

August 18/19, 2018

## Faithful Servants

*2018 Time, Talent, Treasure Series*

**Matthew 25:14-30**

Pastor Ryan Harmon and Jason Harms

Our text this morning comes from the Gospel of Matthew, and it's one of Jesus' parables. It's one of the longer parables that Jesus tells, and because of the nature of parables—that there are these stories—we decided what we wanted to do is read the parable in its entirety to begin and then chat about it for the rest of the service. Before we open it up and before I read it for you, would you join me as we pray together?

*Our Father, as we open Your Word, open our minds and our hearts to receive the truth that You want to communicate to each one of us through it, we pray. As we dig into this parable, help us to gain some illumination about what it means and what it means for each one of us. We pray these things in Your name, Amen.*

So if you have your Bibles, go ahead and turn to Matthew 25. We're going to be reading verses 14 through 30 and then we will try to unpack what it means, and what it means for each one of us in terms of action. So Matthew 25, beginning in verse 14: Jesus is talking to His disciples and says:

**“For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money. Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me five talents; here, I have made five talents more.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me two talents; here, I have made two talents more.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here, you have what is yours.’ But his master answered him, ‘You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’**

(\*ESV, Matthew 25:14-30)

Well, you're probably familiar with this parable. It's one that we commonly refer to as the *Parable of the Talents*, and I want to suggest to you this morning that that's a bad title. It's an unfortunate title for this parable I think, and I'll explain why I think that in just a few minutes. But first let me summarize it.

As I look at it, this parable basically says a master leaves and returns and what happens *in between* makes all the difference, doesn't it? Of course when we think about Scripture when we're reading parables, when we're reading any portion of Scripture, we need to consider the context that it's spoken in, and so we want to consider that the context of this parable occurs in one of Jesus' sermons. It's one of the last long sermons He gives in the book of Matthew. It begins in chapter 24 and in verse 3 it's prompted when His disciples look at Him and say, "*Master, tell us what it's going to be like at the end of time. How will we know that the end of days is upon us?*" Kind of apocalyptic type stuff they're asking Him. And Jesus proceeds to give them an outline of what is going to occur. He tells them about wars and antichrists and tribulations and the great cataclysmic abomination that causes desolation; and then finally in the end, He—the King—will return. He kind of outlines all that is going to occur. That's most of chapter 24.

As we turn to chapter 25, and even at the end of 24, He kind of changes focus. He moves from predictions about the future to a focus on the posture of His true disciples—from predictions to posture—what true disciples will be like. As He does this, His tone changes; He becomes very emphatic, very urgent. He's offering these warnings and He's offering these kinds of sobering statements. He's offering warnings to His disciples, not about what's to come, but about the manner of their living as they await what's coming. Will they be vigilant? Will they remain alert? Will they stay awake and stay sober as they await these things that are coming in the future? He says this in chapter 24, verse 42: "**Be on the alert.**" Just two verses later He says, "**You must be ready,**" and this urgency goes on and on. It kind of covers the tone of this whole sermon.

A master leaves and returns and what happens *in between* makes all the difference. So I started by saying, "I think calling it a parable of the talents is a bad title, and let me explain why I think that's the case. You see the unfortunate thing about this title is it puts the focus in the wrong area. The **talents** are not the point. It isn't a parable about talents. You see the unfortunate thing about us thinking about talents, as Americans, is we immediately connect it to the things that we can do—our skills and abilities, right? *America's Got Talent*, right? We watch the show; we think about all the things we can do. But in the first century context, the talents were money. It was a large sum of money. One talent would have been about twenty years' wages. So, we are talking about massive loads of money! But this wasn't about the talents. It's not about our skills either, right? Sometimes we hear about the parables of the talents and we think about all the things we can do. Maybe we can run really fast or we can juggle really well. I mean, I'm a father of a four-year-old daughter which means that I know the sound track of *Frozen* backwards and forwards, (*laughter*) and my falsetto? It's on point, right? But that's not what this parable is about. It's not about the talents; it's not about the money. So what is it about?

