What will you do with your life?

Matthew 25:14-30

31 years ago, Donald Trump said in an interview: "I'll be 36 next year and I've done everything I can do. Sometimes I think it was a mistake to have raced through it all so fast. What's the next level up? The grass isn't always greener . . . I work, and I don't worry. How can you top that? . . . I protect myself as well as anybody can. I prepare for things but ultimately we all end up going . . . I don't believe in reincarnation, heaven, or hell. But we go someplace. Do you know? I cannot for the life of me figure out where."

Donald John Trump, Sr. (born June 14, 1946) he’s 67 now, is an American business magnate, investor, television personality and author. He is the chairman and president of The Trump Organization and the founder of Trump Entertainment Resorts. Trump's extravagant lifestyle, outspoken manner, and role on the NBC reality show The Apprentice have made him a well-known celebrity who was No. 17 on the 2011 Forbes Celebrity 100 list.

Considered one of best known real estate entrepreneurs in the United States, Trump is the son of Fred Trump, a wealthy New York City real-estate developer. He worked for his father's firm, Elizabeth Trump & Son, while attending the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, and in 1968 officially joined the company. He was given control of the company in 1971 and renamed it The Trump Organization.

In 2010, Trump expressed an interest in becoming a candidate for President of the United States in the 2012 election, though in May 2011, he announced he would not be a candidate. Trump was a featured speaker at the 2013 Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC). In 2013, Trump spent over $1 million to research a possible run for president of the United States in 2016.

That is a picture of a man who is so busy possessing this world he is making no preparations for the next. Before we point a finger, we
ought to realize it's easy for us to do the same thing. The fact is — most people have absolutely no idea what life is all about.

There are **three things you can do with your life:** you can waste it, you can spend it, or you can invest it.

You can waste it….how….There are plenty of things to waste it on. You can spend it on your career, on your hobby, on acquiring certain possessions, or you can invest it. Jesus taught that the greatest use of your life is to invest it in that which outlasts it. He told a story called the parable of the talents…which was kindly read for us by Shola… In it he gives seven principles for investing your life:

1. **Everything I have belongs to God.**

2. **God has given me some talents.**

3. **God expects me to use those talents. Someday he's going to ask me, "What did you do with what you were given?"**

4. **It is wrong to bury what God has given me.**

5. **Fear keeps me from using my talent. When you cut through all the excuses, it's fear that keeps you from using your talents.**

6. **If I don't use it, I'll lose it.**

7. **If I use it wisely, I'll be rewarded.**

The understanding of these seven principles will make a major difference in your life.

**1. OWNERSHIP: Everything I have belongs to God.**

God made it all. We really own nothing. We didn't come into this world with anything and we’re not going to take anything out of this world. What you have you simply get to use for 60, 70, 80, 90 years. It's God's. You just get to use it. God made man to manage his resources.

The Bible says, "Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his property to them."([Matthew 25:14](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew%2025:14)) Whose property was it — the servant's or the master's? It was
the master's. God has entrusted some things to you. God owns everything.

2. ALLOCATION: God has given me some talents.

"To one he gave five talents of money, to another two talents, and to another one talent, each according to his ability." (Matthew 25:15). The word "talent" that we use today actually comes from this story. Back in this day, talent simply meant an amount of money — about £1,000. The master gives five grand to one guy, two grand to another, and one grand to another. He says, I want you to go invest it.

You have some talents. Talents are abilities, resources, skills or opportunities — all of the things that God has given, including spiritual gifts. Anything that God has trusted you with — your children, your job — can be considered a talent.

Notice the amount differs but everybody gets something. There is no such thing as a no-talent person. Everybody has at least one. You do have a talent. The Bible says, "We have different gifts, according to the grace given us." (Romans 12:6) You're unique. God has given you gifts, talents, skills, abilities, experiences, personality traits, temperaments — all to make you, you. You're unique. There's nobody else like you in the world. He made you for a purpose.

