

Matthew 24:45-51 The Faithful and the Unfaithful Servants

Introduction: In Verses 42-44 Jesus called for men to watch for His return. He used a householder to illustrate the importance of watching. He said that if the householder knew at what time the thief would come, he would be watching. In this text he still speaks of being watchful. He again uses a householder to illustrate the point. Only this time it is the servants who are to be watchful for the householder to return and are to be faithful while awaiting his return.

I. The two servants of the householder.

- A. The first servant is a classic example of faithfulness, verse 44-47.
 1. He is a wise and faithful servant.
 2. The master had appointed him to feed the household.
(The family and the servants and guests.)
 3. The master then went away on a trip.
 4. The wise and faithful servant does not goof off, but does his work diligently.
 5. When the master returns, he is well pleased and appoints this servant to be over all his goods.
- B. The second servant is a classic example of unfaithfulness, verses 48-51.
 1. Jesus calls him an evil servant.
 2. He had an attitude problem:
 - a. He did not feel a sense of responsibility toward his master.
 - b. He did not feel a sense of responsibility toward others in the household.
(They depended on him to do his job or they would go lacking.)
 - c. He does not feel any love or loyalty toward them.
 - d. Thus, while the master is away he neglects his duties.
 3. He had a confidence problem:
 - a. His was not a self-confidence problem, but a confidence in his master.
 - b. Surely the master told them about when he could be expected to return.
 - c. But He apparently did not believe the master.
 4. He had an ego problem:
 - a. He began to assume authority over his fellow servants that did not rightly belong to him.
 - b. He began to judge his fellow servants and to punish them. (He beat them.)
 - c. Whether or not they deserved to be punished, it was not his place to punish them.
 5. He had a morality problem:
 - a. He began to attend wild parties and he would get drunk.
 - b. His capabilities as a servant went even farther downhill.
 - c. His watchfulness for his master's return grew less.
 - d. The influence of the alcohol was only bad.
 6. When the master does return, he is furious with this servant.
 - a. He cut him asunder.
(He cut him in two. This was not an uncommon thing in that day.)
 - b. He dealt out to him the same severe punishment that he dealt out to any other wicked person who transgressed while he was away. (Same as the hypocrites.)

II. The interpretation of the story.

- A. Jesus has gone away and promises to return some day.
- B. In the meantime, He calls for men to be faithful to believe in Him and to serve Him and to be watchful for His return.

1. He uses the wise and faithful servant to illustrate a saved person who is most faithful to serve the Lord.
 2. He uses the evil servant to illustrate an unsaved person who is unfaithful and ungodly.
 3. There is – no doubt – many degrees of faithfulness and unfaithfulness somewhere between these two extremes. (That is where most of us fit in.)
- C. All saved people are given some kind of responsibility in the Lord's service.
1. Some have the responsibility of feeding others with spiritual food.
 2. Others have responsibility as deacons, musicians, youth leaders, auxiliary officers, secretaries, treasurers, custodians, etc.
 3. We all have the responsibility of coming, going and witnessing, giving, and supporting.
- D. The right attitude toward Jesus will motivate one to be faithful.
1. If one believes in Jesus as his personal Savior.
 2. If one loves the Lord there will be the desire to be faithful to serve Him.
 3. If one loves people, this will motivate him to be faithful in his service to God.
(People will be hurt if he is not faithful and people will be helped if he is.)
- E. In trying to serve the Lord, one should be careful in his relationships to others.
1. He should not assume authority over others that the Lord has not given.
 2. He should be careful not to judge and punish others.
 3. He should be kind and considerate of others.
- F. The Lord will greatly reward the saved for his faithfulness.
1. He will not get to heaven as a reward; he can only get to heaven through repentance and faith.
 2. But the Lord will richly reward for faithfulness.
- G. The Lord will severely punish the unsaved.
1. They may think they are getting away with their ungodliness and sin.
 2. But Jesus is coming back one of these days and when He does He will judge and punish the unsaved.
 3. They will stand condemned, not because of any unfaithfulness, but because of their failure to repent and believe.
 4. Never-the-less they will be punished for every wrong doing.

Conclusion: The text started out with a question, “Who is a wise and faithful servant?” That is a good question today. An even better question for us is: Who will become a wise and faithful servant? Who will trust Jesus and be saved? And who of the saved will faithfully serve the Lord?

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