



The Gospel According to Luke Wk. 81 “Investing for Eternal Benefits” By Pastor Jody May

Luke 16:1-13 ESV

The Parable of the Dishonest Manager

16 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. ² 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.’ ³ 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. ⁴ I have decided what to do, so that when I am removed from management, people may receive me into their houses.’ ⁵ So, summoning his master's debtors one by one, he said to the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ ⁶ He said, ‘A hundred measures of oil.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.’ ⁷ Then 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.’ 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. 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.

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. ¹¹ If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? ¹² And if you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own? ¹³ No 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.”

Due to the effects of COVID 19 (medical crisis, amid government overreach and the collapse of businesses), in an election year just 5 months away, accompanied with the magnification of ethnic tensions produced by inflammatory media guides



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our whole world right now is **crying for attention**. Here’s what I mean by **crying for attention**; these things, have impacted every soul in this room, these occurrences have demanded that you pay attention and **you address** what is going on in front of you **right now**. Then because of modern social media and the availability to acquire information you feel like you have to act on what you are being told, with haste.

- A spike in COVID what are you going to do?
- Church protests on Systemic Racism what are you going to do?
- Election year, who are you going to vote for now?

And all these big events have connected to it a number of little events that you have to deal with. Just look at one of these topics:

- Do I need to stockpile on TP again, wear a mask more, detach from society, stop going to the gym, sign my kid up for digital learning, stop eating out, etc...

What this has all done to us over the last several weeks and months is that it has taken our attention **off what is everlasting and has put our attention on what is immediate and transient**. Many Christians have stopped living in the reality that this life is short and temporary and according to 1 Peter we are just aliens passing through.

Christians, when we have to react to a crisis, **we can’t** get caught up in mass **hysteria** because you **know some things** about the **ending** already. According to Revelations, Nations will rage, epidemics will occur, upheaval will transpire, war will be conducted because it is supposed to, and it means these are the birth pains that point to the fact that Jesus is coming back soon.

Church I tell you all of this, because if you put our current world into this perspective you can begin to make decisions not on what the world thinks is important and has to happen immediately but on what God sees is important and what He thinks should happen before His return. **Here’s the one point for today:**

Put your Efforts in what is Eternal.



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In our passage today we see Jesus turn to His disciples, right after the incredible parable of the Prodigal Son, and Jesus explains how we should steward that which God has already given us. As Jesus is the ultimate steward of God’s Kingdom, that’s what the Bigger Better Brother is, the Steward of all things for the Father, he relates to us now, how we are to Steward that which has been shared with us by Him.

To set the scene Jesus tells a story about a money handler that has cheated his master, and to his disciples dismay he explains that what transpires in the manipulation of the money by the handler after being caught as a ‘good thing’. Just so you know, Jesus is not using the story to tell us how to be dishonest with our employers, but He is telling the story to **Compare and Contrast** how God views the stewardship of His money.

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.’

Well at least the dude is honest with himself, right? Seriously I am with him, begging is an option, but a beggar can’t be a chooser. And hard manual labor, nothing wrong with that but I did that for a few summers as a young man and learned really fast I wanted a desk job too. So, I think we all can dial into what this guy is pressured by. He then decides to give the people a call that owe his master money, and he’s going work out not just a deal, **it was a scheme** to make them remember him when he would be on job market again.

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.’

He calls in two big debts, btw isn’t it funny how the master lets this guy hang around in the office, around the books after he just told him he was going to get



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fired? Anyway, the guy that owes for the oil, the amount is 100 measures, that is equivalent to 875 gallons of Olive Oil. That is a huge amount representing what seemed to be a yearly accumulation from an entire area of land. And the hundred measures of wheat represented a production off of 9-10 acres of wheat. What the historians are seeing here is that the master is a merchant and has already sold these goods to these individuals and they still owed on the bills.

Also, interesting to note, it was not a Jewish custom to charge interest on loans so the way the merchants made money on goods is that they **up charged** when they sold. Due to the high demand of Olive Oil back then the price owed on those 875 gallons was most likely doubled. The manager asks for half price thus securing the full price of the oil but without profit. Wheat could spoil so the inflated price was usually 20-25%, so again the manager made back the price thus securing that the master would not lose money and that the debts were paid in full. It is possible even to speculate that as the manager was the head of the books, he may have been the one to upcharge for the goods to make collect the profit. In effect he is trading in the profit (possibly just for him) for a long-term goal of getting into a new estate where his skills would be appreciated.

⁸The 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.

Shrewd here means prudent or wisely, so Jesus is not praising the dishonesty of the manager but is merely comparing that people in this world to the people of light (God’s people) and that they are **savvier** with their funds. Probably has to do with the fact that they view their money as its’ only good while they are alive, there is only a limited amount of time in which they can use it, so they better squeeze as much out of it as they can right now. **SHREWD ...**

Jesus then uses this story to paint for us how we should view our money, of which the most important thing you should take in, is **that Jesus believes** that money right now, its use, will **have an effect on the eternal**. Today, to help us all put our,

Put your Efforts in what is Eternal.

I have three things of how money relates to our earthly life:



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1. Money and how it Relates to Us – Future Trajectories

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**.

This is one of the few places in the Bible where Jesus is very specific about what to do with your life and it deals with one of the places that we don't like to let Jesus to speak into, our money. Jesus used 40 different parables in the gospels to teach people about the Kingdom of God and 1/3 of those are about money. You know why? **Because money is the extension of ones will in this world.** The tongue may reveal a person's heart but how one spends money reveals a person's drive to get the heart's desire.

