

## **A LOVE THAT IS BETTER THAN BEST**

**Matthew 25:14-30**

*"Good enough is not good enough if it can be better. And better is not good enough if it can be best." Ozzie Smith (Hall of Fame Professional Baseball Player)*

**Many Marriages are like buying a new car. . . . .It begins to depreciate when you drive it off the parking lot or when you get back from the Honeymoon.**

**PROTECT IT,**

**CLEAN IT**

**TALK ABOUT IT TO YOUR FRIENDS**

**LOOK AT IT A LOT**

**ADD A FEW BELLS AND WHISTLE (Upgrade it a little)**

**Then you walk out one day and there's a DINK in the door. You go back in and accost and accuse your spouse of being reckless and not caring. Within a month, there are a few more dinks and then a week has gone by without it being washed. Forget the waxing and polishing too much time and labor.**

**Pretty soon, instead of taking things out each night we begin to throw things in the back seat. The floorboard becomes like the junk drawer in your home.**

**Then the KIDS come along and boy can they wreck a good car. You've got magic markers on the seat, throw up on the floor board, enough crumbs to feed half the people in China, toys and at least three popsicle sticks stuck to the back of the seat.**

**Before you know it the seats are stained and you start leaving it unlocked hoping someone will steal it, strip it and sell it for junk. You take the insurance money and start all over again. Of course the insurance money does not cover the premium cost of a brand new car so you find yourself settling for a used one or a cheaper mileage and the cycle starts all over again.**

### **PARABLE OF THE TALENTS**

**:Mt 25:14.**

**Mt 25:14 "Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his property to them. To one he gave five talents of money, to another two talents, and to another one talent, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. The man who had received the five talents went at once and put his money to work and gained five more. So also, the one with the two talents gained two more. But the man who had received the one talent 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 the five talents brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more.'

"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!'

"The man with the two talents also came. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with two talents; see, I have gained two more.'

"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!'

"Then the man who had received the one talent 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 talent 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.

" 'Take the talent from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents.

For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him.

And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

### **CHARACTERISTICS OF FIRST TWO MEN**

1. Chose to be **RESPONSIBLE TO** their master **FOR** what they had been given to them.
2. Chose to be **OBEDIENT** to his commands
3. Understood the **PARTNERSHIP** with the Master

### **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LAST MAN**

1. Guilty of **CONTEMPT**: *Took the focus off the issue at hand. Blamed the Master for his failure.*
2. **LAZY**
3. Fear of **CHANGE**
4. Unwilling to take **RISKS**

### **TWO QUESTIONS FOR TONIGHT:**

1. **WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH WHAT GOD HAS GIVEN YOU?**
2. **WHAT IS DAMAGING YOUR MARRIAGE?**

**Tonight my heart is focused upon what the Master called the last man. He called him a WICKED, LAZY SERVANT."**

## IT IS THE WORD LAZY THAT STUCK IN MY MIND FOR THE LAST PART OF THIS SERIES.

My thought is that LAZINESS is destroying more marriages than anything else in our society.

### LAZINESS:

- It has been talked about in Church History as one of the Seven Deadly Sins
- M. Scott Peck (Modern Social Psychologist) “*Laziness is a major cause of evil, a primary cause of psychological illness and the main reason that Americans are increasingly failing in relationships.*”
- Edmond Burke: (17<sup>th</sup> Century Author, statesman and philosopher) “*The only thing necessary for evil to triumph is for good men /women to do nothing.*”

### THREE BASIC REASONS FOR LAZINESS

1. **SELFISHNESS:** “small world mentality. Unwilling to be responsible or accountable for their world. Causing apathy. . . . uncaring.
2. **POOR RELATIONAL MODELS:** Come from a long line of laziness; Parents who modeled a poor marriage relationship. Child of a dysfunctional/ disconnected/ disinterested home.
3. **FEAR OF TAKING RISKS:** Fearing failure, they live life by chance rather than by choice. Self-protection is so high that they become accustomed to not even trying.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LAZY SPOUSE

#### 1. **PROCRASTINATORS:** Suffer from hardening of the “oughteries.”

**Pr 6:6** Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise!

It has no commander, no overseer or ruler, yet it stores its provisions in summer and gathers its food at harvest.

