

Session 4

Developing your shape to serve others

Reflect on your experiences of life; your training, your work experiences, your hobbies, your passions, your home-life, your skills. What enlivens you both past and present?

God uses our life experiences and passions to shape particular ways of serving him.

God is creative at his core- the good and bad of our lives he can take and redeem and use them for his glory. God is totally crazy about you- he knows exactly who and what we are yet HE IS TOTALLY CRAZY ABOUT YOU: **But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Saviour appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit.**

TITUS 3:4&5

<http://www.24-7prayer.com/blog>



Listen to each other. What are some of the things that you discover or already know about their gifts. One of the amazing possibilities of a group like ours is to affirm and help fan into flames the gifts and potential that God has placed in us.

Serving God by doing something he wants done is a way of expressing our

love for him. Serving another person by meeting a need in his or her life is likewise an expression of love. As we begin to serve one another and serve outsiders together, our small group will acquire a deeper richness than we could have by being involved only in Bible study and prayer.

If you or I are thinking that we don't have much to offer as a servant of God



then we are forgetting that he has entrusted us with gifts and abilities and passions that no other person has. Jesus told a story that explained how servanthood works in his kingdom. Like most of Jesus' stories this

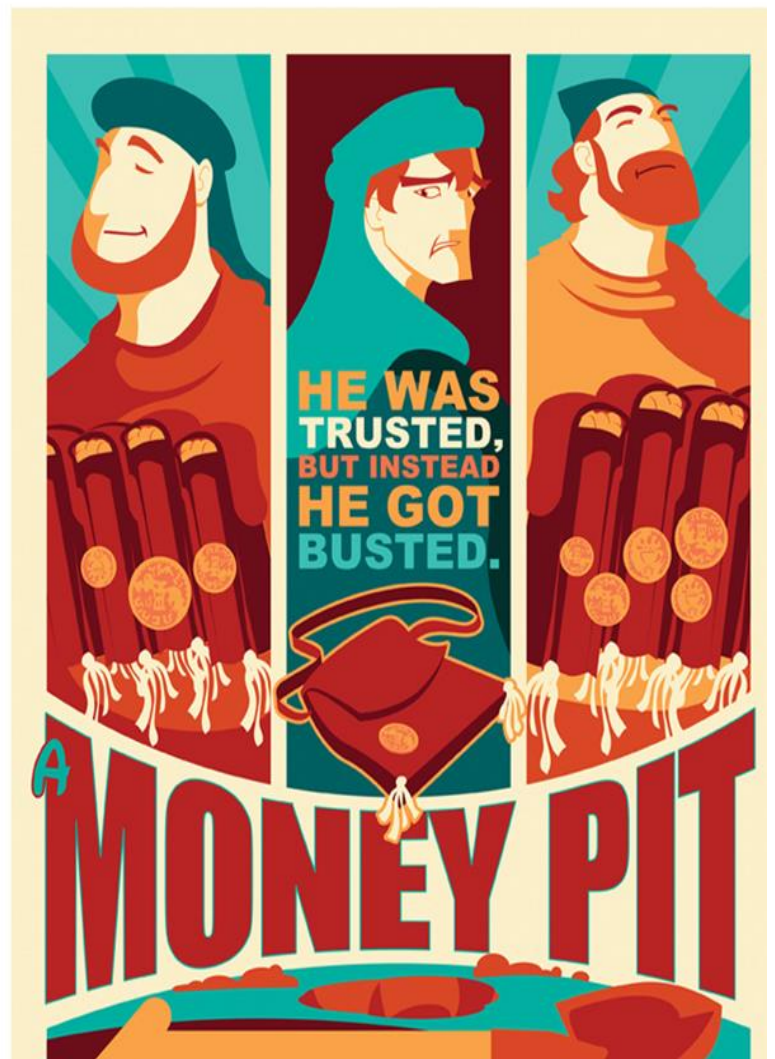
one uses shock value and a sense of humour to make a point.

Matthew 25:14-29 The parable of the bags of gold

14 'Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. 15 To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag,[a] each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. 16 The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more. 17 So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more. 18 But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

19 'After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. 20 The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. "Master," he said, "you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more."

21 'His 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!"

22 'The man with two bags of gold also came. "Master," he said, "you entrusted me with two bags of gold: see, I have gained two more."

23 'His 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!"

24 '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. 25 So I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you."

26 '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? 27 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.

28 "So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags. 29 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.

Questions

The story sets up a contrast between the first two servants and the third. They handled the master's "talents" (amounts of money) differently. How did their behaviour differ?

At the core of the issue is the servants' differing view of their master. What did the third servant believe about his master (24&25)? What about the 1st two?



Step into the shoes of one of these guys, would you view yourself in a similar way?... what view of yourself would motivate you to take risks to invest your master's money? **Or** To hide it in the ground?

The master entrusted "talents" to his servants. What are some resources that God has entrusted to us?

God has entrusted you and I with a portion of his resources in order to do his work on earth. Investing these resources takes time, effort, courage, trust in God, and many other qualities. What are the main challenges that face us in using what God has entrusted to us?

Develop our Shape to

Circle where you see your



Serve Others:

'Talents'



Communicators



Surrendering our lives for God's Pleasure:

How can we as a group pray for each other this week?