

INTRO: In Luke 15, Jesus revealed the Heart of the Kingdom; *i.e.*, God passionately **seeks the LOST** and celebrates their return. – **Now in Luke 16**, He shifts the focus: Once you've been **Found**, **How then Should You LIVE?** – The answer is found in **STEWARDSHIP!** – What we "DO" with what God has entrusted to us matters deeply, not just now, **but for eternity!** – In this message, Jesus provides... *

I. SHREWD PREPARATIONS (16:1–8) – **READ:** Turning towards **His Disciples**, Jesus tells of a dishonest steward, who is **about to lose his position** and must **act quickly before his future collapses**.

A. Review and Reckoning (1–2): Notably, the characters mentioned in this parable are both **worldly corrupted!** – In **(v.1)** we find the Accusation of the rich man, and in **(v.2)** we see his Announcement of Firing! Two things are mentioned about the employee:

- He was a **Steward!** **oikonomos** (steward/manager) – Of another riches. Regarding this, Paul mentions that, *"...a steward must be found faithful."* (1 Cor 4:2). **This unjust steward was not!**
- He was **Wasteful!** **diaskorpizō** (to scatter, waste) much like the prodigal son (*cf.* 15:14)

The steward is accused of **Wasting His Master's Goods and is Called to Give an Account**. His Sinful Actions brought Ruin, his Reputation shattered, and His **Accountability is unavoidable**.

P/A: Every believer lives under stewardship. God owns it all—time, money, opportunities. **One day**, we will give account for how we managed what was never ours. – **The Judgement of Christ is for Believers [Bema Seat]; Judgment for Non-Believers [Great White Throne]. A day of Reckoning!**

B. Rapid Response (3–7): Faced with crisis, the Steward acts decisively! Notice...

1. **His Thoughts (3-4)** *"Thought within himself"* (3), reflecting on his inability to work or beg. But then came to realize what to do (4). **He made plans for future acceptance!** **P/A:** Invest now in what will matter eternally.
2. **His Actions (5-7)** *"So He called..."* (5) All his masters debtors... but the parable only lists two (6-7), each owing a hundredfold. – Notice the **URGENCY**, *"Sit down quickly and write..."* – **His RESOLVE was to reduce their debts owed to his master** in order to secure favor **FOR HIS FUTURE SURVIVAL!**

P/A: Jesus is **Not Praising Dishonesty**—**He is Encouraging Urgency...** Believers often delay obedience, but Kingdom living requires immediate, intentional action! – *Don't delay making wise spiritual decisions!*

C. Response Recognized (8): *"The master commends the steward"*—not for his ethics, but for his Foresight and Urgency in **PREPARING** for what was coming. – **Jesus refers to him as SHREWD** {Grk – **Phronimos**}, it describes someone with sharp, practical intelligence, keen insight, and clever judgment, particularly in business or complex situations. **Q: Are you a SHREWD Christian? In what application?**

P/A: Jesus' use of the word **SHREWD** implies the need for BELIEVERS to manifest such an attribute for Kingdom use! – Jesus labels the **Unbelievers** as *"Sons of this world"*, who often show **More Urgency** about earthly futures than **Believers ("Sons of Light")** do about their eternal future! – **SO THEN...** How much more should we live wisely for eternity? → **Segway:** Next, Jesus turns from Shrewd Preparations to how Servants Manage what truly matters...

II. SERVANT PREFERENCES (9-13) – **READ:** Jesus’ directly teaches about Money, Faithfulness, and Divided Loyalty. – He begins with the statement, **“Make friends... by unrighteous mammon.”** – In simple modern English, **Unrighteous Mammon** is most frequently translated as “Worldly Wealth”.

- **The Term is used to contrast temporary, earthly possessions** with **“True Riches”** (*i.e., of eternal value*). – The Label **“unrighteous”** serves as a reminder that **money is Untrustworthy** and **can easily lead to Corruption**, if it becomes an Object of Worship rather than a tool for doing good.

