

**Irresponsibility #3**  
**September 26, 2010**

We are closing up this series on being responsible for your life and every time we have been together we would repeat this little phrase, *Am I taking responsibility for my life, really?*

The reason why we say **really** is because everyone thinks that they are taking responsibility for their life. Irresponsibility is very difficult to see in the mirror. Really?

We discovered that your irresponsibility becomes someone else's responsibility . Irresponsibility is not a solo thing that it only effects me and no one else.

Your irresponsibility will impact people whom you are connected to whether it be immediate family, friends, employer, etc. Whenever you shuck your responsibility someone is going to have to pick up the pieces that you dropped.

Your irresponsibility becomes someone's problem. It is extremely important to recognize that and begin to act in an appropriate way.

Today as we wrap this up I want to begin to challenge you in a different way.

I want to say a **universal saying** that every child who was ever born has said these words at some point in their lives. In every culture, every language, all the way back to Cain and Abel. It is never taught, it is just a part of our DNA.

It is that phrase that when a child looks up at their parents and say "*That is not fair.*"

To which parents will respond from all generation, from all culture, in all languages responds, "*Life is not fair.*"

We all know deep inside that life is not fair. But there is something inside of us that **doesn't really want life to be fair all the time.**

Let me explain.

I'm only concerned about fairness as it relates to me. If my piece of the pie is the smallest, then life is not fair. But if I get the largest piece of the pie my attitude changes to,

*"Thank you God for blessing me. You are so good."*

If I get the bigger piece, life is great. If you get the smallest piece, well I'm glad that I'm not you.

Have you ever said "*I got the biggest piece of the pie, life is so unfair. I got it and they didn't.*"

Truth is I'm only concerned about fairness if I get the short end of the stick. If things are going my way, I don't even think about fairness.

**When we say life is not fair what we are really saying is that life is not even.** Life should be even. When you stop to think about it that is impossible. It's impossible for life to be even.

The unfairness of life, the unevenness of life, quickly becomes an excuse for our irresponsibility. The unfairness or unevenness of life is something we quickly leverage to act out irresponsibility.

*I got the short end of the stick. I didn't get a fair shake. I got overlooked, therefore what do you expect when I don't carry my weight?*

*You want me to be a responsible person? Why try when I am always coming up short? Why do my best?*

*You win. You get the prize. You won the lottery so because of that I'm not going to carry my load, my share. If you have to pick up part of my responsibility, big deal, because I got the short end of the stick, small piece of the pie. I have every right to walk away from fulfilling my responsibility because after all life is not fair and you got part of my fair share.*

Those of you who lean in that direction I just have two words for you. STOP IT.

Irresponsibility eats a hole in your soul. The others will pick up the pieces and move on, but if you continue to spiral in this irresponsible attitude, it will continue to eat a hole in your soul where you will never be happy. You will always be walking around with resentments, and an attitude conflict inside of you.

**Benjamin Franklin** said this, "*He who is good at making excuses is seldom good at anything else.*"

You get in this spiral of I don't care, nah nah, and lets say for the sake of argument you did get the short end of the stick. If you hang on to that attitude ,you are going to become one miserable person.

Unfairness attitude quickly makes us build a case for our irresponsibility.

We have to accept the fact that life is not fair and we should stop exerting energy in thinking that we can make it fair across the board.

The real question is, *what am I going to do with the piece of pie that has been handed to me. How am I going to leverage my abilities, my talents, to make the most of life that God has given me.*

The more you focus on the unfairness of life the more you will make excuses for your irresponsibility because of what someone else has that you don't.

Here is the amazing thing, Jesus addressed this issue.

In **Matthew 25**, Jesus taught a series of parables to explain to us what the kingdom of God is like. In the midst of these parables Jesus tells a parable of the unevenness or unfairness of life. Most of you have heard it as the Parable of the Talents.

We have to remember when Jesus spoke in parables often times he spoke in extremes. Jesus uses a parable to try to explain the unevenness of life and here's a key point at the end of the parable,

God doesn't try to **fix** the unevenness and unfairness of life.

God wants us to learn to leverage the talents that we receive.

Here's the parable Matt 25:14 and it's in the middle of other parables.

