

Luke Sixteen

Luke 16:1-7

Now He was also saying to the disciples, “There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and this steward was reported to him as squandering his possessions. “And he called him and said to him, ‘What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.’ “And the steward said to himself, ‘What shall I do, since my master is taking the stewardship away from me? I am not strong enough to dig; I am ashamed to beg. ‘I know what I shall do, so that when I am removed from the stewardship, they will receive me into their homes.’ “And he summoned each one of his master’s debtors, and he began saying to the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ “And he said, ‘A hundred measures of oil.’ And he said to him, ‘Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.’ “Then he said to another, ‘And how much do you owe?’ And he said, ‘A hundred measures of wheat.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, and write eighty.’

- This chapter is about faithfulness
- Chapter deals with the economy of the kingdom vs the economy of the world—two different mindsets
- In Jesus' day—there was a great gap between the rich and the poor—chief priests were among the rich
- Steward=a slave who was put in charge of an estate to relieve the owner of routine management
- Jews were not to lend money at interest—they got around this by trading in commodities instead. Perhaps the steward was deducting the interest from each bill
- Some commentators say that the steward was signing off on his own cut on the loan—just like the tax gatherers made their living by taking a cut—it could also be the same for stewards

- No charge could be brought against steward without bringing to light his own law-breaking
- This kind of usury was considered mutually beneficial rather than usury of the poor. The steward then is mimicking his master. Rich man is caught in his own transgression
- Steward deals with each debtor privately—creates secrecy
- 100 measures of oil=875 gallons—yield of approximately 146 trees—a large debt
- 100 measures of wheat=1,000 bushels—yield from 100 acres

Luke 16:8-13

“And his master praised the unrighteous steward because he had acted shrewdly; for the sons of this age are more shrewd in relation to their own kind than the sons of light. “And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by means of the mammon of unrighteousness; that when it fails, they may receive you into the eternal dwellings. “He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much. “If therefore you have not been faithful in the use of unrighteous mammon, who will entrust the true riches to you? “And if you have not been faithful in the use of that which is another’s, who will give you that which is your own? “No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other, or else he will hold to one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”

- Steward praised for cleverness—not dishonesty
- Children of world—wiser than children of God
- Material goods can be God's means of transformation
- Charity to poor has eternal rewards
- Money is not good or evil—how we use it can be good or evil
- Contrasts earthly riches—true riches

- These two masters lead two different kingdoms—cannot hold dual citizenship
- Definition of mammon: 1) term used to describe material wealth/greed—personified as deity 2) false god of riches; avarice 3) riches regarded as an object of worship—greedy pursuit 4) wealth as evil personified 5) excessive materialism or greed as a negative influence 6) a substitute system for God
- Neither the master or the steward would be considered 'sons of light'
- Message to disciples—worldly wealth must be used to achieve eternal outcomes—this must be given great consideration
- Make friends/build relationships using material possessions

Luke 16:14-18

Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, were listening to all these things, and they were scoffing at Him. And He said to them, “You are those who justify yourselves in the sight of men, but God knows your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men is detestable in the sight of God. “The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John; since then the gospel of the kingdom of God is preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it. “But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke of a letter of the Law to fail. “Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery; and he who marries one who is divorced from a husband commits adultery.

- Scoffing at Him—derided—turned up their noses
- Call to be faithful to God—rather than money
- Faithful in our hearts—not just outwardly
- Faithfulness required in marriage
- Pharisees/law concerning divorce—treated women as property. She could be divorced if the husband became a leper or sexually assaulted a virgin. He could divorce for any reason—with or without her approval

Luke 16:19-23

“Now there was a certain rich man, and he habitually dressed in purple and fine linen, gaily living in splendor every day. “And a certain poor man named Lazarus was laid at his gate, covered with sores, and longing to be fed with the crumbs which were falling from the rich man’s table; besides, even the dogs were coming and licking his sores.

“Now it came about that the poor man died and he was carried away by the angels to Abraham’s bosom; and the rich man also died and was buried. “And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and saw Abraham far away, and Lazarus in his bosom.

- There were many folktales at the time about the reversal of circumstances
- Pharisees were behaving toward the poor the way the rich man in the parable acts.
- Rich man is unnamed—poor man is named—opposite of normal
- Rich man was feasting continually—luxury—gourmet—feeding on the exotic
- Lazarus=latin for Eleazar=God is my help
- Only extremely wealthy wore purple—this describes the garments of the high priest
- Extreme poor laid at the gate of the extreme rich. Rich man took no notice—did not recognize the discrepancy
- Lazarus could have had leprosy—estranged from his whole community
- Tend to view rich man as a bad guy due to his attitudes—but Lazarus is on his porch—eating his leftovers
- Just caring for the poor is not enough—must be willing to be in relationship with the poor. Do I have a Lazarus in my life?

Luke 16:24-31

“And he cried out and said, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue; for I am in agony in this flame.’ “But Abraham said, ‘Child, remember that during your life you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus bad things; but now he is being comforted here, and you are in agony. ‘And besides all this, between us and you there is a great chasm fixed, in order that those who wish to come over from here to you may not be able, and that none may cross over from there to us.’ “And he said, ‘Then I beg you, Father, that you send him to my father’s house— for I have five brothers—that he may warn them, lest they also come to this place of torment.’ “But Abraham said, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.’ “But he said, ‘No, Father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent!’ “But he said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded if someone rises from the dead.’”

- Israel regard Abraham as Father—thought it was blasphemy to consider God as Father
- Rich man views Lazarus in subservient role—even at this point
- "remember"—calls us to consider
- C.S. Lewis—The Great Divorce
- Request for a message to be sent to his brothers—first time man acts with any thought of others

Luke Chapter Sixteen Workbook

Key Words:

Harmonize:

How does the parable in Luke 16:1-14 tie with any portion of Luke 15?

Dig:

- 1) Who does Jesus address in the parable in Luke 16:1-13?
- 2) In this parable, why is the steward considered 'unrighteous'?
- 3) Why does the response of the steward gain praise from his master?
- 4) What do we learn about the unrighteous steward? Describe this man.
- 5) How does verse 18 fit with the rest of the chapter?
- 6) By investigating the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, what do we learn about the rich man? About Lazarus?
- 7) How does the rich man view Lazarus?

- 8) What do we learn about separation from God in this chapter?

- 9) Were the master and the unrighteous steward a 'son of this age' or 'son of light'?
What did the disciples need to understand?

- 10) What is 'mammon of unrighteousness'?

Discuss:

- 1) What hindered the rich man's access to the Kingdom of Heaven?

- 2) Is shrewdness a character quality that is valuable? When?

- 3) How do you 'make friends' by means of the 'mammon of unrighteousness'? Give an example of how this could happen.

- 4) What does man esteem that God despises? (vs Luke 16:15)

- 5) What caused separation between God and rich man when he died?

Point of Prayer:

Pray for someone who is currently unemployed.

Integrate:

What other scriptures come to mind as you read this chapter?

Application:

- 1) What was/is the most difficult employment situation you ever worked in?

- 2) Who was your most difficult employer? Employee?

- 3) What circumstances cause you to respond in anxiety and fear?

- 4) When do you tend to mistrust someone or a situation?

- 5) How well do you handle worldly wealth? What part is easy? What is most difficult?

- 6) Would the Lord consider you a good steward? Why or why not?

- 7) Who has lost your trust and gained it back again?

- 8) In what area of your life are you being challenged to press into the Kingdom? (to see forward movement in your spiritual journey)