

## Parables Series Notes

### Messed Up Manager

**Passage:** Luke 16:1-14 NLT Jesus told this story to his disciples: “There was a certain rich man who had a manager handling his affairs. One day a report came that the **manager was wasting his employer’s money**.”

**Here’s the lesson:** Use your worldly resources to benefit others and make friends. Then, when your possessions are gone, they will welcome you to an eternal home. **10** “If you are faithful in little things, you will be faithful in large ones. But if you are dishonest in little things, you won’t be honest with greater responsibilities. **11** And if you are untrustworthy about worldly wealth, who will trust you with the true riches of heaven? **12** And if you are not faithful with other people’s things, why should you be trusted with things of your own? **13** “No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and be enslaved to money.” **14** The Pharisees, who **dearly loved their money**, heard all this and **scoffed at him**.

Wow! **They loved their money dearly... so they scoffed at Jesus.**

The is parable is about money and stewardship. (Today everybody is talking about money! In the news, at the office, on the ball field, around the gas pumps and now in church! lol!)

- 16 of the 38 parables of Jesus had to do with money and possessions. (That’s almost half of the all the parables in the gospels)
- Jesus talked about money twice as much as heaven and hell.
- There are over 500 verses about prayer and faith. There are over 2000 verses about money and possessions

**Why is this?** God knows that there are few things cause us more problems in life than money problems.

If you are trying to buy a house or a car or groceries or gas for your vacation. then you know that being wise with your money is so important.

This manager was wasting money. And it cost him his job.

#### **SETTING:**

**Audience:** A large crowd (tax collectors, notorious sinners, Pharisees, and teachers of the law)

**Context:** In Ch. 15, we find the religious leaders complaining that Jesus associated with sinners and even ate with them. So Jesus told them 3 Parables about lost things.

- The **Lost Sheep** and the **Shepherd** who **left the 99 to find the one**.
- The **Woman and Lost Coin**. When she found she celebrated with her neighbors! Its like the **joy among angels in heaven** when **one sinner repents**.
- Then one of the most famous parables every. **The Lost Prodigal Son!**

Jesus is teaching about the value of a soul. People are valued in heaven. The lost need to be found.

The crowd was moved and they wanted more! **TELL US MORE!**

So Jesus gave them more... This time He tells them a parable about a really **Bad Manager** who did **not value** the things his **Master valued**.

- Most parables make it easy to discern **who the characters are intended to represent**, but in this one, **all of the characters seem to be a little shady** (unethical and dishonest).
- The point of this parable isn't that we should emulate one of the characters, but rather, the **importance of stewardship**... faithfulness with our resources.

### Unwrapping the Messed-up Manager

#### 1) **First century Jewish context.**

- a) Agriculture was big business in that day.
- b) This trusted manager was most likely responsible for several large farms and the tenant farmers who leased the land. He **managed the leases**, **the sale the product** and **managed collections for the owner**.
- c) It was not uncommon for **these managers to be paid a salary** with a **commission** and quite possible some **kickbacks** from side deals along the way.

#### 2) **You're Fired!**

- a) **Things got real intense real fast**. Someone ratted out this shady raschal!
- b) So the manager jumped into **self-preservation mode!**
- c) Understand this: in the **Eastern/Oriental** culture **Shame** must **always be avoided**. This mindset exist even to this day. People will lie, cheat, steal and cover up anything to avoid shame. (if you ask for directions in India or the middle east or in Israel, they will never say I don't know! They will like to avoid the shame of not knowing... lost in **Old Jerusalem**)

v. 3 **The manager thought 'Now what? (SHAME!) I'm too weak to dig... and too proud to beg.** lol

#### 3) **Saved His Job.**

- a) **Big Idea!** He rushes to the two biggest unsettled accounts and he offers the clients a **huge discount** if they would pay the bill **RIGHT NOW!**
  - i) Olive Grove company he offered a 50% discount! Owed 800 gallons to 400
  - ii) Wheat farmers a 20% discount! Change 1000 bushels to 800 if you pay right now!
- b) **Pretty big money!** 100 trees & 200 acres of wheat. About **4000 dollars in savings** to each of them.

