might you invest the good news of Jesus. Pray for these individuals by name. Consider inviting them to a “Matthew party”.