



TRANSFORMED

DEVOTIONS CONNECTING TEENS TO CHRIST

“Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey.

The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more. So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more. But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money.

“Then the man who had received one bag of gold 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 gold 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. “‘So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags. For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

Matthew 25:14-18, 24-30

Monster killer: Risk

This parable seems pretty harsh. At first glance it can seem like the master (God) is mean and overacts concerning the man with one bag of gold.

But, Jesus is giving us some key insights through this parable into how seriously God takes our relationship with him.

Imagine you just got a boyfriend or girlfriend that you’ve always wanted. They’re kind, smart, ambitious, generous and make you feel special. You never thought they’d like you, but now you’re actually together! They are committed to you.

Now imagine that every time you ask them to hang out, they say no. They justify their answer by saying they fear that if you hang out together you might discover something you don’t like about them and then you’d breakup with them.

Seems pretty crazy, right? A boyfriend or girlfriend that never wants to do anything with you? You might say there’s no relationship at all. Their inaction killed your relationship. Inaction is a monster.

God is the master of taking action! He moved heaven and earth to have a relationship with you. He sacrificed his Son, who got into the mess of this sinful world and even faced the wrath of God himself in our place. God saved



Monster killer: Risk - continued

us *from* an eternity without him. We now get to call him our Father and get to look forward to a life of perfect happiness with him.

And, God saved us *for* something, not just *from* something. He saved us *for* a life filled with purpose and action. He gave each of us spiritual gifts and talents that are beautiful. When we use them it's like we're "hanging out" with God and showing him we're glad we're in this relationship.

The man with one bag of gold knew that in order to gain more bags of gold he'd have to take a risk. He knew he could face ridicule, failure, jealousy, and pain if he used what he had. He didn't want to take that risk. But his inaction produced more severe consequences than his risk would have.

The men who had 5 bags of gold and two bags of gold took a risk. They went out into the world and used their gifts. They knew their master would value the risk they took. They knew his heart—that if they failed he would welcome them still and love them.

Don't just settle with being saved *from* something. Live *for* something. Take risks for God and use what he's given you. Even if you get a little bruised and beat up along the way, you'll end up stronger, more resilient, and even more reliant on God because you'll realize you need his grace even more.

Prayer: Dear Lord, thank you for saving me from death and saving me for a purpose-filled life. Forgive me for my inaction. Forgive me for burying my gifts. Help me step out in faith and take risks for you. Convince me that there is a certain thrill to living my life for you. It's what I was made to do. And when I stumble (because I will) you will be right there to comfort me, encourage me, and empower me. Amen.