READ VERSE 8-9 NKJV **So the master commended the unjust steward (dishonest raschal) because he had dealt shrewdly. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light.**

v. 9 **"And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon, that when you fail, they may receive you into an everlasting home.**

#### 4) **"Sons of Light" & "Unrighteous Mammon".**

- a) **“Sons of Light”**.
- i) Recent discoveries have confirmed that the keepers of the Dead Sea, was an exclusive community of a Jewish sect called **the Essenes**. They called themselves the **“sons of light”**
  - ii) To **become part of their commune** required you to **cut off all outside world except for business**. **Whatever they earned or collected had to be surrendered to the community**.
    - (1) These Essenes were very legalistic and they believed they were the only ones who had the light.
    - (2) They lived around the Dead Sea and kept the scroll of ancient scriptures in some caves.
- b) **“Unrighteous Mammon”**
- i) Money of the outsiders was called unrighteous mammon. But the finances of the community was considered holy and righteous.
  - ii) The **“sons of light” would never think of using their resources to benefit someone in the unrighteous world** and they would never try to make friends or do anything to benefit those outside of their group.

The original audience was tracking with all of this. The historical context helps us understand the parable.

### Big 3 Questions:

What does this Parable say about God?

What does this Parable say about Man?

After reading this Parable what kind of Decisions need to be made?

Reread: 9-14 NLT **Here’s the lesson:** Use your worldly **resources to benefit others** and make friends. Then, when your possessions are gone, they will welcome you to an **eternal home**. **10** “If you are **faithful in little things**, you will be **faithful in large ones**. But if you are **dishonest** in little things, you won’t be honest with greater responsibilities. **11** And if you are untrustworthy about worldly wealth, **who will trust you with the true riches of heaven?** **12** And if you are not faithful with other people’s things, why should you be trusted with things of your own? **13** **“No one can serve two masters**. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and be enslaved to money.” **14** The Pharisees, who dearly loved their money, heard all this and scoffed at him.

The Pharisees closed their ears because they were more devoted to their money, power, and possessions than they were devoted to God.

**Everybody I want you to listen with fresh ears this morning.** What Jesus gave us in this parable is one of the **greatest teachings on how to find success** in this life and the life to come.

**What Does the Parable say About God?** **(change was made on point 5)**

1) **Wealth and honor comes from God.**

1Chron 29:10-12 ESV Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all.

2) **God values people much more than money.** People are eternal, money is not!

- 3) God values proper stewardship because He wants our resources to not only meet our needs, but to care for the needy and bring others into the Kingdom.

Verse 9, Use your **worldly resources to benefit others** (for eternity) and make friends. Then, when your **possessions are gone** (can't take them with you), **they will welcome you to an eternal home.**

- 4) God values and blesses faithfulness, even in the small things.

He knows if you are faithful in the little things and He know if you will be faithful with larger ones.

- 5) God rewards sacrificial giving.

- a) Luke 6:38 ESV Give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the **measure** you use it will be **measured back** to you.
- b) Mark 4:24,25 ESV Pay attention to what you hear: with the measure you use, it will be measured to you, and still more will be added to you. **25 For to the one who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away."**

### What Does this Parable say About Man?

- 1) We think having more money will make us secure.

Ecclesiastes 5:10 NLT Those who love money will never have enough. How meaningless to think that wealth brings true happiness.

- 2) Most people have a sense of entitlement until they don't.

- a) There is an **entitled spirit in America** that makes people think they are owed something.
- b) The messed-up manager in the story had a sense of entitlement until he was exposed and then he corrected himself.

Most of the Pharisees never overcame their sense of entitlement.

- c) **I am thankful my dad taught me to work for my needs.**

I grew up in a home with parents who lived paycheck to paycheck. My dad a great work ethic **but he was not a good manager.** Like many people he worked so hard but he wasted what he earned with a lack of management.

