

**Risk. How does that word make you feel? If you are a high risk-taker you feel excited and you think, "Let's go! Where's the action?" If you are a low risk-taker, you feel cautious and say, "Let's wait! What's the plan?" Some people enjoy risky living. Some don't! But the question before us today is should the Christian life be played safe or is "RISKY LIVING" the order of the day?**

**Jesus is the Lord of my life. Will I risk my life and all that I have for Him? That's the point of the parable in the today's text. Two of the servant took risks and were rewarded. One of the servants did not take a risk and was condemned. Before we talk about the risks we take for God, let's talk first about the risk God takes for us!**

**God loves us like a Father loves his child. And that love was so deep that He was willing to risk giving His only Son to die for us, His lost children. Is there inherent risk in a parent-child relationship? There certainly is. Over the years I have given pastoral support to many hurting parents. Parents take a risk in loving a child, knowing that child may reject that love one day. Taking such parental "risks" of love sometimes seem to only bring pain because of sinful responses from children. Sin is an ugly reality, isn't it? It brings pain and misery to every relationship.**

**When Danya and I were adopting Neal, the way the state of Washington law worked was this. The adoption took place about two months after the birth but the birth mother had the legal option to challenge the adoption for a year. So Danya and I were on edge that whole first year, worried that we would hear from the birth mother that she wanted to challenge the adoption. After the year passed, Danya looked at our attorney and said,**

**"Okay, so now we're safe right?" Our attorney, the father of 3 kids himself said,**

**“No, Danya, you’re parents. You will never be safe again.” There is always risk when you choose to love someone but especially when you choose to love a child. And love is a choice. Sometimes adoptive parents get that better than anyone else. We are the ones who had perfectly normal happy lives and we chose to love a child and become his parents and accept all the risks inherent in doing so.**

**God accepted all that risk when he adopted us as his sons and daughters, when he chose to love us. The parable we have before us today talks all about risk.**

**“Jesus said, ‘The kingdom of heaven will be like this. Once there was a man who was about to leave home on a trip; he called his servants and put them in charge of his property’”(Matthew 25:14).**

**He put them in charge of His property! Think of it: as his children and heirs, God puts us in charge of His property. That’s HIS car you are driving, HIS house you are living in, HIS bank account you are spending, HIS clothing you are wearing, HIS food you are eating. It’s HIS, but He puts it in OUR hands—with an expectation! He expects us to use it, to risk using it, for Him.**

**Two of the servants did exactly that! One did not. The expectation is very clear.**

**“After a long time the master of those servants came back and settled accounts with them. . . .**

**“[The third servant said,] ‘I was afraid, so I went off and hid your money in the ground. Look, here is what belongs to you.’ [The master said,] ‘You should**

**have deposited my money in the bank and I would have received it all back with interest when I returned”**

**This is not a complicated parable. God risks putting His treasure into our hands and He asks us to take the risk of using it—for Him—not just hiding it in the ground and giving it back one day.**

**There are three important principles taught in this parable.**

**Do any of you ever grow weary of hearing your kids talk about “my room?” You can’t just come into “my room” whenever you want! Really? I’m sorry, I must have missed the rent check from you this month. Danya and I have been given the house, the whole house and we allow various and sundry people including our children to live there, to manage a segment of the space we have been given.**

**When God asks us to manage, not own, He is really doing us a huge favor because we are not capable of owning all that we manage. It is too much! It is too complex. God OWNS—we manage the part He has given us.**

**1. God owns; we manage.**

**2. God entrusts; we invest.**

**The master was very clear that he expected his servants to invest what he put in their hands. Why did the third servant refuse to invest his talents? Why do we? Are we perhaps afraid of failing God? We have no reason to fear God. We are forgiven for all failure by Christ who paid for all sin on the cross. We will fail. But we are completely forgiven. With the fear of failure removed, we can risk investing our life for God.**

**God wants us to have the joy of using his. We love giving and watching our gift used. We love watching God's treasure grow. I've never seen people find lasting joy when they waste and hoard—their lives, their money, their abilities. But I have seen incredible joy in people who step out in faith and invest what God gives them.**

**1. God owns; we manage.**

**2. God entrusts; we invest.**

**3. God demands a return.**

**When we give our offerings of time, talent and money, we are giving that return to God. We give to God, not to the church budget. We give to God, not to our favorite ministry. We give to God, not to pay the gas bill. Your gift is given to Him. The question God wants you to answer is: "How much will I give to God? What percentage of what he has given me will I risk in serving him? Do I believe his promise to always return more than I give or do I not?"**

**Percentage giving is biblical. When I give a percentage of my income to God first before I spend on anything else, it is a concrete way of saying, "God, I am putting you first in my life and I trust you to provide all that I need."**

**So this parable leaves us with a very personal question. The question is: What will you return to God who has given you all that you have and eternal life as well? Is the answer nothing? Or is the answer, I will give him something? I hope that every one of us desires to give God something. So the question now is how much will you give him? He suggests we return 10% to him. \$5 a week? That's 10% for those of you who make \$2,600 a year. \$20 a week? That 10% for those of you who make \$10,000 a year. How much will you risk in showing your devotion to God and trusting him to provide all you need? Start with something and trust him to grow it.**