

Parable of the Dishonest Manager

Luke 16:1-13

“And the manager said to himself, ‘What shall I do, since my master is taking the management away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. I have decided what to do, so that when I am removed from management, people may receive me into their houses.’” (16:3-4)

Plan

Reduce the bills of his master's debtors so that the debtors would return the favour and help him out when he was out of job.

Possible Options

- He may be cancelling out the part of the debt which was **interest** charged from the debt.
- He may be sacrificing his own **commission** for long term gains.

“The master commended the dishonest manager for his **shrewdness.**” (16:8a)

Jesus is not afraid to use dubious characters to illustrate important lessons on the kingdom of God, **not in any way condoning the morality of the people concerned, but using some aspect of their behavior to make a point** (e.g. the *unexpectedness* of the thief who surprises people in the night).

Not to imitate the manager's dishonest behavior, but rather his **shrewdness**, while remaining innocent of evil.

“I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore **be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves.**”

(Matthew 10:16)

Application

“The master commended the dishonest manager for his shrewdness. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than the sons of light.” (16:8)

Reflection/Examination

“And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth, so that **when it fails they may receive you into the eternal dwellings.**”
(16:9)

Unrighteous wealth:

- Wealth of this unrighteous world.
- It is temporary.

Parable of the Rich Fool

Luke 12:13-21

- The man in the story of the rich fool could not recognize the **temporary nature of money**.
- As a result, he is consumed with **storing wealth for himself** and is **not rich toward God**.

Lesson from the Two Parables

Not to be like the rich fool, who failed to see the failure of worldly wealth;

But like the manager who used his wealth to prepare for the future.

“And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth, so that when it fails they may receive you into the eternal dwellings.”
(16:9)

> To use our resources for kingdom priorities.

Kingdom Priorities

“Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations...” (Matthew 28:18-19)

“He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” (Micah 6:8)

“And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth, so that when it fails they may receive you into the **eternal dwellings.**”
(16:9)

> When we invest in the kingdom of God now, we will be **well received** in the future when we enter into our eternal dwellings.

Other Biblical References

- **Storing up treasures in heaven (Matthew 6:10-21; Luke 12:32-34).**
- **The Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25).**

Relationship between worldly wealth and the kingdom of God.

“Jesus is not an ascetic who sees everything material as evil, nor a materialist who sees the material as everything; he sees money as something temporary, but still as something with value when properly used.” (David Wenham)

Sayings of Jesus

“One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? And if you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own?” (16:10-12)

'Worldly' and 'Spiritual' Wealth

- The use of money is a measure of faithfulness and spiritual maturity.
- It is also a measure of a person's fitness for the greater wealth (spiritual wealth) of the kingdom of God.

“No servant can serve two masters... You cannot serve both God and money.”
(16:13)