



## You only live once

### Narrator 1

Reading from Mathew chapter 25 verses 14-30

“Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more. So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more. But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money.

**Richard** *seated at desk with papers during reading – when finished, comes to life and checks and re-orders his papers – then picks up phone to secretary*

Esther, are they all here?.....good – send them in.

*He gets up and goes to the office door and welcomes the three managers one by one and then directs them to his desk where they pull up chairs and sit down.*

### **Richard**

Now guys, as my management team, I have some important news for you.....while this is my own company, I will be leaving very shortly. I have been appointed chief executive of European Airways who have just acquired two major airlines and my challenge is to bring those two together and rationalize them into a profitable business.

**Managers** *more or less together and with variations of words, offer congratulations – one in particular interjects clearly*

Congratulations!

### **Richard**

As you can imagine, this will be more than a full time job.....and it is based in Berlin.....so I have to consider the future of this company, so here is what I would like to do.

You have been my management team here for a number of years now. I appointed you on account of your abilities and I have trained you in good business practice and how to manage well .....so, I am putting the three of you in charge here. As you know the company is split into three business units and I am putting you in charge of one unit each. You know the performance measures for each unit.....and I will review at year-end as I won't have the time to be involved more regularly. I know you guys are well equipped to do it.....so I will be trusting you entirely.

*He stands up with three files in his hands and addresses each manager separately by name, shaking each by hand and giving over a file to each and each responds to say thankyou and reassure him they will honour his trust/do their best etc*

Sam, I am giving you the manufacturing unit

Hannah, I would like you to take the retail network

Chloe, you know we have a significant property portfolio; well I am leaving that one with you.

*They all walk to the office door where they shake hands and say goodbye with pleasantries. He walks back to his desk and packs his briefcase while saying*

I know they are well equipped to do it.....I just hope they will be as dedicated when I'm not here.....but it's the best plan I can make.

*He exits*

### **Narrator 1**

"After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five 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 things. Come and share your master's happiness!'

"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 things. Come and share your master's happiness!'

"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. So I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.'

"His master replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? 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.'

"So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags. For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. <sup>30</sup> And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

### **Richard** *Richard enters*

Oh, it's great to be back in here again.....(*as he takes his coat off*).and now to see how they've been getting on.....I know each of them was well capable of managing and developing what I entrusted to them (*As he takes papers from brief case and puts them on desk*),

*Sits at desk, and picks up phone)*

Ok Esther, tell Sam to come in. *Sam enters and they greet each other and Sam sits down*

### **Sam**

I think things have been going well while you were away.....here is my report (*hands a file to Richard who peruses file for a few moments before....*)

**Richard**

My, I can see you've been busy. How did you manage to get such good results?

**Sam** *a little embarrassed*

Well.....I did a bit of research in the market which identified a niche for an automated electronic door lock. So I got the design team together and developed a prototype initially. Critics scorned the idea but I was confident enough about it and when I went to market the product was an immediate success.

**Richard**

Congratulations on your idea.... and carrying it through. I will chat more about this gadget later but for now, well done.

**Sam**

Err.....well.....thankyou.....that was the least I could do.

*Richard freezes while.....*

**Narrator** *Richard and Sam freeze*

But God was keeping an eye on things too

**God**

My!..... he has done well not just in the results but also in his ethical business standards. And also I can see he has been busy about his Christian faith. I AM impressed. All those skills and blessings I gave him have been put to good use.....in particular, I like the way he talked about Christian faith among the friends and neighbours I sent his way.....wasn't always easy or popular.....but it has had a positive impact in more ways than anyone realizes. Great!

**Richard** *as he and Sam move to door for Sam to exit.*

I am very pleased.....and keep on as you are.

I will be organizing a little celebration dinner very shortly.

*Richard picks up phone and asks Esther to send Hannah in*

Hello Hannah, won't you sit down.

*They both sit*

So, how have you been getting on?

**Hannah**

It's been an exciting time and I have a report for you *hands it over and Richard peruses it for a few moments*

**Richard**

This is great. You weren't afraid to take risks – I love it! .....tell me more.

**Hannah**

Well. I thought we needed to improve our presence in the market so I researched that a bit and found two towns where we could enter competitively – so I opened two new retail outlets. A risky business, but with a bit of effort and some marketing they very soon became profitable, one just ok and the other a real success story. But retail being retail, we need to monitor it closely.

**Narrator** *Richard and Hannah freeze*

And God's thoughts?

**God**

Wow! Another success story.....and a risk taker.....and not put off when some of the risks don't work as well as expected. And she took risks campaigning on matters of Christian values both at home and abroad.....particularly in the modern world where Christianity is often scorned. Impressive.

**Richard**

An ideal employee! I have more exciting plans for you.

And I will be arranging a little celebration outing shortly.

*Both get up and he sees her out*

**Richard** *phone again*

Esther, would you ask Chloe to come in now please

*Enter Chloe – greeting – both sit*

Well Chloe, what news have you for me.....do you have a report?

**Chloe**

Err....well.....no. There was nothing new to report. Things are just as always.....you see, I didn't have time to do much on the property.....I was very busy at home. And when that shop on the corner became vacant I was afraid to re-let it in case we got a bad tenant.....thought you'd like it safe.....and I wouldn't want to look foolish if I made a mistake.

**God** *Richard and Chloe freeze*

Oh dear, what has happened here? Basically she has focussed on herself and her own interests. The same goes for her spiritual life. Just doing what she thinks is enough to keep her Christian faith in tact – occasional visits to church, a few financial donations and bits of charity. None of that impresses me....I just want her dedication. So many blessings spurned and opportunities wasted.....I think I'll just hand her over to what Richard has in store for her. Richard

**Richard** *becomes animated*

You mean....you...you mean....you did NOTHING! What about all that opportunity I gave you?.....I'd say you just BURIED it.

**Chloe**

Well.....there wasn't really any time left over ....a bit of TV....sport.....family, friends.....socializing.....you know the sort of thing. But I did make enough time to get to church....well, most of the time.

**Richard**

It seems to me your life wasn't used with any priority .....other than your own interests!

**Chloe**

Well, you know some things require commitment on a regular basis.....and I HATE COMMITMENT....it takes away my freedom.

**Richard**

I'd say you think just of yourself, YOUR rights, YOUR freedom, YOUR enjoyment.....and BURIED your skills.

*(Richard stands up, gets animated)*

Chloe, you're fired! *She protests.....sacked.....DISMISSED.....do you understand? Richard becomes so emphatic, Chloe retreats slowly towards the door*

**Narrator** *Just as Chloe reaches the door*

Hold it.....just...there.....now...rewind.

*Chloe walks backwards to Richard's desk and about to sit back where he was*

**Narrator**

Stop!

*Chloe and Richard in freeze position and a short pause to create suspense*

**Narrator**

Life is not a rehearsal, but, Chloe, if you had the opportunity over again, would you do anything differently?

**Chloe**

I would like to think so....but the scary bit is ...WOULD I REALLY?.....but the bigger question is can I find what it takes to change from now on?

**Chloe & Richard** *speaking and pointing to audience*

How about you?.

