



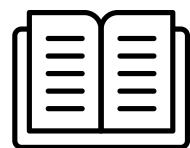
### Order of the session

1. Connect (45 mins)
2. Study (45 mins)
3. Pray (30 mins)



### Connect

Spend some good time connecting. We're encouraging every group to have a **CHRISTMAS PARTY** the week of December the 4th, so now would be a good time to start planning, especially with calendars filling up.



### Study

We've now flipped to doing the studies **AFTER THE SUNDAY SERMON**. We'll be looking at the same passage. The aim is both to **UNDERSTAND** the passage, and to **LAND IT IN APPLICATION**.



### Pray

Spend some time praying for each other.

### MAIN IDEA

The main thing to get out of this passage is to **grow in our HUNGER and ABILITY to invest everything we have in the KINGDOM OF GOD.**

# STUDY #6

## Investing // Matthew 25:14–30

DON'T TALK ABOUT

WOMEN

**Q1**

What do you think defines **living faithfully** while we await the return of Jesus? **(4 mins)**

*This is just an introductory question to get people thinking and talking. It's pretty broad and that's ok. "Faithfulness" is a key idea in the passage, and so this question is to just get people thinking about that idea.*

**Q2**

Split into **pairs/trios** and **EITHER:**

- **Rewrite** the passage in your own words, avoiding any of the words used in the passage as much as you can (so you have to find your own language), and then share with the group
- OR read through Matt 25:14–30 **TWICE**, and then close your Bibles and take turns **retelling** the whole story to each other—in as much detail as possible **(10 mins)**

*The key aim with this question is to get people into the passage and noticing as much detail as they can. Just pick **ONE** of the options above for your whole group—just make a call on what you think will work for your group (i.e. don't give people two options). Give people a good amount of time to do this. People should come away with a decent understanding of what's going on in the passage. That's the aim here.*

**Q3**

**What did you notice** as you retold the story? Was there anything that **stuck out** to you? **(4 mins)**

*This is just following up on the previous question. It's providing a space to capture anything that people noticed. You don't necessarily need to look for anything in particular, it's just a way to invite people to reflect openly on God's Word, which is a way of helping people to read the Bible for themselves.*

Q4

**Read out** the following quote:

- The talents are not abilities (a talent is a weight, which later became a large unit of money). They are, rather, the *responsibilities* the Lord gives his people *in the light of* their abilities and opportunities. So it is not a “talent” in the way we would use the word. It is not a gift, as if we control it. It is not an ability, of which we might boast.

**Then ask:** Based on this quote, what do you think the “**talents**” in the story represent? Are there any **clues** in the passage that might point one way or another? **(6 mins)**

*This quote is from the Bible Speaks Today commentary by Michael Green. If you can, it would be helpful to **display this quote so people can read it** (e.g. paste it into a WhatsApp group, display it on a TV, or print it off). People will find it hard to process if you only read it out aloud.*

*The **big aim** with this question **ISN'T** to arrive at a neat answer, but to **help people think about this passage in new ways**. Many people might assume that the “talents” are equivalent to what we might call “spiritual gifts” or “abilities.” This quote and question are designed to help push people beyond this, to a more holistic understanding of the passage. **Your key tool here as a leader** is the question: **“What do others think?”** Keep people exploring ideas and possibilities, and keep asking where we get our ideas from the in the passages.*

***Two little clues** to look out for are that the master gives the talents “to each according to his ability” (v. 15), which suggests that the talents aren’t just abilities. Also, the language of being “set over” (vv. 21, 23) points us to the idea of “responsibilities” more than abilities. However, in all of this, don’t go in looking for the “correct answer,” aim to generate a discussion based on the passage.*

Q5

Split into **PAIRS**, come up with a **practical example of a “talent,”** and explore what it would look like to **faithfully steward** that talent. **(6 mins)**

*This question is designed to help move us towards **application**. The idea behind this question is to get people thinking creatively about what “talents” actually look like in our lives, and to start imagining what faithfulness might look like in each of those areas. If people are **struggling to come up with practical examples**, you could give people the following categories to help them get started: **position, personality, or possessions**.*

Q6

What does this passage say about what it means to be **faithful** as a Christian? **(5 mins)**

*Faithfulness is one of the key ideas in the passage. Notice that God celebrates the “faithful” servants in vv. 21 & 23. Help people see the **connection between being faithful and seeing an increase in the master’s assets**—i.e. kingdom impact.*

Q7

Do you think this passage has **financial implications**, and if so, **what might they be?** **(6 mins)**

*Jesus uses a financial metaphor in this parable, but the parable is about so much more than just money. It’s about all of life. Having said that, this question is prompting people to consider whether there are financial implications.*

*Help people to think through what it means to “double the investment.” Jesus gives us the equation of doubling the investment. But what does that actually mean? Does it mean we should end up with twice as much money at the end? Probably not! It’s all about kingdom impact. Help people explore that. Again, make sure you’re asking: **“What do others think?”***