How long will you lie there, you sluggard? When will you get up from your sleep?

A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest— and poverty will come on you like a bandit and scarcity like an armed man.

- Do not need supervision
- Get essentials done first (Priorities)
- Work so they can relax
- Do all without applause or fanfare.

## STATEMENTS OF THE PROCRASTINATOR IN MARRIAGE

- A. YOU are not important
- B. Your NEEDS are not important
- C. I really don't CARE.

**COUPLES NEED TO SIGN MARRIAGE ZONING LAWS BEFORE THEY SAY "I DO."**

1. I will not allow OLD ARGUMENTS to pile up at the backdoor for more than a day.
2. I cannot leave BROKEN PROMISES unattended for more than 12 hours
3. I must keep interior and exterior well maintained with weekly repair and maintenance.

**TRAGEDY: WE PUT OUR HOPES ON HOLD.**

**2, POOR EVALUATORS:** The lazy man does not understand the value of his possessions much less value of his own life. Proverbs 12:27

The man who has no clear distinct values or priorities will continually use up and abuse all possessions and relationships around him.

He does not STACK his values....he places them side x side.

**FACT:** Its not the violence, sex in movies, filthy language....its how it devalues the preciousness of life.

**TRAGEDY: "ABUSE"**

**3.ALWAYS FEARFUL:** That "Lion" is nothing more.... Fear of Failing.  
Wonderful Excuse for ....Not Trying.

When our PAST failures are not used as learning experiences for the future, they become Lions to be feared in the present.

SLOTHFUL PEOPLE are more concerned with Protecting than Risking.....Remaining the same.....Changing and becoming MORE.

**TRAGEDY: STAGNATION**

**4. CONSTANTLY NEGATIVE:** The Lazy man will **always** find the flaw, always see weakness, always easier to destroy than build up. Proverbs 15:19

Lazy man looks for the obvious, the diligent man looks below the surface.  
Lazy man will see the thorns, the diligent man will find the rose.

**TRAGEDY: PESSIMISM**

**5. BAD USE OF TIME:** They make no Plans for Free Time, for Enrichment, to Become.

**TRAGEDY: BOREDOM**

**6. DESTRUCTIVE RELATIONSHIPS:** There is nothing harder than a one sided relationship.

House, car, property depreciates when we do not take care of them.

RELATIONSHIPS...Love is an act of Discipline and Hard Work.

The strength of a man is always determined by what it takes to discourage him.

True also for Marriage.

Most couples have never had to love.

Made commitments at wedding

Richer/Poorer

Sickness/Health

Tough Love is Painful.....Extremely Painful, Life Giving Painful

**TRAGEDY: HEARTACHE**

## CURE FOR SLOTHS AND SUGGARDS

### 1. S.....Secure absolute truths around your heart.

Prov. 3:5-7 *Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil.*

Your absolute TRUTHS will determine your PRIORITIES.

Your priorities will determine how you STACK your VALUES.

Your values will determine your DECISIONS.

### 2. L.....Learn to set short and long term goals

Col 3:1-2 *Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.*

Don't be afraid to make a List. Work the list. The list will help you focus. They are not about PASSING OR FAILING.

### 3. O.....Overcome the fear of change

Jer 29:11 *For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD," plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.*

Eat somewhere different. Eat something different.

Ask yourself. "Am I boring?" Then ask your spouse that same question.

### 4. T.....Train yourself to think positive.

Phil 4:8 *Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable-is anything is excellent or praiseworthy- think about such things.*

Lazy people are negative people. Work at seeing the best. Work at saying the best.

### 5. H.....Honor the heart of others

**1 Peter 1:22** *Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart.*

Lazy people are the most UNGRATEFUL people in the world.

HONOR THEM THROUGH GRATITUDE.

Re-evaluate the gift of your spouse.

Re-evaluate your responsibility to nurture their heart. To HONOR means "to treat as valid"...."to show great respect for another"