

The Kingdom and True Wealth

Luke 16:1-13

February 28, 2010

Big Idea

When **God** talks about *money*, do you *listen*?

The answer to that question isn't just about giving money to your church or your favorite charity. It's also directly tied to the ability to build God's kingdom in *your world*, the world in which you live every day. It affects your credibility when you talk about the existence of an invisible God and an invisible kingdom that is *better* than this physical world in which we live.

Before our husbands, wives, children, extended family, friends, co-workers, etc., will listen, many of them will first need to see us *investing* in this kingdom with everything we have, including our money.

Money Talks. What does it say in your life? The answer to that question is directly tied to the building of God's kingdom through the effective proclamation of the gospel (the proclamation of the forgiveness of sins). It is also directly tied to the building of God's kingdom through our ability as believers and as a church to do battle against the effects of sin in this world, as we do battle against sickness and hunger and poverty and injustice and all manner of suffering in the name of Jesus.

When it comes to the kingdom, *money matters*. And, as a result, our Lord talks to us about it. Will you listen?

Our study today begins in Luke 16:1

Luke 16:1(a) He also said to the disciples...

1) Who does Luke tell us that Jesus addresses this teaching to?

With that said, in verse 14 Luke tells us that the pharisees were also present.

Luke 16:14 The Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard all these things, and they ridiculed him.

2) What do you think was the difference between the disciples and the pharisees in terms of their disposition toward wealth or money? Who are the disciples and pharisees today?

Luke 16:1 He also said to the disciples, "There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was wasting his possessions.

If the rich man represents God and the manager represents us, then as the manager managed the wealth of the rich man, so also we manage the wealth of God.

3) What does that idea imply about everything we call "ours?"

4) How does one "manage" God's resources? What are his investment goals?

5) Why do you think that Jesus gave no details whatsoever about how the manager wasted the Rich Man's wealth? As you appraise your own life, do you see any areas in which you might be wasting your master's (i.e., God's) wealth?

Luke 16:1-2 He also said to the disciples, "There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was wasting his possessions. And he called him and said to him, 'What is this that I hear about you? Turn in the account of your management, for you can no longer be manager.'

6) Even though he's been fired for wasting funds, the manager still has the authority to direct the use of the Rich Man's wealth until the accounting is complete and must then be presented. What do you think that this short period of time is analogous to in your own life?

Luke 16:1-7¹He also said to the disciples, "There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was wasting his possessions.²And he called him and said to him, 'What is this that I hear about you? Turn in the account of your management, for you can no longer be manager.'³And 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.⁴I have decided what to do, so that when I am removed from management, people may receive me into their houses.'⁵So, summoning his master's debtors one by one, he said to the first, 'How much do you owe my master?'⁶He said, 'A hundred measures of oil.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.'⁷Then he said to another, 'And how much do you owe?' He said, 'A hundred measures of wheat.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, and write eighty.'

In the first century there was an unwritten law that if someone was generous or benevolent towards you, you were then obligated to return the favor sometime in the future.

7) With that in mind, what do you think the manager is doing here?

8) What do you expect the Rich Man to say to his manager in response?

Luke 16:8 ' 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.

The word "shrewd" here means literally, "wise," or "sensible," or "prudent. Jesus seems to be telling us that we can learn something from this manager (and others like him).

9) What do you think that this manager did that Jesus then labeled as being "shrewd?" Do you agree?

Luke 16:9 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.

Jesus here speaks of using "unrighteous wealth" (i.e., the wealth of this world that tends to corrupt) in such a way as to gain an eternal blessing.

10) How have you seen "the wealth of this world" corrupt?

11) What is the lesson that we're supposed to learn from this unjust manager about our use of the wealth that God entrusts to us?

Luke 16:9-14 ⁹And 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. ¹⁰"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. ¹¹If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? ¹²And if you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own? ¹³No servant can serve two masters, for 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 God and money."

12) What are some differences between "unrighteous wealth" and eternal or "true riches?"

13) What are the rights of ownership? What do you lose when you become a manager of someone else's resources?

14) What's "in it" for managers in the Kingdom of God?

15) If God is the owner and you are the manager of the resources he's given you, how does that perspective change things in your life as you currently live it?

For Next Week: The Kingdom and Status

Luke 14:12-24

The Parable of the Great Banquet

¹²He said also to the man who had invited him, "When you give^(U) a dinner or a banquet, do not invite your friends or your brothers^(b) or your relatives or rich neighbors,^(K) lest they also invite you in return and you be repaid. ¹³But when you give a feast,^(U) invite^(M) the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, ¹⁴and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. For you will be repaid^(N) at^(O) the resurrection of the just."

¹⁵When one of those who reclined at table with him heard these things, he said to him,^(P) "Blessed is everyone who will^(Q) eat bread in the kingdom of God!" ¹⁶But he said to him,^(R) "A man once^(S) gave a great banquet and invited many. ¹⁷And at the time for the banquet he^(T) sent his servant^(C) to say to those who had been invited, 'Come, for everything is now ready.' ¹⁸But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it. Please have me excused.' ¹⁹And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them. Please have me excused.' ²⁰And another said,^(U) 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' ²¹So the servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house became angry and said to his servant, 'Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in^(V) the poor and crippled and blind and lame.' ²²And the servant said, 'Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.' ²³And the master said to the servant, 'Go out to the highways and hedges and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. ²⁴For I tell you,^{(d)(w)} none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet.'"

Footnotes:

- a. [Luke 14:12](#) Or *your brothers and sisters*. The plural Greek word *adelphoi* (translated "brothers") refers to siblings in a family. In New Testament usage, depending on the context, *adelphoi* may refer either to *brothers* or to *brothers and sisters*
- b. [Luke 14:17](#) Greek *bondservant*; also verses 21, 22, 23
- c. [Luke 14:24](#) The Greek word for *you* here is plural

Cross References:

- A. [Luke 14:12](#) : [John 21:12 \(Gk\)](#)
- B. [Luke 14:12](#) : [Luke 6:34](#)
- C. [Luke 14:13](#) : [Neh 8:10, 12](#); [Esth 9:22](#)
- D. [Luke 14:13](#) : [Luke 14:21](#)
- E. [Luke 14:14](#) : [1 Cor 15:23](#); [1 Thess 4:16](#); [John 11:24](#); [Rev 20:4, 5](#)
- F. [Luke 14:14](#) : [Acts 24:15](#)
- G. [Luke 14:15](#) : [Rev 19:9](#)
- H. [Luke 14:15](#) : [Luke 13:29](#); [22:16, 30](#)
- I. [Luke 14:16](#) : [For Luke 14:16-24, Matt 22:2-14](#)
- J. [Luke 14:16](#) : [Isa 25:6](#)
- K. [Luke 14:17](#) : [Esth 6:14](#); [Prov 9:3, 5](#)
- L. [Luke 14:20](#) : [Deut 24:5](#)
- M. [Luke 14:21](#) : [Luke 14:13](#)
- N. [Luke 14:24](#) : [Matt 21:43](#); [Acts 13:46](#)

Application Exercises:

sta·tus

–*noun* High standing; prestige.

- 1) **Who has status in “The World?” What does it take to get it?**

- 2) **Who has status in The Church? What does it take to get it?**

- 3) **Who has status in the Kingdom of God? What does it take to get it?**