Well, I think to understand what the parable is about, all we have to do is look at the **master**. What was it that brought him pleasure? What was it that pleased him or displeased him? Was he pleased or displeased by the manner in which they invested the money? Did one of them do it in a really wise way and others not? And the answer is, "No." Was he concerned by how much of a return they got? And the answer is, "No." They brought the same return of a hundred percent. That's a pretty good return. Is that what consumed him? And the answer is clearly, "No." That's not what consumed the master. What consumed him—what pleased him or displeased him—was whether the servants were willing to faithfully engage and care for what had been entrusted to them, whether

they were willing to faithfully steward what had been given to them. What is in question is not how much they had or whether one had more and another had less. That is not the point of the parable. What matters is whether the servants were faithful and responsible with what he entrusted to them.

This is the parable, I think, of the *faithful servants*. What does the master say? What's his commendation? He says, "**Well done, good and faithful servant. You've been faithful with a little, now I'm going to set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.**" A master leaves and returns and what happens *in between* makes all the difference.

Well, just like Jesus' disciples, Lincoln Berean sits in this period that we can call the *in between*. We are *in between* people. We are living in this time where we are awaiting the return of our Master, aren't we? So the question for us becomes, "Are we alert? Are we sober? Are we staying engaged?" We are the people who pray, "*Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven,*" and we pray that precisely because we are in the *in between*. So the question this parable prompts us to ask is, "How are we doing? How are we living? How should we live?" The answer that Jesus clearly gives in this parable is that we should be living as *faithful servants*, willingly engaging and caring for what has been entrusted to each one of us. It is a parable about faithfulness. So the question we have to ask is, "Are we being faithful servants?"

Individually, a question we can ask is, "What has been entrusted to you?" Then, "What has God put in our care? What has He put you and me specifically in charge of? What's He given us say over?" Have you ever thought about that for yourself? What has God given you say over? What's He entrusted specifically to you? Would that include your abilities, your skills, your falsetto during the *Frozen* soundtrack? Does it include those things? And the answer is, "Absolutely!" The parable isn't about that but the parable certainly has an impact on the way we think about that. So, yeah, our skills, our talents, our gifts—100%! Does it include all the experiences we have had that have accumulated and kind of built up towards this wisdom in life, and the answer is, "Yes, it includes that." Does it include our loves and our passions—the things that kind of make us come alive and the things that really kind of charge us up and give us energy and the answer is, "Yes, all of that falls under the category of things that God has entrusted to us."

So for you, what has God put you in charge of? Have you ever stopped and thought about the fact that God has put us—put you, me and you—in charge of things in His world? Sometimes I think when we start to talk about this kind of stuff, sometimes a view of God starts to develop that kind of starts to treat God almost as if He's in heaven and He's pushing buttons and pulling levers and that's how everything in the world happens. But when you look at Scripture, that's just not the picture that is painted. You see, for some reason God has chosen to include us in the unfolding of His plans, in the working of His purposes. He's given us power and authority. He's given us a lot of say, and it's an astounding thing to think about. We never want to lose sight of God's sovereignty. He is absolutely sovereign, but we also don't want to let His sovereignty swallow up our responsibility. God has made us to be responsible; He's put us in charge of things. He's given us things and He wants us to faithfully steward what He's given us.

David was so astounded by this, that in Psalm 8 he marveled about it. Listen to his words in Psalm 8. David says, "*What are mere mortals that you are mindful of them? You made them rulers over the works of Your hands. You put everything under their feet.*" God has put things in our charge; He's entrusted things to us. Now for some of us—and I've been here before—that causes anxiety because we start to wonder, "Are we doing okay?" And, "Man, maybe God's really going to be harsh." But we want to put that kind of thought away because that's the thinking of the third servant, right? These aren't burdensome responsibilities. These are opportunities that God has

given us to engage in what He's doing, to deploy what He's given to us for the sake of His kingdom. It's an astounding reality and it's an astounding opportunity that He's granted to you and to me!

In this passage a master left; a master returned, and what happened *in between* made all the difference. So church—Lincoln Berean—our Master has left and He will return, and what happens *in between* makes all the difference, and we are living in the *in between*. That's where we find ourselves today. And so are we alert? Are we engaged? Are we ready? Are we taking up the call to be willfully faithful with what He has entrusted to us?

