

Successful Stewardship pt. 1 Luke 16:1-13

Have you in the past or do you presently experience tension and anxiety caused by problems related to your finances?

Have you learned from experience that if you don't manage your money it will manage you?

The Bible teaches us that money is a spiritual test.

Luke 16:11 (NIV) "If you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches?"

I. THE STORY OF THE SHREWD MANAGER (vs. 1-8)

The key to understanding this parable is found in verse 8.

"... For the people of this world are more shrewd ... than the people of the Light" (v. 8b)

Luke 16:1-2 (NIV) "Jesus told his disciples, "There was a rich man whose manager was accused of wasting his possessions. So he called him in and asked him, "What's this I hear about you? Give an account of your management because you cannot be a manager any longer."

The first lesson of the parable is that:

One day God will ask me to GIVE AN ACCOUNT of how I used the money I had on earth. (v. 2)

(v. 8a) "The master commended the dishonest manager because he acted shrewdly."

WHAT HE DID RIGHT

- HE LOOKED AHEAD (v. 3)
- HE PLANNED AHEAD (v. 4)
- HE ACTED QUICKLY (vs. 5-6)

That's God's investment strategy!

II. FOUR LESSONS ABOUT MONEY

1. THE PURPOSE OF GIVING

(vrs. 9) "I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings."

The greatest use of my money is to INVEST IT IN GETTING PEOPLE TO HEAVEN.

Use your temporary resources for permanent good!

(verse 9) "... so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings."

Matthew 6:20-21 (NIV) "Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."



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2. THE PATTERN FOR LIVING

(V.10) "Whoever can be trusted with very little can be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much."

God says: If I am faithful with WHAT I HAVE RIGHT NOW God can trust me with more of it.

3. THE PRINCIPLE OF BLESSING

(vs. 11) 'So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches?"

What I do with my money determines HOW MUCH GOD CAN BLESS MY LIFE.

God is saying that inconsistent giving produces inconsistent living.

4. THE PRIORITY OF LOVING

(verse 13) "No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money."

From this verse we get two conclusions – two lessons.

I must choose WHAT I WILL LOVE MOST IN LIFE.

Money is to be USED, not LOVED.

Luke 18:18-25 (NIV) "A certain ruler asked him, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" ... When he heard this, he became very sad, because he was a man of great wealth."

Deuteronomy 14:23 (LB) "The purpose of tithing is to teach you to always put God first in your lives."

APPLICATION

- What is the purpose behind your giving?
- Does God really have first place in my life?
- How much am I investing for eternity?
- If you were to give an account before God today concerning your stewardship what would you say?
- Can God trust me with spiritual blessings?
- What do you love most in life?
- How do you need to adjust your life to honor God totally with your substance?

Memory Verse: Matthew 6:20-21 (NIV) "Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."