

When you invest in something,
There is an expectation of return,
A hope of growth and increase.

When someone invests,
Either with money,
Time, resources,
Interest,
There is the desire to see the thing invested in grow to fruition.
We see this naturally in the market,
where people invest money with the hopes of gaining a return greater than when they started,
Or in parents, who invest in their children patiently over the years,
hoping to see a responsible, moral person emerge into society.

The point being, we expect a return on an investment, and rightly so.

Today's parable reveals something truly amazing--God has invested in us.
Christ calls the kingdom of God like a man leaving on business,
And entrusting his property to his servants, in hopes that they will grow his estate while he's
away.

But what does this mean?

God has invested in us--he has put his stock in us, so to speak.

By becoming human, Christ united our life to his.

Now, as "is away in a foreign country--"that is, ascended into heaven,
he has given us his riches. His grace. His mercy. His power, by the Holy Spirit.

God has entrusted his riches to the Church.

God has invested in us, and so he expects a return.

A growth, and increase in the wealth he has given us.

Do we live with this awareness? Are we like the good servants,
taking stock of what we were given--what talents, what resources, what spiritual gifts--
and "trading" them with our fellow man?

Do we use our words, our job, our relationship, our hobbies, our strengths, our very existence,
to grow the Kingdom of God?

When we give God an account of our life, will we see an increase from what we were given--
did we "trade" in this world for the sake of the gospel?

At the very least, did we put our money in the bank to gain interest?

As we heard the word of the king in the parable, at the least His money should gain interest.

Did we at least take the gifts we were offered in this life and invest it back in the bank--the
Church?

Did we take the life of the services and of prayer seriously, giving back to God what is his so
that he might use it to grow the faith on earth?

Did we give our money, time, and prayer to the Church?

Or are we like the ignorant servant,
the one who thought he was given so little, the one who buried his talent in the ground,
making it useless.

Do we blame our lack of growth on God, rather than our own use of his gifts?

Do I bury the gift given to me at my baptism, hiding my faith, giving it no opportunity to grow by
not even properly investing myself in the Church, in prayer, in the gospels?

Brethren in Christ,
Our whole life is an investment.

We were brought into being in order that we might have life and more abundantly.
Are we trading our life for heavenly life?
And how do we do so?

Be encouraged by the words of today's epistle; they give good counsel on how to trade our talents for the kingdom.

As the elect of God, chosen, the apostle Paul says to put on tender mercies: kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering. When we are kind to those who need it, when we show humility instead of insisting on our own way, when we show meekness where others expect hardness, when we longsuffer with the pains and burdens of our brother, we make good on God's investment.

He continues: bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another, even as Christ forgave you. So you also must do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection, and let the peace of God rule in your hearts. Be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell richly within you in all wisdom.

When we bear with and forgive someone, even the person most difficult to us; when we forgive like Christ has forgiven us; when we put on love as the most important thing, to bind all the other virtues; when we love those hard to love. When we seek the peace of Christ in our hearts instead of being tossed about by the cares of this world. When we remember our blessings and offer thanks for them, blessing others. When we do these things, we trade wisely in God's investment, because we behave like him in the world.

Let us all seek these things, that we might have our lives be a worthwhile return in God's glorious investment.