3. ACCOUNTABILITY: God expects me to use them.

"After a long time the master of the servants came back and settled accounts with them." (Matthew 25:19)

The master had made an investment and wanted a return. God has made an investment in your life and he wants a return. The Bible says one day God is going to do an account — an audit — of your life. Are you ready for that? God is going to ask you, "What did you do with what I gave you?" You didn't choose to be born in the UK and enjoy the freedom you have here, what did you do with it? The greater the privilege the greater the responsibility.
4. UTILIZATION: It's wrong to bury what God gave me.

The first man took his money and doubled it — a 100 percent return. This man was a wise investor. The second guy took his two grand and he doubled it. The point of the story is the third guy. The third guy just buries it. He does nothing. "But the man who had received one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money." (Matthew 25:18) He's cautious and conservative. He says, "I'm going to play it safe!" He sat on it.

What was his master's reaction? "His master replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant.'" (Matthew 25:26) His master was ticked! He was more than a little upset! "At least you could have put it in the bank." You haven't even tried, he said. You hid it. This is the sin of inactivity, the sin of passivity.

The point is we cannot please God by playing it safe. We must take risks in life. If we don't, we are wicked and lazy. Why does God want me to take risks? Because, 23 But the man who has doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and everything that does not come from faith is sin."Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." (Romans 14:23) And the Bible also says "Without faith it is impossible to please God." (Hebrews 11:6) If everything is safe, you don't need any faith! Doing nothing is inexcusable. God would rather have you try to serve him and totally blow it, than do nothing. I'd rather attempt to do something great and fail than attempt to do nothing and succeed.

I've said that I want the church to put four words on my tombstone: "At least he tried!" I may not reach all the goals I believe God has given me for my life but it really doesn't matter. What matters is the effort — trying! Trying to make your life count, trying to make an impact with your life, trying to do something significant that is going to outlast you. It's not whether you reach it or not, it's the effort that counts. Doing nothing is inexcusable.
Which person — the person with five talents, the person with two talents, or the person with one talent — was the most likely person to "sit on it" — to do nothing? It was the guy with the one talent. Why? Because this is what typically goes through our minds: "If I'm just a one-talent person, and therefore not a superstar, I'm not going to do anything. I'll let the pros do it. Since I don't have 10 talents, I'm going to do nothing! Since I only have one, I'll just bury it. I'm not going to make any attempt in ministry at all with my life."

I see dull Christians all the time. The fizz, the sparkle has gone out of their life. The Christian life is not a relationship any more, it's a routine. There is no joy like it used to be. Their spiritual life has gone flat. Why?

They are sitting on the side-lines — not in the game — spectating and not participating. They have buried their talents. You get stretched when you're in the game, not sitting on the side-lines saying, "Go team!" God gives the principle of utilization — he expects me to use what he's given me. If I don't it's not just a casual matter. It's flat out wrong to waste my life. I shudder to think of some of the excuses given while standing before our pure Saviour — excuses why no attempt was made to get involved helping other people and serving others. Those excuses will seem pretty puny at that point. May I, as your friend, urge you to seriously consider preparing for that event? Whether you like it or not, it's inevitable.

5. MOTIVATION: Fear keeps me from developing my talent.

Why do we play it safe? It's really fear — Satan's favourite tactic. Satan has three kinds of fear: self-doubt, self-pity and self-consciousness. Any time you're sitting on your talent it's usually because of one of those three things.

Self-doubt — "I could never do that; I'm not qualified." It's the fear of failure. Do you remember when you were in school and the teacher asked a question you knew the answer to but you thought there might be a chance you'd be wrong so you didn't raise your
hand? "Do I want to put my life and reputation on the line?" you thought. "If I say the wrong answer, my mates will laugh at me!" God says that's fine for kids but it doesn't cut it as an adult! Don't let fear get in the way. "I was afraid and went out and hid your talent." (Matthew 25:25)

**Self-pity** — "I've failed in the past so many times. I made an attempt at one time to get involved for God, to get involved in ministry and service, but I got burned or I burned out. So I'm never going to try again." That's like saying, "I ate at a restaurant once and it was bad food so I decided I'd never enter another restaurant." It doesn't make sense.

