

# WELL DONE CHECKLIST

A BIBLE STUDY ON THE  
PARABLE OF THE TALENTS FOR THE  
DISCIPLE WHO WANTS TO HEAR,  
"WELL DONE".

shannon popkin



# THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS

Matthew 25: 14-30



14 “For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. 15 To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. 16 He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. 17 So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. 18 But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money. 19 Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. 20 And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me five talents; here, I have made five talents more.’ 21 His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ 22 And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me two talents; here, I have made two talents more.’ 23 His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ 24 He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, 25 so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here, you have what is yours.’ 26 But his master answered him, ‘You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed? 27 Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. 28 So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. 29 For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. 30 And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

# THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS

Matthew 25: 14-30



Read the verses through two times.

Underline all of the verbs that refer to the Master (vs. 14-15, 19, 21, 23, 28). What do you learn about the master?

Underline the verbs that describe the actions of the servants. What do you learn about each?

Draw a circle around the quotes from each servant. What is their view of the Master, revealed through their words? Did each one treat the Master like the Master?

- two and five talent guys
- one talent guy

What words does the master use to describe each of the servants?

- one talent guy:
- two talent guy:
- five talent guy:

# THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS

Matthew 25: 14-30



Mark any cause and effect relationships in the story with C and E, and and arrow between. What patterns do you notice?

Draw a box around the quotes from the Master.

- Write out the Master's response to the five talent guy in verse 21:
- What differences do you see in the Master's response to the two talent guy in verse 23? What does this show you about the Master and the kingdom?
- What differences do you see in the Master's response to the one talent guy in verse 26-28? What do you learn about the Master and the kingdom?

Knowing that the Master represents God, and the servant represents you, what does he say that....

- scares you?
- surprises you?
- interests you?
- inspires you?

# THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS

Matthew 25: 14-30



Why do you think Jesus told a story about three servants with mismatched talents versus a story with two servants with the same talents?

Knowing what you know about human nature and the twelve disciples, what temptation might there have been for them to compete and compare?

What is God showing you about himself?

What is God showing you about yourself?

What is God showing you about your relationships with other disciples?

Use the following pages to go deeper and make this parable personal.

# CHECK YOUR HEART:

"Search me, God, and know my heart..." Psalm 139:23



- ☐ I am often stressed out and overwhelmed.
- ☐ I am often discouraged because I'm "falling behind".
- ☐ I think I might expect more of myself than Jesus does.
- ☐ I think I might expect less of myself than Jesus does.
- ☐ I'm frequently jealous of someone who does what I do.
- ☐ I'm often hurt or frustrated because someone else is advancing beyond me.
- ☐ I sometimes wish certain people had less capacity or giftedness.
- ☐ I tend to discount or minimize the importance of my gifts or talents.
- ☐ I tend to inflate the importance of others' gifts or talents.
- ☐ I often criticize myself without taking into account my capacity level.
- ☐ I often measure myself against others who have higher capacity.
- ☐ I long for others to look at me and say, "She's done well."
- ☐ I think more about measuring up than being faithful.
- ☐ I see God as a harsh taker, not a generous giver.
- ☐ I've put too much emphasis on the world's status, fame, and wealth.
- ☐ I've put too little emphasis on the rewards I'll receive in heaven.
- ☐ I need to focus more on hearing God say, "Well done!"

Pray and ask God to help you work through what he has shown you, as you complete the following pages. Remember that his desire is to tell you, "Well done!"



# KNOW MY TALENT

In Jesus's story, the servants were each entrusted with a different number of talents that matched their capacity.

Invite Jesus, your Master, to help you discern answers to the following:

List out the gifts and talents you been entrusted with. How are you uniquely gifted? (Compare yourself without measuring.)

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What is your capacity level? How has this been impacted by things that are in God's control, not yours?

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Look back at your list of gifts and talents. Consider how you'd feel if you lost each one. Does this given insight into how much you've invested it?

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If one talent is worth \$1.75 million to God, how much have you been entrusted with? Have you been looking at your talents this way?

