



Jesus said to his disciples: "Be sure of this: if the master of the house had known the hour when the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come." Then Peter said, "Lord, is this parable meant for us or for everyone?" And the Lord replied, "Who, then, is the faithful and prudent steward whom the master will put in charge of his servants to distribute the food allowance at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master on arrival finds doing so. Truly, I say to you, he will put him in charge of all his property. But if that servant says to himself, 'My master is delayed in coming,' and begins to beat the menservants and the maidservants, to eat and drink and get drunk, then that servant's master will come on an unexpected day and at an unknown hour and will punish him severely and assign him a place with the unfaithful. That servant who knew his master's will but did not make preparations nor act in accord with his will shall be beaten severely; and the servant who was ignorant of his master's will but acted in a way deserving of a severe beating shall be beaten only lightly. Much will be required of the person entrusted with much, and still more will be demanded of the person entrusted with more."

Introductory Prayer: Lord Jesus, my Creator and Redeemer, everything good comes from you. You are the one source of peace and happiness. Thank you for bringing me into existence and insuring I received the inestimable gift of the faith. Thank you for accompanying me in every moment. I am grateful for your mercy and love and wish to respond more generously to you in my life.

Petition: Lord, help me to be a faithful and prudent steward.

1. Wanted: Faithful and Prudent Stewards: Anyone who has had a management position knows that one of the riskiest parts of the job is hiring. Very often, it can seem like rolling dice, especially when there is a conflict between what's read in the resume and what's felt in the gut. Nevertheless, to make a good hire, you need to have a clear idea of what you want. The Lord has a simple job description for the stewards he is looking to bring on. They must be faithful and prudent. In being faithful, they don't seek to impose their own vision or desires over his, but rather serve the Master who has given

them their commission. Their will is such that they are confident in assimilating the desires of their master. They are able to perceive how to adjust and adapt to the multitude of circumstances that arises. These stewards are constantly applying the old wristband test, “WWJD,” i.e., What Would Jesus Do?

2. Tasting One’s Own Medicine: Having been “hired” by the master, it would be foolish not to expect to be held accountable for the trust that he bestows. Nevertheless, the irresponsible steward indulges his appetites and abuses his authority. The master’s “delay” gives him a false sense of security. Without the natural brake of his master’s watchful eye, his pride gets out of control. Yet the master is bound to return, and the servant eventually experiences the results of his own arrogance: the taste of his own medicine is bitter indeed. The Lord is inviting us to have a greater awareness of his constant presence. His absence and “delay” are only apparent. He is very much present to those who wish to live their God-given charge with integrity and responsibility. His grace is always available to those who live their lives in his presence.

3. Management Styles: The two types of stewards have very different management styles. One beats the servants; the other “distributes the food allowance at the proper time.” We all want to be counted among those faithful and prudent stewards who take good care of those entrusted to us. Yet at times, the responsibility we have seems more burdensome than desirable. While the bad steward indulges his passions, the good steward is in danger of giving into his fatigue and impatience. Frustration is a distinct possibility when it comes to forming others. If the Lord died such a cruel death for our salvation, who can measure the value of a single soul? By contemplating that example, we need to learn to put aside our petty annoyances and instead be faithful in caring for those entrusted to us.

Conversation with Christ: Lord Jesus, you have given me such great responsibility. I am sorry for the times I have offended you, and for when I have not lived up to the trust you have bestowed on me. I promise you that I will strive to reflect your love for those to whom you have entrusted to my care.

Resolution: When my patience is tested, I will pause and ask myself, “How does the Lord want me to handle this situation?”