

Just Give Part 2: “Stewardship” (2-11-2018)

This series: “Just Give” An act of surrender, that enables us to become Generous Givers, who learn to Steward well all we have been giving by our Father the King!

Today: Part 2 – “Stewardship”

Intro: Read Jesus Parable of the Dis-honest and Shrewd Manager (Manager here is the NT word for Steward)

Luke 16:1-8 (ESV)

(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. (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.

Notes:

- **The Manager pictured in this story is like a combination of a CFO and a COO**
- **The Biblical imagery is . . .**
 - Manager of a household
 - Treasurer of a city
 - Superintendent of a farm or land estate
 - The Main idea: Someone who manages & dispenses the property & funds of another
- **Biblical Examples: We are stewards . . .**
 - Sometimes translated “dispensation” (example: we distribute the gospel)
 - Of the Gospel – 1 Corinthians 4:1-2, Ephesians 1:10, Colossians 1:2
 - Of a new way of life – bringing both freedom and new responsibility! (1 Peter 4:10)
 - Church leaders described as stewards – higher calling & responsibility (Titus 1:7, 1 Timothy 1:4)
- **We are stewards in this life . . . Everything we have comes from God**
 - Examples: Alive, Health, Talent, Circumstances
 - So, How do we steward what we have been given? Let’s return to our story

Recap: Luke 16:1-8 . . . The manager that has been left in charge is being fired! He has mis-used and mis-managed his master's possessions. He panics, realizing he isn't cut out for manual labor or begging (meaning he isn't well thought of so he has no other prospects). So, he goes and cuts deals on all his masters debt, currying favor and friendships hoping to arrange for his future employment. The master while calling him dis-honest at least commends him on his shrewd dealings. Let's pick up the story from there as Jesus continues . . .

Luke 16:8-15 (ESV)

(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." (14) The Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard all these things, and they ridiculed him. (15) And he said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but **God knows your hearts**. For what is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God.

Notes: Jesus says, we have the light, and yet we don't think about our future as wisely as this dis-honest steward!

Jesus calls this steward **unfaithful**, but at least **wise**. The comparison? All too often we aren't being **either!!!**

Jesus cuts right to the heart of the matter by asking whom are you serving?

Verse 13 - You can't serve God & Money (mammon)

Mammon - this is the personification of wealth (the "god" of materialism)

Notice it's not about having a lot or a little (verse 10) – you can be dis-honest & unfaithful with little. It's always about the heart!

Tim Keller on Biblical Generosity

"You can be technically generous with your money, and still not radically generous in your heart, not pervasively generous in all parts of your life."

What about Good News? What's the message Jesus is sharing? **Arrange for your future!!!**

Context: Luke 12 (The one other place where Jesus teaches on this concept of stewardship)

- Jesus tells a story about a man who lays up more & more for himself in his storehouses, but Jesus says he should have been rich towards God
- Be anxious for nothing – food, clothing, etc. God will provide
- Instead **give** to those in need, and **lay up treasure in heaven**.
- Where your heart is there will your treasure be.
- Then He warns them to be prepared and concerned with their eternal future . . .
- Specifically being ready for his return!

Luke 12:42-43 (ESV)

(42) And the Lord said, "Who then is the **faithful** and **wise** manager, whom his master will set over his household, to give them their portion of food at the proper time? (43) Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes.

Notes: Jesus calls us to be **faithful** & **wise** stewards. Preparing for the future by living in view of eternity. How?

Focus on dispensing what you have been given to that which is eternal. **People**

Let's look back at Luke 16 and the primary advice Jesus gives . . .

Luke 16:9 (ESV)

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.

Michael Wilcock's commentary on Luke 16

"Although these things—your property, ability, time—belong to this life only, says Jesus, yet what will happen to you then, when you pass into that life, will depend on what you are doing with them here and now. Make sure that your use of them brings you into a fellowship of friends which will survive beyond death."

Jonathan Edwards in his sermon "**Heaven is a world of Love**" - On earth love is more a source of pain than joy . . .

- We long to be loved for our own sake (but rarely experience this or love others this way)
- Long to express love without walls/obstacles (but pride, selfishness, defensiveness, etc.)
- We want to experience mutual love (so often not reciprocated)
- When you love somebody, if they aren't happy you aren't happy.
 - Example: parents can only be as happy as their un-happiest child
- We want love without parting

Steve Berger – "Have your heart in heaven, and your hand in the harvest"

Practical Advice . . .

Be relationally generous . . . Forgive & risk being vulnerable

Practice Hospitality – welcome people into your home & your life

Think about how you spend you time, talent, and treasure . . .

Don't take advantage of people in order to arrange for person gain.

Don't spend your life trying to get. Be a giver. Put your money into things that help people.

Connect your money with the Gospel – it'll make all the difference.

Conclusion: Steward your life, by spending it on what really matters. Be a faithful, and wise steward by investing in God's Eternal Kingdom of Love!