So what do we do about this? What's a way that we can become a faithful servant and start to willfully engage in this faithful stewardship of what He's entrusted to us? I'm really fortunate today because the application is so simple. Right outside these doors there are tables representing every ministry that's happening at Lincoln Berean Church, and there are people that are representing those ministries who would love nothing more than to talk to you about ways that God is prompting you to take what He's given to you and to deploy it effectively to advance God's kingdom and His message in this world. I want to urge you not to miss the moment, not to miss the moment to step outside and talk to someone and say, "Man, here's what God has done in me; here's what He's given to me. Can you use that?" I can guarantee they will say, "Yes, I'm so thankful you came and talked to me." So, church, let's not miss the opportunity. Let's step in that direction.

But I don't want to stop there. You see, I'm the pastor of global outreach and so I can't just let our thoughts stop here, because in this church God's given us the opportunity to know what's going on and be engaged in what's happening all throughout the world. God is advancing His message throughout the world, and we are zealous to do a better job of finding relevant and practical ways for you to engage in all that is happening around the world, for you to deploy the gifts and the talents and the skills and the passion that God has given you and to use it to bring His message of the *Good News of the Kingdom* to bear in the lives of the least of these. And so just a few months ago we hired a new pastor in global outreach. His name is Jason Harms. You might know Jason; he used to work with our youth. Jason has been working like crazy to try to find practical applications for this, and in just a minute I'm going to have him come up and share that with you. But more than that, I also want him to come and share a story—a story of what it looked like when his family was willing to just say, "God, I'm here; You've given us much; use us." So let's have Jason share that story with us now. (Clapping)

*Jason:*

Alright! So about twenty years ago my family and I were about to be commissioned to go on our first mission's trip. And at that point in my life—that makes me about 12 years old—I had no idea what that meant. I knew I had to walk on stage with my family and there were people that were going to pray for us; I didn't know what it was. It was awkward—lights were really bright. I remembered I had dyed my hair white and I was, "Like I look cool and this is cool, right?" And then all of a sudden all these elders came up to pray. Elders—I don't know who they are. A bunch of these old guys all walked up and they are weird, and then they put their hand on your back and they prayed for you. That was alright until like they started praying way too long and their hands were sweaty and it's like, "Oh, this is awkward; what's going on?" I'm a middle-schooler; I don't know what's going on. I mean, like, "Man, the most foreign person I'd probably talked to is probably a girl" (That was probably my mission field as well. *laughter*) It seemed to make sense.) And I think it would be fair for pretty much anybody in this room to ask this, "What in the world did that 12-year-old Jason have to offer out on the mission field?" And at that point in my life, I

probably would have said the same thing. However, ironically, there are some pretty cool stories that came from it.

Before I get into that story further, I want to take just a minute to be kind of genuine with you guys and meet you maybe where you're at. From the very first mission's trip that I've been on (the one I was talking about) to any trip in between and possibly even ones that I've led recently, I've always had a moment (if not sometimes many moments) where I've looked to my left and to my right and I've seen people that I'm like, "I think that guy is way more qualified to do this piece of that trip or say this type of thing," or, "Have you heard that guy talk? He is so eloquent, and sometimes I feel like I'm struggling in a conversation with two or three people. Why on earth, why do I have to speak at this thing?" Or maybe it's somebody out there like, "Bible study? Man, that guy over there, he knows all about it! Have him talk; have him be on these conversations." Sometimes I feel like every time I learn a Bible verse, five fall out the back of my head, and I'm like, "Oh, here we go again, trying to remember these things."

But one thing that I'm very thankful for, in the midst of all this, God sometimes says, "Alright, Jason, are you willing to step up? Are you willing to be used in this way?" And many times these are areas that aren't necessarily what I would say are my strengths or my talents. But God seems to come through, and I'd say, thankfully my ability to measure up is not defined by the person to my left or to my right. I think that's important for you guys to remember that as I go into this and share a little bit more about this story while I was out there—and just about your effectiveness as a whole.

