

Why Holy Spirit Won't Let You Enter This Place Empty-Handed

When the Magi from the East arrived at the home of Joseph and Mary in Bethlehem, they did not come to see the King of the Jews empty-handed.

They brought gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

The Lord Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem for the final week of His earthly ministry. He met a tax collector in Jericho and went to his home for dinner.

Zacchaeus was the chief tax collector in that region and very wealthy.

He received salvation from the Lord that day and pledged to make restitution for all he had stolen from the people. Jesus taught an important parable about the kingdom of God to Zacchaeus and all who were in his house that day (Luke 19:11-27).

A noble land owner was making a long journey to assume lordship over additional territory.

He called for three of his servants and gave each of them responsibility over finances equal to three months' average salary. When he returned from his business trip, each of the three was called to give him account of their responsibility.

The first servant had earned 10 times the amount entrusted to him. The master was very pleased with the servant's work and promoted him to be governor over 10 cities.

The second had earned five times the amount entrusted to him. Again, the nobleman was very pleased and promoted that servant to govern five cities.

The final servant came before his master empty-handed. Fear of failure and intimidation caused him to hide the finances entrusted to him rather than investing them. None of the resources had been lost. He returned to the master all that had been given to him.

The nobleman was angry and disappointed in the servant. "You should have put the money in the bank to draw interest, at the very least," he said.

He received the money returned and sent the servant away. He took the three months' wages returned to him and gave it to the servant who was now governor over 10 cities.

Jesus is the nobleman going on a far journey. You and I are His servants.

He entrusted His kingdom into the hands of His church before He returned to heaven. "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. 16:19).

When you received Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, He gave you a portion of that responsibility, according to your ability, with accountability.

When He returns in the clouds and takes us home, He will call us before His throne and request a report of what we have done with that portion of His kingdom for which we were responsible.

We will kneel before His *bema*, and the fire of His eyes will judge our works for His kingdom. Like the Magi, you will come into the presence of the King with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

Your gold will be the souls to whom you have witnessed.

The frankincense, the hours of prayer you have lifted to

heaven

The myrrh is the words of love, mercy and grace you have spoken to the brokenhearted, wounded and diseased.

He will see your hours of agonizing intercession in your war room.

He will make note of those gifts given in secret to the needy.

He has recorded every hour of preparation to teach the children's class no one else would teach.

He will make note of the times you have slipped money into the hand of your pastor who faithfully serves you on a meager salary.

He will rejoice and reward you with crowns and appoint you to govern over cities and regions in His eternal kingdom.

Faithful shepherd and pastor's wife, the Chief Shepherd and Bishop has recorded of every hour you have prayed and fasted, sacrificed days off to care for the brokenhearted and endured criticism and gossip without defending yourself.

He has made note of the years of service to His kingdom, not looking for recognition or financial gain. The Lord Jesus will celebrate your works, proclaiming, "'Well done, you good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a few things. I will make you ruler over many things. Enter the joy of your master'" (Matt. 25:23).

There will be those who kneel before the king and profess, "I received you as Lord and Savior of my life. I loved you. But I had so little time. I was so busy at work. I was afraid to witness. I had so little money to give. I was no good at working with children or teenagers. I couldn't sing."

Their mouth will be full of excuses, and their hands will be empty.

They will return to Jesus the life He has given to them, and they will enter heaven.

They have no reward.

They will kneel before the King of kings and Lord of lords empty-handed! {eoa}

Dr. F. Dean Hackett *has served in full-time Christian ministry since October 1971. He has ministered throughout the United States, Canada and Europe, serving as pastor, conference speaker and mentor. He has planted four churches, assisted in planting 15 others, and currently serves as lead pastor of Living Faith Church in Hermiston, Oregon. Dr. Hackett founded Spirit Life Ministries International in 2001 to facilitate ministries in Croatia and Bosnia Herzegovina and to open a training center for workers in those nations. You can find him at F. Dean Hackett – Foundational, Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest.*