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# REFUSE TO RANK

You weren't given your talents to make you feel "better than" or "less than". Ranking is rooted in this measure-up world.

How has the habit or measuring and ranking kept you from having your Master's mindset about your talents?

When have you had an inflated sense of self after comparing your talents or capacity level with someone else's?

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When have you felt inadequate or "less than" after comparing your talents or capacity level with someone else's?

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How has measuring yourself against others caused fear or discouragement? Where have you quit too soon? How have you "buried" your talents?

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Respond to this quote by F. Dale Bruner: "The special peril for the one-talented person is thinking one-talented people don't matter much."

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# PURSUE FAITHFULNESS

Since the two-talent guy and the five-talent guy both heard, "Well done, good and faithful servant," we know that our Master is less interested in how much we produce, and more interested in how faithful we are with what we've been entrusted.

Which short term, measure-up goals have distracted you from the goal of faithfulness? How are these short term outcomes out of your control?

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How can you shift your focus to the long term goal of being a faithful servant? How will this affect your current season?

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Who are you jealous of? Is she being faithful to God? What difference does it make to remember that you and she both can hear "Well done"?

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How have you been faithful, even in ways that no one knows, with what God has entrusted to you? How can you make faithfulness a bigger priority?

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# KNOW THE MASTER

The one-talent guy buried his talent, and explained that it was because he judged the Master to be a harsh taker, not a generous Giver—which revealed that he neither knew the Master nor saw the Master as his Master.

Do you?

How have you viewed God as a harsh taker, rather than a generous giver? Which of his generous blessings have you overlooked or discounted?

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How often do you obsess over measuring up, getting ahead, or falling behind? How might this indicate you're not living to hear, "Well done"?

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Have you turned down assignments which seem "beneath you"? Have you sought after assignments that bring recognition? How might this indicate that you don't see the Master as your Master?

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What evidences do you see that you do or don't approach God with humility? How might humility (rather than an attitude of entitlement or judgment) help you better see the generosity of God in your life—especially as you consider that God gave his only Son, that you might receive eternal life (John 3:16)?

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# EXPECT MORE!

When the Master returned, and the servants were held accountable, it wasn't the end of the story!

How will you align yourself with the Master, by expecting more?

Picture the day that you will meet your Master, and bring forward the talents that he has entrusted to you, and give account for how you've invested them. If that were happening today, what would you say?

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Think through the current ways you're investing your talents. What adjustments would you make if you knew that you only had a year left? What adjustments do you need to make, in keeping with the fact that this life is only the introduction to the life to come?

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# ONE-ANOTHERING

The Bible is clear: One anothering is essential.

In isolation, we wilt. In community, we grow. I've shared a short summary statement for each of these "one another" verses.

Write down any other insights you have on "one anothering" from each verses, and answer the questions:

Rom. 12:10 We are to outdo one another in showing honor. Who do you see doing this, and how does it affect you? How will you "outdo" someone in this way, today?

Rom. 15:14 We all need to be in counseling – the kind of counseling we offer each other! What friend is able to give you godly counsel? What do you need his/her input on today?

I Cor. 12:25 When we truly care for one another, we get rid of polarized division. Name one way you will care for someone who thinks differently than you do. How might this help eliminate division?

II Cor. 13:11 Our goal should be restoring (not discarding) splintered relationships. What relationship do you want to be restored? What is one step you can take toward restoration?



# ONE-ANOTHERING

Gal. 5:13 We should serve (not burden or coerce) the people we have access to. How have you burdened or coerced a family member or close friend? How can you serve this person today?

Gal. 5:26 Comparing up or comparing down can hurt relationships. Who do you compare up with? Who do you compare down with? How can you celebrate (not compete with) him or her?

Gal. 6:2 It's implied that God's laws are designed to lead us into community, not isolation. How is your disobedience causing you to isolate from other believers? How will you obey, instead? How might this create community?

What did God show you in these verses?

# comparison:

## distracts

Jealousy, insecurity, self-consciousness distract me from the creative work that I'm called to do.