Big story. The Master is ready to go on a journey and he's going to entrust his money to three trusted servants.

The word **entrust** means this: The Master is going to split his money among the three servants, not evenly, but he expects his servants to do with his wealth what he would do personally. He's not giving this money to protect or to guard, but to manage it and invest it.

Verse 15 *"To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags. And to another one bag, each according to his ability.*

The first thing that should strike you is this is not even. One is given five, and to one, two 2 and to one, one.

To which we quickly cry out, "*That is not fair.*"

*"What do you mean it's not fair.*

*"Doesn't the Master have a right to divide up his wealth anyway he wants to.*

Important lesson in life . What might be fair to one may not be fair to you.

A talent of gold is 15- 20 years of work for an average day laborer in this culture. It's like getting a 20 year pay off if you were a daily laborer.

Then , after he distributed this wealth unevenly, he went on his journey.

The man, who had received five bags of gold, went at once to put his money to work and gained five bags more. Why? Because he knew that is what his Master was expecting of him. His Master would have done the same thing. He followed in his Master's footsteps.

Verse 17, "*So the one with two bags of gold gained two more.*"

He follows his Master's footsteps.

Verse 18, *The man, who had received one bag, went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.*

At this point in the parable, the audience probably went whoooo. Why would anyone do that? Why would you dig a hole and put \$300,000 of gold in the ground. Even if you are wanting to keep the money safe, there's better ways to keep it safe then digging a hole. who would do that?

Verse 19 After a LONG, LONG time, they are wondering if he is ever going to come back, "*After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them.*"

**Settled accounts** means the Master wanted to see what they did with his gold. He expected them to manage the wealth in the same manner that he would manage the wealth. He wanted to see what type of return they got on his investments. He came to settle the accounts.

He didn't expect them to say, *Master we guarded your gold.*

The Master wanted a return on his gold.

Verse 20, *The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. "Master," he said, "You have entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.*

Verse 21, *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."*

Few things? That seemed like a lot to me. The Master referred to it as a few things. Then he says *I will put you in charge of many things.*

The man with two bags of gold also came, "*Master, he said, you entrusted me with two bags of gold; see, I have gained two more.*"

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.*"

At this point in the parable the sound track would change. Who is next. The man with the one bag who has dirt and mud all over himself from digging up the box.

Here is what you really can't appreciate. This is 1st century whining. We can't hear his voice, but listen carefully. He very subtly begins to blame the Master. This is what irresponsible people do.

*It's not my fault, it's someone's fault. I couldn't help it.*

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. You are a tough business guy. You are winner take all. You don't take no for an answer. You are a very intimidating person. So, I was afraid because of you.*

See the subtle shift of blame taking place here.

He responded by saying, *I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.*

Look at how the Master responds, His master replied, *You wicked, lazy servant.* The word **wicked can be translated worthless** which is a better translation.

The master is saying you didn't bury that money because of something about me , you didn't bury the money because you were lazy. You just took the path of **least resistance** and the easiest way out and now you want to blame me for your own slothfulness.

Verse 25 *So you knew that I harvested where I have not sown and gathered where I have not scattered seed?*

*If you knew that I was that difficult to deal with you would have come up with a different plan than to just bury it.*

Verse 27, *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. Oh no, you are too lazy to even do that and you want to blame me.*

**Here is the main twist in the story.**

Verse 28, *take the of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags.*

Hey wait a minute, that's not fair. Shouldn't we evenly divided up between the other two.

He continues, *For those who have, will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Those who have been responsible will be given more. As for those who do not have, even what they have will be taken from them.*

Verse 30 Closes out the parable. *And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

Weeping and gnashing of teeth is a sign of frustration. This guy was in on the inner circle. He had a golden opportunity. He had \$300,000 that he had to go out and manage for his master. Instead he totally wasted the

opportunity and blamed the master.

Master is saying *I want this guy, who is in the inner circle, now put in the outer circle where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.* Sign of great frustration like making a very bad golf shot.

Here is this guy who had this incredible opportunity, blown it, and tried to blame his boss, and he's thrown out of the inner circle. Then Jesus goes on to the next parable.