So I was 12 years old, sitting next to this other guy that was pretty similar in age. His name is Cordero. I'm sitting there; we had a basketball camp that we were at as a means to kind of share the gospel and very easily get into conversation. (Showing a picture of Jason with Cordero): There's that white hair. There it is. That's great. So I'm sitting with him and I'm like, "Hey, Cordero, how's it going?" We're talking—whatever—middle school is kind of hard sometimes getting into these meaningful conversations. "I'm God's..."—just dropping bombs—and Cordero is like, "Hey, man, what did you say is like the purpose in life?" I'm like, "That's a big question, Cordero, but we've got to have lunch around the corner, and huh, maybe we should get ready for lunch here. We've got that coming up." He's like, "Oh, okay, cool." (Missed that moment!) And God's like, "Alright, come on, I'm going to lay it on you. This is going to be easy. We're going to get this conversation." So this is Cordero: "Hey, Jason, you heard of this guy named Jesus? Recently I've heard somebody talking about Him." (Jesus? Of course I know who Jesus is. You don't know who Jesus is? It's like, man, I accepted Him in my heart when I was five. Who is this guy?) "Oh, Cordero, you're funny," (and I'm still sitting there and he says,) "Okay, great conversation, Jason, I'm going to get going." (Of course, that's the moment, and I'm sitting there and I say, "Oh, shoot. I completely missed my moment. I'm on a mission trip!") So, naturally, we're going to bring out a little *fire and brimstone*; let's let this thing roll. Let's bag and tag Cordero. (*laughter*) So I'm sitting there and I'm like, "Hey, Cordero," (he's walking away with his friends) "Hey, what's up super kind, loving and compassionate and caring, normal Jason?" "Like, if you were to die tonight, are you goin' to heaven or hell?" (Whoa, drop the bomb! And I mean I might as well like, pulled out my wallet and—I don't know if you guys ever saw those fake hundred dollar bills you find on the ground—but I give it to him and you know it's like a hundred dollar bill, and I'm super-jacked because when he flips it over, it's like psyched! It isn't a hundred dollar bill; it's a piece of paper and it says you will go up in flames just like your soul if you don't know Jesus. (*laughter*) Like what in the world? Why does that make me want to be a disciple of Jesus? Come on!

You know, all jokes aside, the miracle in the story is that night I got to sit down with poor Cordero and share Jesus with him and share the hope of Jesus—and he came to know the Lord that night. So

I'm not sure that I did it all right, but the best part about this (well, that's probably the best part) but a great part, the next step, is that after talking with him, I'm like "This is awesome!" I'm running around camp telling everybody...weeping...and everybody's like, "Are you okay?" I'm like, "No, Cordero is a Christian and it's awesome!" And then the pastors and the missionaries that were there, they met up with him and continued to follow along the path. (And thank God, because I didn't know what to do after telling him Romans 3:23 thirty-five times.)

So that was a really neat thing, but obviously I'll tell you what. That didn't happen because Jason is so eloquent, because Jason knew how to perfectly share the gospel or because Jason had it all together. It happened because of God. It happened because I guess I was willing to say, "Use me." In that situation I probably didn't know the difference, but I'll tell you that in my life since I've seen that time after time after time again. Oftentimes God uses my areas of weakness more than He uses my areas of strength to accomplish what He wants.

So here's the deal: Ryan was just talking about it. Out in the hallways there are tons of opportunities, tons of things you guys can get involved with. I'm going to share just a little bit about some of the opportunities we have coming up in *Global Outreach*. I'm really excited about these. ("You guys, pop up that map.") I'll walk through this. I'm going to give you kind of like a 30,000 foot overview of these different areas. There are three of them we've landed the plan on; the other ones we're kind of figuring out. So, yeah, I'll just kind of walk through it and you guys can hold on.