**You might be like me...** I have always worked. I had my first job working during my summer break on 2000 acre cattle ranch... I was 12 yrs old. Then when I was 14 , I got job working in a cabinet shop sweeping floors and gluing cabinets. I would ride my bicycle down a mile down the road to the shop everyday after school and work til dark.

**I bought my own car with my own money. I worked my way through 4 years of college and paid for it all by myself. No loan and no financial help from my parents.**

**I always found a way to earn enough money to make life work for me. But I was never taught stewardship.**

The principles Jesus is teaching here I had to learn and I am still learning.

3) Our attitude toward money is first natural and not spiritual.

a) We waste a lot of kingdom resources.

i) I am not saying you can't have a boat or a lake house or new car or new shoes or fancy purse!

ii) I am just saying our resources are first spiritual and then natural.

b) Be faithful to use the resources you acquire in this world not just for what you would naturally want to use them for, use them to help people! Because people are eternal your toys and clothes and houses are not!

If we look at our money more spiritually than naturally, we will find good success in this life and for eternity.

### What decisions need to be made?

1) Give careful thought to your ways.

Haggai 1:5-7 NIV Now this is what the LORD Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways. You have planted much, but have harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but are not warm. You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it." This is what the LORD Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways."

- a) Are you enslaved to your money and possessions?
- b) Are you being faithful and trustworthy over the little things God has given you?
- c) Are you thinking spiritually about your money and your possessions?

Jesus said, If you are faithful to use it to benefit the kingdom, you will be trusted with more!

2) Guard against every kind of greed.

Luke 12:15 "Beware! Guard against every kind of greed. Life is not measured by how much you own.

3) Give to God and be Faithful in the Tithe.

God showed me years ago that we needed to be faithful with the small things, to best trusted with more.

God challenged me in this parable to treat my 10% tithe as one of the small things to be faithful in. The tithe was a big enough small thing to stretch my faith and faithfulness.

a) Mal. 3:10,11 NIV Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it. 11 I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not drop their fruit before it is ripe," says the Lord Almighty.

i) Test me in the tithe.

What is the test? I am going to think spiritual first with my money and natural second. So giving that first 10% to God is being faithful over the smaller portion of you income and I believe that if we do that we will see an increase of the 90% and be trusted with the true riches of the kingdom.

ii) At CL we have a **Storehouse Mentality**.

We want to **use your worldly resources to benefit others** in this life and for eternity.

b) **3 Reason's why people question the tithing:**

i) **Tithing was Old Testament law and we are not under the law!**

Yes it was and OT law for Israel. In the OT they had to do it! In the New Covenant we get to do it.

You don't have to tithe to make it to heaven. But why would you only think naturally about your finances? If this was the standard and the promise brought financial blessing in the Old Covenant how much more would God bless your faith and sacrificial giving in the New Covenant?

By the way the tithing principle pre-dated the law... Abraham tithed 10% to God before God ever gave Moses the law. And Abraham is called the Father of Faith.

There are a lot of practices in the law that we keep under the New Covenant of Grace.

ii) **I can't afford it!**

Of course you can't!

If you can afford it, it is not tithing, **tithing is a test of your faith and your faithfulness. If you could afford it how would that be a test of faith.**

iii) **The church doesn't need my money.**

You are partially right, we don't want to lead from the position of need! From one Sunday offering to next. I never want to get up here and say, dig deep people if you don't give we will have to close the doors.

If we can lead with no needs, then we can release finances into the Kingdom to do what God needs us to do.

**CL STOREHOUSE:** If we had the increase of your tithe! We would become a bigger storehouse for the Kingdom.

Help widows, single moms, orphans and teens and families in crisis. Adopt more unreached people groups in the world.

I have a dream that everyone who need discipleship counseling could go. Money would not stop them.

Things are tough right economically, we need to thing Spiritual First and be Faithful Now more than ever.

God is your Source! He is the one who has the power to increase your resources!