What is his point. Everyone gets an uneven amount of opportunity. But everyone is held accountable with what they receive. Everyone has the privilege and the responsibility to give an account of what they did with their uneven amount of opportunities. This opportunity that we all have been given, in different amounts, it's not fair, God is not trying to make it fair, is not even ours, it's on loan to us. Our responsibility is to try to leverage what has been given to us to its maximum.

There are some people that have 5 bags of opportunities, some people that have 1 bag of opportunity and some only have 2 bags of opportunity. Five bag people. Born in the right family, right schools, naturally talented and it was recognized. They married well. They are good looking and deep inside we hate them. It just seems to come so natural to them and you work so hard.

You know what happens with these five bag people, they just take it for granted. Instead of relying on God they become self reliant.

Then there are those whose parents divorce early. Had to work their way through life. Tough time in school. Poor social skills. Had a lot of pimples in high school. Life was tough. They withdraw. They look at their lives and think, honestly I don't have a lot going for me.

Then there is most of us somewhere in the middle. Just the average joe blow.

Let's do a reality check here. We have a tendency to inflate ourselves. If anyone was to die today in this room, the flag of the United States is not going to be flown half mast for you. President Obama isn't going to have a moment of silence for you.

Christianity Today, isn't going to do a cover story on the life of Vince Eisaman, like they did with Carl Henry.

The question we have to ask ourselves is not what he or she is doing with their bags but what we have. The tendency is to look at everyone else's bags and compare ourselves to see what they have and what we don't have or to see what we have and what they don't have.

**Comparison game.** Why is it that we play that game everyday?

The point of the parable is that you are to look at your bag and decide how you are going to leverage this to your full potential to God's glory.

Those with 4 or 3 bags need to realize that there are a lot of things that have come easy for you in this life than those with only 2 or 1 bag.

Those with more bags need to realize that it's not as easy to get one's life together if you have only one bag.

Those of us that might have a little extra, whether it's small or great, we need to remind ourselves that the gifts were given to us by God, not just for our benefit, but to benefit the kingdom of God.

Do not think for a moment, that we are not going to be held accountable to God in how we used our talents for his kingdom.

The more bags you have the more responsible you will be held to.

If you are a 4 bag person ,don't compare yourself to a person who is only a 2 bag person. You'll find yourself saying, *He or she should be doing this or that. That's between them and God. You worry about the bags that have been given to you, not the other persons.*

Those of you who feel like you have only one or two bags, stop making excuses. It's amazing what God can do when you give that one bag of talent and surrender it to him.

One bag people can become great people. 5 bag people can become worthless. Decide to stop making excuses. Can't look back. One or 2 bag people will often say,

*What am I going to do. I don't have a great story like that. Life never comes easy for me. Look at what you have been given.*

You need to look for something bigger than yourself because your life is too small to waste your entire life focused on you.

Nothing inspiring about a person's story that focuses on self. There is no challenge in a self indulgent lifestyle. Nothing inspiring. You know better.

Nothing inspiring about a person's story that makes excuses. There is nothing to celebrate there.

The challenge for you and the challenge for me, for two bag people is *Am I able to see God's bigger picture? What can I do to leverage my bag to most benefit God's kingdom?*

To remember the gifts that you have today can easily be snuffed out in a second. What are you going to do with those two bags?

What are you going to do with your bags? Are you going to sit around and complain about what you don't have and say, *Life is not fair.*

Or are you going to accept what your heavenly Father gave you and leverage it for Him.

The most important verse in the parable is verse 19, *After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them."*

When you stand before Jesus to give account for what you did, it can be one of those glorious moments knowing that you did everything you could possibly do with what you had to work with.

Or it can be one of those moments where you will try to excuse yourself and be of great embarrassment.

We all have time, but we have uneven amounts of time. We all have opportunities but we have uneven and unfair amount of opportunities. But to be a person of integrity is to take responsibility of the opportunities that God gives me

I'm not going to take it for granted.

I'm not going to make excuses.

I'm not going to compare myself.

The bottom line is this, ***To Whom is given something is required.***

When we embrace that, we see it through a lens of a God who loves us and cheering for us, empowering us, giving us opportunities, that is when we begin to take full responsibility for our lives.

It's my hearts desire that everyone here get this and get this right.  
Are you taking responsibility for your life, Really?