"For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." Eph. 2:10 ESV

## divides

When I feel inferior, I pull away. When I feel superior, I pull away. But when I celebrate my own and others' differences, cultivate community.

"Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone." 1 Cor. 12:4-6 NIV

## detracts

Comparison requires so much sideways energy that it detracts from what I can ultimately produce. But when I free myself from measuring myself against others, I'm free to fulfill my purpose.

"Be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain." 1 Cor. 15:58 ESV



GET THE  
REST OF  
THE DIGITAL  
VERSES &  
REMINDERS,  
+ MORE  
BONUSES!

code:  
MEFREE



# Comparison Girl

## prayers

Lord Jesus, next to \_\_\_\_\_, I feel:

- ☐ small
- ☐ inadequate
- ☐ ashamed of myself

I confess that these feelings are tied to a desire to be lifted up or admired by \_\_\_\_\_.

Today, I will choose to "little" (not belittle) myself and humbly turn my focus to serving others by...



RED LETTER COMPARISON OF JESUS:

*"Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted."*

Matthew 23:12

# Comparison Girl

## prayers

Lord, today I feel inadequate next to \_\_\_\_\_ and it makes me want to pull back and tuck myself in a corner of isolation.

OR: Lord, I know I'm admired for my \_\_\_\_\_, but because of the pressure to maintain appearances, I want to retreat to that same corner of isolation.

But I was created for community (not isolation)! So Lord, which truth-claiming believer in my life would you like me to make myself vulnerable with? \_\_\_\_\_ Today I will climb out of my corner of isolation and invite connection by...

RED LETTER COMPARISON OF JESUS:

*Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted."*

Matthew 23:12

# Comparison Girl

## prayers

Lord, today I will live by your kingdom values—not this measure-up world. Instead of pushing to be first, here's how I will put others first in my...

- work:
- community:
- church:
- family:
- online interaction:
- other:

RED LETTER COMPARISON OF JESUS:

*"So the last will be first, and the first last."*

Matthew 20:16

# Comparison Girl

## prayers

Lord, you know that I'm struggling today. I feel...

- jealous because of...
- outdone by...
- "less than" because of...

Lord, am I just too focused on me? Please show me my heart.

Today, in your strength, I will walk in me-free humility by...



RED LETTER COMPARISON OF JESUS:

*"Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted."*

Matthew 23:12





## Comparison Girl

### prayers

Lord, I have been comparing myself with \_\_\_\_\_ and driving myself to get ahead or outdo her/him/them by...

But Jesus, you told me to follow you, and live "me-free". So today, I choose to lay down my get-ahead pride and humbly serve this person(s) by:

RED LETTER COMPARISON OF JESUS:

*"The greatest among you shall be your servant among you shall be your servant."*

Matthew 23:11



## Comparison Girl

### prayers

Lord, you know that I have a harshly critical attitude toward my \_\_\_\_\_ because of \_\_\_\_\_.

Help me to see that I can't compare down in disgust without also elevating myself. Yes, \_\_\_\_\_ is probably wrong, but I am *definitely* wrong when I respond with self-righteousness and pride.

Today I will pray for \_\_\_\_\_ as a fellow sinner, and I will empty myself of pride by...

RED LETTER COMPARISON OF JESUS:

*"Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted."*

Matthew 23:12



## Comparison Girl

### prayers

Lord, today as I approach social media or people in real life, I will choose to focus on the "spout" not the "lines".

I know that you have put \_\_\_\_\_ in my measuring cup, which is meant to lift up others (not elevate myself). Please give me an opportunity to pour myself out today by...

RED LETTER COMPARISON OF JESUS:

*"The greatest among you shall be your servant among you shall be your servant."*

Matthew 23:11



## Comparison Girl

### recentering questions

Am I just too focused on me?

How can I be vulnerable with my comparison struggle?

Who can I focus on, other than myself?

