Today, Jesus’ followers are still equipped to do God’s work around the world. As we study the Parable of the Ten Minas* throughout four sessions, your group members will be challenged to:

- Identify their God-given gifts and resources
- Understand that God calls each of us to use those gifts and resources
- Become good stewards in using their gifts and resources to serve the poor

These four studies can be done either before or during the Famine. Each session features short teachings, discussion, and activities designed to assist students in grasping and applying the truths of Jesus’ Parable of the Ten Minas. Feel free to adapt any of these materials for the age, size, and needs of your group. If your group members are keeping a Famine journal, encourage them to record what they are learning and what actions they plan to take.

Lesson objective
For participants to know that God has given each person many things of value, including time, talents, and resources, and to identify some of the specific, unique gifts God has given each participant.

Items needed
Sticky notes, pens, notepaper, a penny or fake coin for each participant, and clear tape.


Putting the story in perspective . . .
Okay, first question: What’s a mina? A mina during Jesus’ time was equal to about 100 days’ wages. How much do you think that would be in today’s wages if you earned even minimum wage and worked eight hours per day?

The equal amount in U.S. dollars today that the master gave each servant is about ________.

So we can see this was no small chunk of change the master was entrusting to his servants. It was of great value! Keep this in mind as we continue to learn about this Parable of the Ten Minas. Before we go too far, let’s talk about parables—stories Jesus often used to communicate His lessons.

*This Bible study is based on the New King James Version of the Bible. You may have the word “talents” in your version of the Bible instead of “minas.” Please clarify as needed for your group participants.
Discuss it . . .
Why do you think Jesus used parables, or stories, to teach truth?

In essence, a parable is a story about familiar things that help us understand spiritual truths. Parables communicated directly to the people because they told a story the people could relate to—Jesus’ parables talked about farming or sheep or tax collecting. These all were things familiar to the Jews of Jesus’ day, so Jesus used them to teach about God and His Kingdom.

Today we may have to understand a little about Hebrew culture to see the significance of the Parable of the Ten Minas. Jesus shared this parable with a group that was following Him to Jerusalem, the city central to the Jewish faith. This city is where kings and other powerful people lived. Before this, Jesus had spent time talking about the Kingdom of God, and many people were looking to Jesus to set up an earthly kingdom to defeat the Jews’ political and military enemies—and they expected Him to do that in Jerusalem. As the group approached Jerusalem, the seat of religious as well as political power, Jesus was telling this parable to communicate that He was soon going to leave them and that His followers would then be entrusted with His affairs. First, let’s identify who the players are in Jesus’ story.

Discuss it . . .
Who does the man of noble birth represent?

Who do the servants represent?

What does the master tell them to do with the money he had entrusted to them?

Apply it . . .
Just as the man of noble birth gave his servants something of value to use, God also gives each of us many things of value. Don’t believe it? Read 1 Corinthians 7:7 and Romans 12:6–8. Then brainstorm to think of all the things God has entrusted to you. Remember, it’s more than just physical stuff; it also may be talents or abilities.

Activity
Have group members write their ideas of what God has entrusted to them onto sticky notes and post them on a wall where they can be read. Then ask participants to choose three things they know God has entrusted to them. Ask them to write those gifts on the notepaper. Give each of them a penny or fake coin to represent a mina, and have them tape the coin to their list to remind them that the gifts God has given them have great value. Encourage participants to put their list in their Bibles or school binders or to attach it to a mirror at home where they regularly will be reminded of their gifts.

In the next session, we’ll challenge your group members to use the gifts God has given them.
Lesson objective
To challenge participants to use the gifts God has given each person—by investing them and seeing a great return rather than hiding them and seeing no return.

Items needed
Chocolate coins, each wrapped in a piece of cloth—one for each participant; notepaper; and pens.

Last session
We looked at how God entrusts each one of us with talents, time, and resources. Refresh your knowledge of what you learned last time by re-reading Luke 19:11–27.