So Panali, Nicaragua—you can see it up on the map there—we're going to be heading there February 6<sup>th</sup> through the 12<sup>th</sup>. We're partnering with *Food for the Hungry* and I'll pause here for one second. (I'm going to be giving you a lot of stuff. If you need to write this down, if you need to take your phone out, whatever, if any of this kind of pops into your mind—like, "I've got to do something about this," remember it, and then you can talk to me or partner with us.) You guys may have heard of this before—there's a pretty good chance if you listen to My Bridge radio—because Vota, Bryan Olsen's group, they've been partnering with them for awhile. We're going to be joining alongside with what they're doing and kind of combining our efforts. We're really excited about this! They have a lot of different things they're doing. One of those—they kind of have a holistic approach saying they're going to adopt an entire community—so whether that's helping with like infrastructures, school, their sponsorship programs, there's a variety of different things that they are doing. And one neat thing specifically that they do is they go into the community and they say, "Alright, (the elders that are there,) "like, what do you guys need?" They sit along side them and say, "Okay, this is the next step; this is what we need," instead of coming in and saying, "Nope, this is what we think you need and we're going to do it." But they walk alongside of them and partner with them, so it's really neat stuff! So this trip that's happening February 6<sup>th</sup> through the 12<sup>th</sup> is going to be a construction trip. So if you guys are good with your hands, that's awesome! If you can build a house, you're completely over qualified, but we could definitely use you. If you can dig a hole, that's awesome. We need people with grit—somebody that can do that. And if you've ever dug a hole, then you also need this person that's to your right that's like, "Man, great job digging that hole!" and you're like, "Thank you, this is terrible!" and then they come back and they are like, "Hey, you are about a foot deeper—good job!" and they're like, "Yeah." And there's the moment where the guy throws in his shovel and says, "I'm done," but then you say, "Keep digging!" "Why?" "Your biceps are getting bigger, bro." (*laughter*) And he's like, "I can do this," and he keeps going. We need that person...we need the person that is the encourager! Every mission team needs that person. And you also go out into the community, to kind of have a separate piece where you will be encouraging the locals and pastors and the different leaderships that are there. So that's a really neat one!

Mexico City - February 7<sup>th</sup> through the 16<sup>th</sup> we're going to be coming alongside a variety of organizations that are out there. One of them—some of our local missionaries run an orphanage—so if you love being with kids, we're going to encourage the missionaries there, but also spend time just being with the kids, playing games with them and showing the love of Jesus to them. We're going to be working with *Hope of the Poor*, working with kids who live in some of the trash heaps of Mexico City. These are kids that literally live in the trash and they're there trying to survive, and so we're going to spend time hearing their stories, getting to know them, again sharing the hope of Jesus, and just being the hands and feet of Jesus and having a little taco stand and having some food with them and some of that. So there's really some neat stuff that's there. At the end of it, we will also be working with *Compassion*. So, similar with *Food for the Hungry*, there's this sponsorship thing that you can have there to keep an ongoing relationship with these kids.

Next we have a trip that's going to go to Kenya June 14<sup>th</sup> through the 30<sup>th</sup>. We're going to be partnering with *Hope Venture*. A lot of you guys have probably heard about them; we're really excited about them. This is kind of an obvious one for us as well. They do a lot of different things, whether that's the backpack programs for kids who don't have backpacks or these things called *Mamma Kits* for pregnant mothers. They do water sanitation projects. They have goat projects. They have agriculture projects. They have a lot of different things. On this specific trip that is, again, June 14<sup>th</sup> through the 30<sup>th</sup>, they're going to be working with some of the students in the area, specifically the sponsored students (those would be high school students) so again, if before the trip you can sponsor a student (or even if you didn't) you'd get to spend time with those sponsored kids for a week just investing in them—another really neat opportunity!

All three of these things—you've heard me say it over and over and over—have sponsorship. That's something we are really excited about and we want to kind of invest deeply in the area. So before a trip, you guys can do anything—can sponsor a kid, get to know them, send letters, do all that stuff, but when you are there, we will set aside a day you can actually spend time with a specific sponsored kid that you have. I think there is something really neat and really valuable about that. Every time I've seen videos of this happening, where the sponsor and the kid get to meet each other, it about brings me to tears every time. There's just something really special about that—so pretty cool!

So those are the three that have landed. Now I'm going to talk about some that we are kind of working on, hoping to land the plan in this next year. I'm going to do these real quick.

So Mongolia: If you like basketball or volleyball or are good at either of those, they do a lot of outreach with that. Also they work with teaching English.

Another one we're really excited about is the Christian Medical and Dental Association. So if you are medically inclined (medical, surgical, dental, any of that area) we're looking at some possible trips in Nicaragua and Lebanon.

Another big one is internship action programs for those of you guys who are maybe in high school or in college and you're looking to jump into some of that. It's awesome jumping into an organization—that's sweet—but if you can jump into an organization that's partnered with a church, there's a lot of depth that brings. We can walk alongside you with some of the discipleship process, send you out, get you about anywhere in the world, and then at the end of it, continue the discipleship process and say, "What are the next steps," instead of you guys falling through the cracks.