RED LETTER COMPARISON OF JESUS:

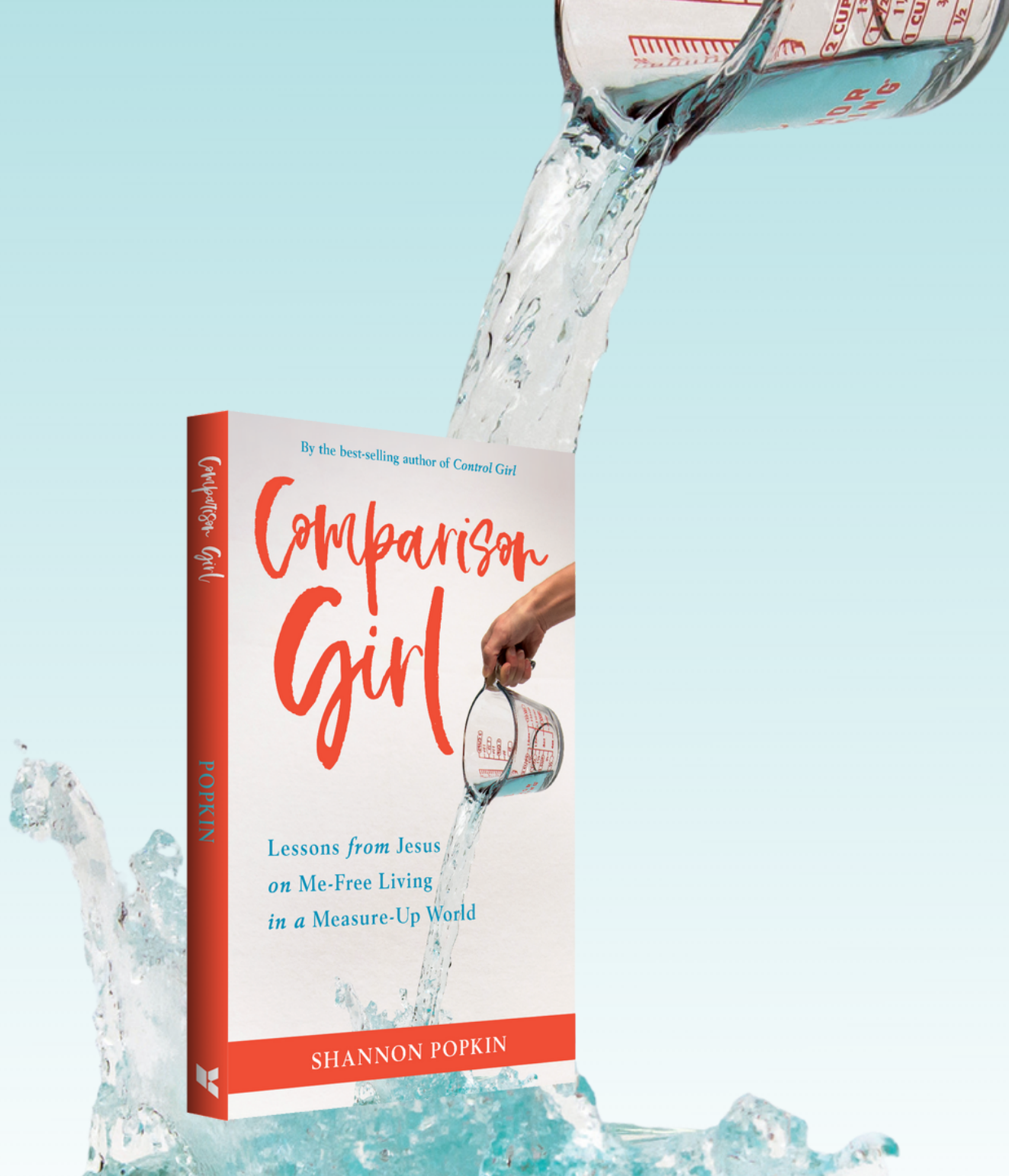
*"The greatest among you shall be your servant among you shall be your servant."*

Matthew 23:11









## A SIX-WEEK BIBLE STUDY

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