There are two ways to respond to failure — as exemplified by Judas and Peter. Both committed the same sin — they denied Christ. Judas let it get to him. He got on a guilt trip, threw himself a pity party like Mike always say, became depressed and gave up. He committed suicide because he blew it. Peter, on the other hand, wept bitterly, told God he was sorry and picked himself up. Fifty days later, this same man — who three times denied Jesus Christ — was chosen to birth the Church. In fact 3,000 people accepted Christ in one day while Peter preached! Just 50 days after his greatest failure in life Peter experienced his greatest success. It does not matter so much where you've been. What matters is what direction your feet are headed when you land. Where you are headed right now is what counts, not all the garbage in the past. It's where do you want to go, not where you've been. Will the rest of my life be the best of my life?

**Self-consciousness** — "What will other people think? If I give my life completely to God, will I become a fanatic?" The Bible says, "Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD is kept safe." (Proverbs 29:25) — it's a trap. We excuse ourselves from ministry by pointing to people who are more talented and saying, "Let them do it, God." I have a phrase when it comes to ministry — "If it's worth doing, it's worth doing poorly." I hate the phrase, "If it's worth doing, it's worth doing well." That cuts out about 95 percent of us. That means that the only people who should be
doing anything are the people who are tops in the field. If you can't do it well, don't do it! That's stupid! The same is true of ministry. If it's worth doing, it's worth doing poorly. What counts is the effort!

Fear causes me to make excuses for doing nothing. "Then the man who had received one talent came and said, 'Master, I knew you were a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered.'" (Matthew 25:24) This guy prepared a speech. He says, "The reason why I didn't make any profit on my money is your fault!" He blames the master and passes the buck.

6. APPLICATION: If I don't use it, I lose it.

This principle is true of anything in your life — time, money, effort, energy, talent or abilities. If you don't use it, you lose it. "The master says, 'Take the talent from him and give it to the one who has ten talents.'" (Matthew 25:28) That doesn't seem fair! The rich get richer and the talented get more talented. But it is fair. God has the right to take away anything that I don't use for him. He gave it to me in the first place. He has the right to do that. I forfeit it if I don't use it. It's a universal law: if I don't use my muscles I lose my muscles. If I don't use my mind, I lose it — it becomes mentally dull. If I don't use the opportunities God has given me in business, sports, ministry, whatever, I lose the opportunities. If I don't practice my talent, I lose my talent. Use it or lose it.

Just start using what you have been given for God. If you find you need more energy, use what you've got for God and watch what happens. Little becomes much when you put it in the master's hand. If I need more time, I give my time to God. If I need more money, I give my money to God. If I need more talent, I give my talent to God. Watch him multiply it — just like the five loaves and two fish. He multiples it when we place it in the Master's hand.
7. COMPENSATION: If I use my talents, I'm going to be rewarded.

This is the test. This is why you're here on earth. The rewards: "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!'" (Matthew 25:21)

God promises three rewards:

**Affirmation** — "Well done." I can't think of anything better than to stand before Jesus Christ and have him say, "Good job, Rick. Good job! You really tried!"

**Promotion** — He says, "I'm going to give you greater responsibility. You've been faithful with little things; I'll trust you with more." God can't trust many of us with great blessings because we're not faithful with the little.

**Celebration** — He says, "Come and share your master's happiness." The happiest people I know are those who are using what they have for God.

When God does an audit on your life — and it is coming — is it going to show a profit or a loss? A negative or positive? Is he going to say, "Well done!" or "Lazy servant!" What's it going to show? I shudder to think some of the excuses I will have to give for earlier in my life when I did nothing! I was basically living for myself. To stand before a Saviour with pierced hands and have him say, "Why did you never even make an attempt to get involved in a ministry? You were so busy doing your own thing!"