Oh, no, it's a pop quiz!
Can you recall the answers to these questions based on last session's lesson?

Who does the man of noble birth represent in this parable?
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

Who do the servants represent?
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

God may not directly hand us money, but He does give us other gifts. What gifts can you remember discussing during last session?
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

This session
We’ll focus on what happened to the servant who kept the money entrusted to him in a piece of cloth—and didn’t use it at all. Begin by giving each participant a chocolate coin wrapped in a piece of cloth. Tell them not to open the cloth until you instruct them to. (Because chocolate melts in warm hands, you may want to have participants place the chocolate coin on the floor or table in front of them! And if you’re doing this lesson during your Famine, you may want to collect the chocolate coins at the end of the activity and return them to students after the Famine.)

Better yet, assign some participants to act out these verses!

Discuss it . . .
What happened to the servant who kept his mina in a piece of cloth?
Why do you think the master made this decision?

____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

So what is Jesus saying? Recall again the dollar amount you figured last session that the master gave each servant. It was substantial, right? The master was very generous when he entrusted his servants with his money. Likewise, God has generously equipped each of us with resources of great value.

Discuss it . . .
What do you think God wants you to do with the things He has given you?

____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

Thinking again about the parable, how responsible are we before God to use the resources He has given us? What could happen if you choose not to use them?

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____________________________________________________________________________________
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Apply it . . .
Spend time in prayer asking God to show you how you can use the special resources and talents you identified. Write down your ideas. Now tell participants to unfold the cloth you gave them. Ask: Do you want to bury this or use it to feed your body? Does God want you to bury or use the gifts He has given you? Let them throw away the cloth and eat the coin (unless it’s during the Famine).

In the next session, we’ll look at what it means to be a “good steward” of the things God has created.
Lesson objective
For participants to understand that God calls each of us to be good stewards of what He has created.

Last session
We focused on how we can use the gifts God has given us—instead of hiding them like the servant who was afraid of his master. You may want to review the Parable of the Ten Minas by re-reading Luke 19:11–27.

Yes, you get to do another pop quiz!
Can you recall the answers to these questions based on last session’s lesson?

What happened to the servant who hid the money he was given?
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

What does this say about our need to use our gifts for God?
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

This session
We’ll see how God calls us to be “good stewards,” not only of our gifts, but also of everything He has created.

A “steward” is someone who manages someone else’s property or financial affairs, so in a way the master in this parable is making his servants “stewards” of some of his money while he is away. From the beginning of humankind, God has called individuals to be stewards of all He has created. Don’t believe it? Read Genesis 1:28–30 and Psalm 8:6–8.

In the Genesis account, we are able to peek into the earliest hours of human history as God tells Adam and Eve they are to “rule” over His creation. Then King David reminds us in the Psalms passage that people remain the “ruler over the works” of God’s hands. Yet what God has made still belongs to God—we are just entrusted to care for His creation, to be good stewards of it.

Discuss it . . .
Look again at Genesis 1:28. What specifically does God give to people to care for?
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

What does Psalm 8:6 say God has given people to care for?
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
What does it mean to you that God has entrusted you to care for His creation?

____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

What are other examples of possessions in your control? Are they yours or God’s? What difference should it make?

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____________________________________________________________________________________
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Apply it . . .

Being a good steward of God’s creation begins with recognizing that all we have comes from God and ultimately belongs to Him. If we truly believe this, how will we act differently in what we do, how we consume, and how we treat others? Ask students to break into groups of four or five and choose a stewardship issue to role-play, such as wise consumption, recycling, how they spend their time, or choosing to do with less so you have more to share. Encourage them to be as creative as possible. Let the groups practice their role plays and then have them present them to the entire group.
In the next session, we’ll look at how God asks us to share our resources with the poor.

