

Luke 19:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.

Analysis

Well, thou good servant (Εὖγε, ἀγαθὲ δοῦλε, Euge, agathe doule)—'well done' (εὖγε, euge) is a rare exclamation of approval, used only here and in the parallel. Agathos (good) describes moral character, not just competence. **Faithful in a very little** (ἐν ἐλαχίστῳ πιστὸς ἐγένου, en elachistō pistos egenou)—the mina, though valuable, was 'very little' (ἐλάχιστος, elachistos, superlative form) compared to the authority granted. Faithfulness in testing qualifies for greater responsibility.

Have thou authority over ten cities (ἴσθι ἐξουσίαν ἔχων ἐπάνω δέκα πόλεων, isthi exousian echōn epanō deka poleōn)—the reward vastly exceeds the task. The Greek exousia (authority) indicates delegated governmental power. This previews the coming kingdom where Christ's faithful servants will reign with Him (Revelation 2:26-27, 20:4-6). Small faithfulness in the age of grace qualifies believers for co-regency in the age to come. This isn't about earning salvation (which is by grace through faith alone) but about rewards for service.

Historical Context

In Roman client-kingdoms, loyal servants of the king often received governorships over cities as rewards for faithful service. The audience, living under Herodian client-kings appointed by Rome, understood this dynamic. The disproportionate reward (ten cities for one mina's profit) illustrates grace: God's rewards exceed what strict justice would require. Jesus was teaching that kingdom service in this

age—though often despised and difficult—would be rewarded with governmental authority in the Messianic kingdom.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. Why does God test faithfulness 'in a very little' before granting greater kingdom authority?
2. How should the promise of reigning with Christ motivate present faithfulness in seemingly small tasks?
3. What does 'good servant' reveal about the character God values more than mere productivity?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	εἶπεν	αὐτῷ	Εὖ,	ἀγαθὲ	δοῦλε	ὅτι	ἐν	ἐλαχίστῳ
And	he said	unto him	Well	thou good	servant	because	in	a very little
G2532	G2036	G846	G2095	G18	G1401	G3754	G1722	G1646
πιστὸς	ἐγένου	ἴσθι	ἐξουσίαν	ἔχων	ἐπάνω	δέκα		
faithful	thou hast been	thou authority	G1849	have	over	ten		
G4103	G1096	G2468		G2192	G1883	G1176		
πόλεων								
cities								
G4172								

Additional Cross-References

Luke 16:10 (Faith): He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.

Matthew 25:21 (Faith): His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

1 Peter 1:7 (Faith): That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

1 Corinthians 4:5 (Parallel theme): Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

Genesis 39:4 (Parallel theme): And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand.

1 Samuel 2:30 (Parallel theme): Wherefore the LORD God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever: but now the LORD saith, Be it far from me; for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.

Romans 2:29 (Parallel theme): But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

Luke 22:30 (Parallel theme): That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

1 Peter 5:4 (Parallel theme): And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

2 Timothy 2:10 (Parallel theme): Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