A. Redemptive Planning (9): **“Make Friends...Into Everlasting homes.”** – This means to use **“Worldly Wealth”** to impact people for eternity. – **HOW?** By **INVESTING ETERNALLY!** – **When we Support the Gospel, and Help those in need, people come to faith or are aided in Christ's name.** These people, in turn, represent the **“friends”** who will be in heaven to witness to **the believer's good stewardship**. –

1. The Phrase “When you Fail” is in reference to our death, *i.e., when money becomes useless!* – **For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out!** (1 Tim 6:7)

- There’s an old saying, **“When you die, you can’t take it with you.”** **Ahh**, but Jesus makes it possible that what you have, YOU CAN SEND IT BEFORE YOU! (*That is good investing!*)

2. Paul Reinforces this in (tt. 1 Tim 6:17-19) – When we invest in people, not possessions, when we live with eternity in view; **When we actively Use Money** for charity, missions, and supporting the Church, we **TRANSFORM “dirty”** human money into heavenly treasure.

P/A: Every dollar has direction—either temporal or eternal. But **misused money becomes a rival god!**

B. Reliable Practices (10-12): *i.e., Faithful Stewardship!* – Faithfulness in small things **Reveals Reliability** for greater trust. – Jesus tells us that **God EVALUATES our tendencies!**

1. The Comparison (10) – We are either *Faithful* or *Unjust*. *This is determined by...*

2. The Handling (11) – **Reveals Stewardship!** How we handle **little**, is exactly how we will handle **much!** – Our handling of Worldly Wealth determines if we can be trusted with **True Riches!**

3. The Outcome (12) – **Stewardship Secret:** God tests us with temporary things before entrusting eternal things. **“What is another man’s”** *i.e., GOD’S!* – Leaders among God’s people must be good managers of their own money (*cf. 1 Tim 3:2-6*) – If a person can’t be faithful before God with the money He gives, **how can they be faithful with the care of people?** – Faithfulness in this will result in blessings that are *our own!*

- Everyone wants to hear **“well done good and faithful servant!”** **BUT YOU HAVE TO BE TESTED!**

C. Rivalry of Masters (13): Jesus declares an absolute impossibility: **No one can serve two masters!** **“If God is our master, then money will be our servant, and we will use our resources in the world for God. But if God is not our master, then we will become the servant of money, and money is a terrible master.”** – Wiersbe

1. You do not “Balance” God and money! – You **Bow to one** and **Reject the other**. – **Neutrality** is impossible in spiritual allegiance. **“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”** (Matt 6:21)

2. Stewardship Secret: “You CANNOT serve God and mammon” – In the O.T. idols had demonic spirits behind them; **Baal, Ashtoreth, Molech**, etc. – Here, Jesus speaks of **MAMMON**, as a false, *demonic-like “master”* that demands human service. – **(1 Tim 6:10) “the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.”** – **Know that Money is not neutral—it competes for your worship!**

3. **How then do we overcome the DESIRE for UNRIGHTOUS MAMMON?** – May I suggest to you that the issue is NOT found in Possession, but in Devotion... in particular, **TITHE!**

a. Many people struggle with the idea of tithing, saying that's it's an O.T. Practice that we don't have to abide by anymore (cf. Lev 27:30-32; Num 18:21-28; Deut 14:22-29).

• But **Did you know that Abraham Tithed to the pre-incarnate Christ BEFORE the law was ever given! (Gen 14:18-24)** – *Shortly afterwards, the king of Sodom tempted Abraham to take the goods!*

b. Some people argue... ‘*“but I am barely getting by, I don't have money to give to God!”*’ Ah... but once again, the issue is Not found in Possession, but in Devotion. – **When we forsake the devotion of tithing, the CURSE sets in!** Curse? Yes! Where does it say that? (tt. Mal 3:8-11)

• You see church, **Tithing is a Stewardship Secret!** – *Be certain that Satan is responsible when the demands of worldliness yell at us.* How can we defeat him? **TITHE!** – Every time I tithe, I **throw aside my greed, my coveting,** and selfishness; and I **demonstrate my Devotion and Confidence in God,** just as Abraham did. – We all love money... **but tithing alters my personality!**

• When we faithfully trust God by giving to Him first, **He promises to Bless us and Rebuke the Devourer! (Mal 3:10-10)** – It's the only place in scripture where God says, **“PROVE ME! – God doesn't need our money,** but He knows that it sets us free and **communicates that we trust Him.**

P/A: Kingdom Stewardship is not just about Money—it is about Mastery. – **Ask Yourself:** Am I using money, or is Money using me? – Is God truly first, or just included! → **Segway:** Jesus now exposes the deeper issue behind divided loyalty—heart condition and Scripture authority.