In **Matthew 6:19-21 ESV** Jesus lays out for us how money should be viewed and how it relates to our hearts, it is a mirror verse of Luke 12:33-34.

¹⁹“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, ²⁰but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Translation you spend your money on what you love so make sure what your buying you can get your hands on when you die!

Jesus said in v.9, “**make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth**” use what you have now to help ensure that others are entering into the Kingdom of Heaven. Practice **loving your Neighbors now** for in this way you are storing eternal treasures in heaven, it is sanctification. Luke 6:38

Illustration of passing on some drywall...

2. Money and how it Relates to Others - Responsible Stewardship



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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. ¹¹ If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? ¹² And if you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own?

The scripture is full of places that shows that all things belong to God:

Haggai 2:8 ESV

⁸The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, declares the Lord of hosts.

Psalms 24:1 ESV

The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof,
the world and those who dwell therein,

Psalms 50:10 ESV

For every beast of the forest is mine,
the cattle on a thousand hills.

There is a perception in the church today that is misleading, and I have heard it preached to myself. That once you give your tithes and offerings to the church the rest you can spend as you see fit, it is yours. The problem with this view is that it's in contradiction to God's view of money; that is everything you have is His and you are still **responsible for how you spend it.**

Let's clear something up first because I really don't know what everyone has been taught on this so let's start off first with understanding what's the baseline. Your offerings what you give here to the church in our memberships class we ask people to give at least a tithe, according to Baptist tradition that's 10%, even though we know tithing is an OT commandment, we start people here so that they can have an aiming point.

In scripture the early church had the OT as well, so they were well aware that the tithe was not a 10% but a 20+% on yearly income. New testament Christians were sacrificially generous and showed what it looked like for the NT believer in light of the OT examples.

Acts 2:44-45 ESV



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⁴⁴ And all who believed were together and had all things in common. ⁴⁵ And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need.

What we see in the scriptures is that people gave to the churches AND they gave to each other to ensure that there was no need in order to accomplish the great commission. Sacrificial giving...

2 Cor. 8:1-9 it is recorded that people gave well beyond their means and begged Paul for the opportunity to give it although they were poor.

³ For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord, ⁴ begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints— ⁵ and this, not as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God to us.

Dr. Thomas Schreiner (from Southern Seminary) reflects that most likely NT Christians were following the 20% at least and gave more when there was a means. No one is guilting anyone in this room into giving but what we are saying is, that if you miss out on the practice of giving, *being faithful in the little* then you are missing out on God entrusting you with true Kingdom riches, *being faithful with much*.

Gospel:

Family, the question I have for all of us this morning is what do the books/ledger sheets/quicken/check book/bank statements say about you? Do they show that your heart is set on God’s Kingdom expansion and not your own? The issue is not about having enough to give but the issue is have our hearts been changed so it is reflected in your character and integrity? Are we stewarding as if it **ALL BELONGS** to God?

Jesus, the greatest of all stewards, entrusted all His earthly wealth for a short earthly life, and left all he had to His servants. He never put away for a vacation, retirement, nor personal wealth, in fact on the cross turned His mother over to one of His best friends. Jesus modeled the principle to make friends, to win



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others with all His material wealth, to help Him get to the cross, so that in heaven we all will praise Him for His stewardship to the glory of the father. That is why we are gracious because we model that and we are entrusted to grow His kingdom, his wealth not ours.

My father retired at 65, I watched him kill himself to reach retirement. After retiring he had 10 more years on this earth and half of those was spent fighting cancer. Upon his death the Electrical Workers Union closed out his pension and kept all he had earned. This is not what we are called to, we are called to spend God’s wealth, to be savvy, to make friends that will be in heaven waiting, to use all we have to enlarge His kingdom. And in point three here it helps us see what the underneath issue is to all of this.

3. Money and how it Relates to God – Rightful Worship

13 No 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.”

The translation of this verse is essentially you are a slave and **what do you want to be a slave to?** You are either owned and in service to money that the world gets to keep when you die, or you are owned by God and in service to Him and you can increase the value of yourself in your death. Jesus ends this teaching with this stark reality, **there is no option three.** Granted my loves ones you may not be there yet that’s why you are here. Today, it was God’s grace to show us the Better Bigger Brother was the ultimate steward that brought you into this life.

The **prodigal sons return, that’s all of us,** should show a person(you) that no longer views money as a tool to experience the lusts of the flesh but as a tool to enlarge the Father’s kingdom. I want to offer you today a verse to help us remember our main point of **Put your Efforts in what is Eternal.** Commit it to memory and pray it back to God and ask Him to seal that in your heart:

2 Corinthians 4:18 ESV



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18 as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

Keep believing and striving after what is eternal and build your storehouses there.

PRAYER

COMMUNION

BENEDICTION

Go in the name of the Father, that through His unlimited resources was able to save you and asks you to keep investing in this future, save the Lost.

Go in the name of the Son, that squandered not His inheritance, but spent His earthly wealth perfectly so there would be many voices praising God’s name in eternity!

Go in the name and power of the Holy Spirit, that helps us see that it’s all God’s, that gives wisdom on how to spend it wisely, all to enlarge the Father’s Kingdom.