Last thing is I'll be heading over to Asia in September to check out some different opportunities for sex trafficking organizations to partner with, and also to Lebanon where there are some refugee camps we are looking at, outside of even the medical field things that we are also looking at. So, a lot of cool stuff!

How do you get involved? This is important! Right now the best way for you to do that would be through our new website that's launching here fairly soon. Unfortunately it's not done right now, but that website is going to be a great asset because you are going to be able to go on, go to the Global Outreach area and click on different countries. So once you click on the country, it's going to tell you a little bit about the country, our involvement there, the partnerships, how to apply, and FAQ's. We're going to try to give you everything you need to basically get the ball rolling and answer as many questions as possible. Since we don't have that quite yet, there's an email address (it's on the screens here): [trips@lincolnberean.org](mailto:trips@lincolnberean.org). If you have any interest, even if it's like, "Man, I don't even...like right now I'm super psyched"...so forget about this and just send me some emojis about how excited you are! Your mind is blown, but you're excited, so let's do this thing! Do that; send it over; it will make me laugh, and then I will like e-mails again. But if not, you guys can also meet us out at our booth, talk with us out there and get signed up and we can basically say, "Here's when the website is coming out." We can get you more information. Don't worry, you're not writing your name in blood.

So, pretty cool stuff! I'm going to close my portion of this with one last thing that I want to share—something I'm kind of passionate about and would love to see this church embrace. So I've been on mission trips where I've been by myself and I've also been on mission trips with close family or even close friends. And those where I've gone with family have had some depth to it that is pretty neat, and so I think we can accomplish a lot of great things at once! One of those being, "Go and make disciples," but could we also bring families together in the midst of this? So, for example, some day—I have two little girls and they aren't old enough to do this yet—but when they're of age, I think it would be awesome to take one of my girls and go to the trash heaps of Mexico with her and serve girls and boys that are her age and have my daughter look at me and say, "Dad, this doesn't make any sense," and have her ask hard questions that I don't know how to answer. But I can be honest with her and I can meet her at her level because we're both going to be at the same level on that moment and say, "You know what? I don't know all the answers to this, but I'm excited when we go back home to continue to talk about this, to continue to say, "Hey, what's our response to this? How do we work through this? What does this look like in relationship with the Lord?" I think there's something really, really neat that can come from that. So we will see what happens. But, guys, I'm really excited! It's one of these things, you know, you develop all these things; they look great on the map, but until people start moving forward, we will see what happens. Thanks for your time, guys." (clapping)

*Ryan:*

As I think about this parable, I just kind of think about the context. Why did Jesus preach this parable? Why was this His message? And you know, you think about what His disciples were asking. What were they concerned about? "Jesus, how's it going to happen? What's it going to look like? How will we know when all this stuff starts to unfold?" And we can still be like that, can't we? We want to know all the things that are going to mark the end of time because we can't wait until Jesus returns. Right? It consumes us sometimes. But Jesus very quickly moved their focus from all the events that are going to take place in the future—those are His job—and He turned His disciples back to a focus that is their primary responsibility and that's, "Are we being faithful in the *in between*?" See, the simple fact is that God has granted each one of us skills and talents and abilities. We don't honor Him by thinking we haven't been given those things. We

honor Him by acknowledging, “Lord, You’ve given me much; now let me be faithful with what You’ve put in my hands.” So my prayer is that we can be that kind of church—that we faithfully engage and care for all that God has entrusted to us. Our Master has left; He is going to return. We are in the *in between*, and if you are anything like me, that moment of hearing our Master say “*Well done, good and faithful servant,*” there’s nothing more exciting than that! Let’s become those types of people. Let’s be people of the *in between*, faithfully serving our Master. Will you pray with me?

*Our Father, You have given us much. You have entrusted to us much. We are so thankful. We are so thankful that You give us the opportunity to participate with You in what You are doing. We praise you for that. We thank You for that. Lord, give us clear ways that we can employ and engage what You’ve entrusted to us. We want to be faithful. Help us to know how to start to step in that direction even today. Amen.*

Scripture quotations are from The ESV Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version)  
Copyright ©2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.  
Used by permission. All rights reserved.  
Lincoln Berean Church, 6400 S 70<sup>th</sup> St, Lincoln, NE 68516 (402) 483-6512  
Copyright 2018 – Ryan Harmon. All rights reserved.