Good stewardship includes not only how we use the talents or resources God has given us personally, but also how we use everything He has made. For example, when we assume that as Americans we have a right to more resources than most of the rest of the world, we are consuming more and leaving less for others. When we assume that if we have the money to purchase something we have a right to it, we may not be good stewards.

Discuss it . . .

For example, just because we buy newspapers, do we have the right to throw the old newspapers in the trash to fill up garbage dumps?

What would be a better solution, and why? Believe it or not, these small issues impact the entire globe!

Lesson objective

For participants to see that being a good steward of God’s resources extends to how they work alongside the poor.

Items needed

Notepaper and pens.

Last session

We saw how God entrusts us to care for His creation and calls on us to be good stewards by using the time, talents, and resources He has given us to care for all He created.

Last pop quiz—promise!

Can you recall the answers to these questions based on last session’s lesson?

What does it mean when God said in Genesis 1:28–30 that people are to “rule” over His creation?

How should our choices reflect being a good steward of God’s creation?
This session
We’ll look at how God asks us to share our resources with the poor. Begin by reading James 2:14–17.

Discuss it . . .
According to verse 17, faith without action is __________. What does this mean?
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
What are we to do for a person who has no clothes or food?
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
As we said before, hunger isn’t just a lack of food; it’s a result of poverty—not being able to afford to buy food. So as good stewards who must have action to accompany their faith, as James tells us, what should we do? Choose an answer below and explain why you chose that answer.

A. Send food to hungry people.
B. Refuse to eat so others can have more food.
C. Assist people with learning new skills so they don’t have to live in poverty.
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
Answer: Well, “A” works to feed others for awhile, but it doesn’t work in the long run. When there are emergencies such as drought or floods, supplying food is essential to keep people alive during recovery. However, there’s a better long-term solution. That solution is “C.” People are better off when they learn the skills they need to care for themselves—to grow their own food, provide their own health care, and even run their own small businesses. World Vision works alongside people in need until they learn these skills—and then we move on to help new people. The Famine funds you raise assist in a big way in this process!

Discuss it . . .
Thinking back to the Parable of the Ten Minas, we saw that the master gave his servants money to invest—when he could have invested the money himself. Why do you think God uses people to help other people—instead of doing it Himself?
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
Apply it . . .
Think about the areas in which you may need to adjust your attitude. Although it could take some of your resources (time and “stuff”) to help others, it is actually a great privilege to serve as stewards of all creation and ambassadors for the Almighty God of the universe (see 2 Corinthians 5:20). First, spend some time in
prayer asking God for His eyes to see the world’s needs and where He has designed you to fit into His work of walking alongside those in need. Then consider the following:

- The 30 Hour Famine is a great way to help the poor, but you don’t have to stop there. In what ways can you continue to help people in need in your community, country, and the world even after the Famine weekend is over? Choose at least one of these things and develop a plan of action—when you will start making some noise on behalf of those in need. Then share your plan with your group.

- In 5, or even 10, years from now, how do you see yourself involved in making a difference for those in need? Write down your long-term goals and share them with your group.

More Ideas to make some noise

Pray for the needs of a country that is in the news. Consider doing this every week.

- Go to www.worldvision.org to find out where World Vision is working in the world. Choose one or two countries, and pray specifically for the country’s and people’s needs.

- Make some noise locally! What are the needs in your own community? Volunteer to help those in need.

- Sponsor a child. Call World Vision at 1-800-7-FAMINE to do so.

Please post the following page in your youth room. You may want to make copies for your youth group members.
Many of the children and families whose lives you will impact through the 30 Hour Famine have never:

- Taken a warm shower  
- Worn closed-toed shoes  
- Been to a hairdresser  
- Shopped in a mall  
- Slept on a mattress  
- Said, “I’m stuffed!”  
- Seen a refrigerator  
- Watched TV  
- Received an e-mail  
- Tasted ice
National Famine Dates:
February 22–23, 2002
(but you can do it any time!)

www.30hourfamine.org
1.800.7.FAMINE