

Alley Rundown - May 17 - 18, 2025

Today's Bible Story: Use Somebody (Parable of the Talents) • *Matthew 25:14-30*

Today's Key Question: How can you use what you've been given?

Today's Bottom Line: Look for ways to use what you've been given.

Monthly Memory Verse: None of you should look out just for your own good. Each of you should also look out for the good of others. Philippians 2:4 (*NIRV*)

PRE SERVICE VIDEOS (*Dude Perfect*)

Welcome the students and introduce yourself to the group. Set expectations for behavior during the large group. Review "Alley Cash" and bathroom procedures.

Welcome, everyone! We're incredibly excited that you're all here today! I-spy some familiar faces, AND some new ones, too! That's awesome. We're glad you're here with us in The Alley! All month, we've been discovering more about how we can follow Jesus with the way we take initiative to help others and show them God's love.

Let's start off today with something to think about: what would you do if you were given \$1000?

SLIDE: Photo of a stack of money

I'm talking cash in hand, like a stack of twenties totaling a thousand bucks. What would you use your newfound riches for? Video games? A year's worth of art supplies? Maybe throw half in savings and use the rest to buy candy and chips? Take a moment and talk it over with kids around you.

All great uses of a thousand bucks! Many of you would spend it on really great stuff! When I was in your shoes, I did the exact same thing whenever I got my hands on any kind of money.

*Communicator shares a personal story of a time someone gave them a moderate sum of money and how they spent it. **Use this as an example or put this in third-person and share it as a hypothetical situation.***

When I was a kid, my grandmother used to give me \$100 for my birthday every year. Sure, a hundred bucks might be a good deal less than a thousand, but it's still some serious money to be carrying around at ten years old! My mom always told me to save it, but COME ON! There's no WAY I wasn't NOT going to buy myself something awesome! One year, I spent the full \$100 on baseball cards and bought a FULL SET right off the shelf. However, the joke was on me: the VERY NEXT WEEK, the New Year's edition of cards came out, and the set that I bought was virtually worthless. None of my baseball friends cared about my OLD cards when they were all getting with the NEW packs that just released.

I burned myself pretty bad by buying all those cards. I mean, I seriously regretted it afterward. But in hindsight, I think I understand why I bought all those baseball cards. I was thinking SMALL. At that moment, I wanted something that would make me instantly happy. I'm sure a lot of you have felt the same way. That bag of candy might taste better after you've enjoyed a nice, big dinner, but all you want to do is rip into that little bag of sugary goodness right NOW.

What if there's a way to use whatever you have—money or gifts or talents—to do something even greater? Don't get me wrong. At the time, those baseball cards were really exciting, but it didn't take long for them to become archaic, or ancient, and no longer interesting. So, think about it. What would it look like to use a \$1,000 or \$10 or your art skills or skateboarding talent to do something greater? What if that something greater had more to do with others than it does with ourselves?

These are actually important questions to think about. In fact, people have been asking similar questions for thousands of years, even during the time when Jesus was on earth. This means that we can check out the Bible and discover truth about how we might want to start thinking about our stuff and our talents, because whether you know it or not, God's given each of us resources to do something bigger! Let's take a look at a time Jesus challenged some people to do just that!

VIDEO: So and So Show (18:03)

So, not really a happy ending for Jesus' story, huh? At least for the third servant. But remember, Jesus was telling this story as a way to help people understand an important truth about God. So, let's think about this story for a moment.

Jesus talked about three servants who were given much while their boss, the rich man, was away. When the man came back, he celebrated the two who multiplied their money and gave them more. But the rich man scolded the man who did nothing with what he had. The message of Jesus' story was clear. Those who take some initiative and are responsible with what they're given will be given more! But those who waste it will end up with nothing!

While Jesus told this story to the disciples, His words also make sense to us today! Whether you know it or not, God has given us SO much. Now, maybe God hasn't given you bags of cash, but God has given you words to say that can help people know about Jesus. Maybe you've been given some influence in the lives of the kids in your class or on your team. Maybe you've been given the ability to cook really good food. Whatever God has given you, it isn't something that should just be kept to yourselves. It's meant to be shared, to help others! It's important for us to make the most of what God has given us.

Jesus made the most of His time with people. Part of why I love this passage is because Jesus was using what God had given Him, the gift of storytelling, to encourage us to use what God has given us! He showed love to everyone and helped them understand what's most important to God.

As you head to Small Group, ask yourself this question.

SLIDE: Key Question

How can you use what you've been given? Think about what exactly God has given you. Consider how God has wired you and gifted you. Imagine all the ways you can take initiative and use those gifts and talents to show others how much you care about them and how much God loves them. And don't worry if you're having trouble thinking about what you've been given. You'll have a chance to talk more about this with your Small Group in just a moment. Before we head out, let's pray and thank God for the way He's loved us and given us so much. Let's pray.

Communicator leads group in a prayer related to what they just heard.

CHECK THE TIME: There should be 20-25 minutes for small group. If LG is running late, skip the next part.

OFFERING:

We are collecting our offering to support a mission partner called La Liberte' Church (La Lib-er-tay) in Africa. La Liberte' Church is in a financially challenged area in The Congo. The kids at the church don't have access to a lot of food so this church feeds 700 children a meal every weekend! Each meal costs \$2.00 and our goal is to help feed as many kids as we can! Check out this video....

VIDEO: Offering Video

SLIDE: Theme