III. SCRIPTURES PREVAIL (14-18) – **READ:** *The Pharisees Loved Money!* – In fact, they taught that the godlier one was, the More Money he would have! (The OG *name it and claim it founders...ha!*)

A. Response of Derision (14-15): It's obvious that the religious leaders **listened to Jesus' teaching on the Unjust Steward** and **were convicted** of their own Self-Righteous practices. *So, we see the ...*

1. **Derision of the Pharisees (14)** – They literally **“turned up the nose”** at Him, implying a **Sneering, Contemptuous Rejection of His message.** – Once again, **they scoffed because Jesus exposed their hypocrisy!** (*i.e., their facade of righteousness while chasing mammon*)

2. **Derision of God (15)** – Jesus calls the out their **Self-Justification,** declaring that **GOD KNEW THEIR HEARTS!** – They may have **“looked righteous”**— **but God saw through them!** – Jesus then unveiled another Kingdom Truth: **The World's Values are God's Abomination!** (*Things the world values—prestige, power, excessive accumulation of wealth—are often repulsive to God*). – (tt. Psalm 2:1-5)

P/A: Heaven's Evaluation is not impressed with human applause! – **You can appear spiritual and still be spiritually bankrupt!** God is never impressed with external religion without internal surrender!

B. Reality Disclosed (16): Jesus did not want the Pharisees to think that He was calling the law an abomination so He solidifies it with His next statements...

1. **The Law and Prophets Pointed Toward to Christ.** – By mentioning John the Baptist, **He declares that a Transition took place.** – And the ministry of John the Prophet marked it! (cf. Matt 11:11)

2. The End of John's ministry marked the End of One phase of God's work. – The Good News of a new covenant was introduced... **different from the law, but fulfilling it!** – (1 Pet 1:10) *Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you..."*

3. The People "**Pressing into it**", describes the **Intense Desire** and **Urgency** of **Sinners and Publicans**, who were seeking to embrace the gospel and **Enter the Kingdom**. – The **Direct Contrast** would be **the Covetous Pharisees**, who rejected the message (v. 14)

P/A: Accessibility for All: The Kingdom is preached to "everyone," highlighting its inclusive nature. **It is open to any who will come to God through faith in Christ**, regardless of their past background or social status. But **the Gospel demands Urgent Response, not just Observation!**

C. Relentless Direction (17-18): Next, Jesus affirms the permanence of God's Word! *i.e., its...*

1. **Details of Endurance (17)** – By declaring that "**...it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke of a letter in the law to drop out**", **Jesus asserts that the Law is still valid!** – This means **the Gospel does not abolish the moral law but fulfills it** (cf. Matt 5:17).

2. **Divorce Law Emphasized (18)** – To be clear that **He is not undermining the law**, **Jesus includes the controversial principle of divorce**. **Why would He in this situation?** For one, **because the Pharisee's took divorce lightly**. And secondly, because **Divorce and Money often go Hand in Hand!**

- **God Hates Divorce (Mal 2)** – **He knows that it bankrupts people**, emotionally, and financially! **Unfaithfulness or even Unjust Stewardship results in lives Ruined!**
- **Heavy Application:** This is where Jesus cuts deepest into modern compromise:
 - ⇒ Scripture does not bend to culture; **Truth does not shift with opinion!**
 - ⇒ Marriage, Morality, and Righteousness are **Not Negotiable Categories!**
 - ⇒ **(Ps 119:160) The entirety of Your word is truth, and every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever.**
- **If God's Word is eternal, then rebellion against it is not intellectual—it is spiritual resistance.** – You cannot redefine what God has already declared.... **You can only submit or resist!**

P/A: Jesus leaves no middle ground—Kingdom Stewardship is about Urgency, Allegiance, and Submission to His Unchangeable Word. – **Luke 16** calls believers to **Live Wisely, Steward Faithfully**, and **Choose Loyalties carefully!** — **Because what we do now echoes into eternity.**

- Are you a Wise steward or a Wasted life?
- Are you Serving ONE Master or TWO competing loyalties?
- Are you Submitting to Scripture or Reshaping it?