

Luke 16:1-13
Live Generously

Image Church // The Gospel of Luke: Inverted Kingdom Wk. 25

Intro

Good morning Image Church, it is so good to be with you this morning and I am really looking forward to opening God's Word with you!

If you don't know, my name is Bryson Moon and I am the college pastor here at Image Church. We are three weeks into being on campus at KSU,

we have had the chance to connect with several new students, so please be in prayer for these relationships and as we continue to connect with new students this semester.

I am really glad that you are here this morning. If this is your first time or you are new around Image Church, welcome, we are so glad that you are here!

If you didn't get a chance to stop by our connection center on the way in, please do so as you leave. We would love to meet you and we also have a small gift to say thank you for joining us!

Before we dive into our text this morning... I want to take a moment to say a very special thank you to an incredible group of people here at Image Church.

To everyone who is a part of one of our serve teams, thank you. Thank you for serving the body so faithfully, thank you for showing up early, staying late, setting up, tearing down, all the behind the scenes work.

We so appreciate you all and all the hard work that each and everyone of you put in week in and week out! We couldn't do this without you, so thank you!!!

So this morning we continue in our series "Inverted Kingdom" where we have been working through the book of Luke. I don't know about you but I have really been enjoying our time in Luke

I have been encouraged and challenged and convicted. I have rejoiced, I have wept, I have meditated and worshiped.

What we are seeing as we journey through Luke, is more of who Jesus is, more about what he has done, and how we are supposed to live in light of it all.

One thing is very clear throughout Luke's gospel and that is as Christians, we are called to respond to the gospel and live our lives in a certain way.

We are called to respond to the gospel and to live accordingly... and all throughout Luke Jesus is constantly pointing to the way we are to live our lives.

We can't miss this though, this is not about doing... We don't do in order to be saved or earn God's love and acceptance, but in light of the fact Christ saved us we respond and live in light of the gospel.

We live out of new identities, BECAUSE we are loved and accepted by God, we respond with our lives.

Our hope and prayer as we have journeyed through Luke and continue in our journey is that **we see Christ more clearly**... who he is and what he has done

And we understand that **there is a calling on our lives**... that the Christian life means we live different...

And our text this morning is no different...

So if you have your Bible's go ahead and turn with me to Luke 16, we are going to be in Luke 16:1-13

As you are turning there I want to go ahead and ease any tension there might be in the room over our passage this morning.

I want to get it out in the open, we are going to talk about money. At least it's going to be a part of what we talk about this morning.

Look I get it, money is a touchy subject for many people, but check this out...¹

Jesus actually talks about money a lot, and what we do with our money being connected to the kingdom of God!

As Pastor Greear puts it, That's because **“money gets at the heart like nothing else does”**²

So Jesus clearly knew that money would be this enormous obstacle for many, and something that would or could very easily entangle us and keep our eyes off of him!

But Something else to remember here, and this is really really important, so lock in...

I didn't write this, Jesus did. So take it up with him.

And if you're thinking “man they sure do talk about money a lot” we are walking text by text through Luke - at Image Church the text drives the sermon, so here we go!!

So Luke 16 starting in vs 1

Now he said to the disciples, “There was a rich man who received an accusation that his manager was squandering his possessions. 2 So he called the manager in and asked, ‘What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your management, because you can no longer be my manager.’

Ok, so you have a rich man, who has a guy that works for him as a manager or overseer but this manager has done messed up... he's been doing some shady things. And now he has got caught

¹ Thoughts and Ideas taken from [“The Church, Money and Awkwardness”](#) by JD Greear

² [“The Church, Money and Awkwardness”](#) by JD Greear

3 “Then the manager said to himself, ‘What will I do since my master is taking the management away from me? I’m not strong enough to dig; I’m ashamed to beg.

so the manager is caught... he is going to lose his job and be out on the street... [I love the detail here though... and his honest self-evaluation.

I'm too weak to dig but I'm too prideful to beg! He has to figure out a plan for when he is kicked out so this is what he does]³

Look I get this one... i'm not saying I condone the actions he is about to take but I get his thought

I used to do landscaping... and in case you have never had to dig for extended periods of time let me tell you, it's no walk in the park.

As someone who is getting to the age where I can wake up sore for no reason, **in the words of the Temptations “Ain't too proud to beg”**

Alright,

4 I know what I'll do so that when I'm removed from management, people will welcome me into their homes.' 5 “So he summoned each one of his master’s debtors. ‘How much do you owe my master?’ he asked the first one. 6 “‘A hundred measures of olive oil,’ he said. ‘Take your invoice,’ he told him, ‘sit down quickly, and write fifty.’ 7 “Next he asked another, ‘How much do you owe?’ “‘A hundred measures of wheat,’ he said. “‘Take your invoice,’ he told him, ‘and write eighty

Understand here how much we are talking about... I mean we don't trade in oil and wheat so if I had to guess you don't know, so i'll tell you...

- 100 measures of oil - 150 olive trees - 2-3 years salary of an average worker
- \$50,000 salary - \$100-150 thousand dollars

³ Thoughts taken from Matt Chandler “The Stewards Response” NOV 22, 2008

- 100 measures of wheat - 100 acres of land to produce this much wheat - 10 years salary⁴
 - talkin about half a million dollars

We aren't talking about a few dollars here... this is huge sums of money. So for one guy he cuts his debt in half and the other he cuts by 20% - that's a lot!

He does this to try and earn favor so that when he is put out on the street for being dishonest and a bad manager he hopes they will look on him favorably and he will have somewhere to go!

8 “The master praised the unrighteous manager because he had acted shrewdly. For the children of this age are more shrewd than the children of light in dealing with their own people.[a] 9 And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of worldly wealth[b] so that when it fails, they may welcome you into eternal dwellings.

so here the master praises the dishonest manager for acting shrewdly... so I had to look up the word shrewd. I know, your probably thinking “really he had to look it up, it seems as though his vocabulary is prodigious

ok Full confession... I googled synonyms for amazing and found prodigious... moving on

the unrighteous manager acts shrewdly... but let's understand the word, we typically think of the word shrewd with a negative connotation.

but to act shrewdly means acute in perception and sound judgement.

so the unrighteous manager had foresight and acted intentionally to try and secure for himself employment and housing when he was officially fired and let go.

the children of this age act with more foresight and intentionality more so than the children of light. Which is crazy because we know how this ends, we know what's to come!

⁴ Matt Chandler “The Stewards Response” NOV 22, 2008

Yet we don't always live with the future in mind.

We really need to grasp what is happening here and we each need to wrestle with this... I'm not advocating for being shady or for scheming

But what he see here is the **earthly vs the eternal**... this guy is caught being dishonest and so he puts together a scheme to ensure he is taken care of when he loses his job...

He took intentional steps to secure for himself a future... he had foresight, in that he “*assesses what the future holds*”⁵ and he acts accordingly

Church, we know the future (I don't mean crystal ball type stuff) I mean we have the Word of God, and he tells us how this will all end... that for those who have put their hope in the finished work of Christ

Christ, who died for our sins, rose victorious and Philippians tells us, who is seated at the right hand of the father... WE WILL BE REUNITED WITH HIM

if we know this to be true, if we know what is to come then shouldn't that determine how we live here and now???

Does the hope of the age to come, orient your steps in the here and now??

Some of you work in the business world... you might like this guy, he made a very savvy move, he was praised for his foresight. You might be this guy... a shark when it comes to business

At work you are a shark, you make calculated decisions, your 10 steps ahead of everyone else, you make wise,

well thought out decisions everyday **but give 10 percent of that effort and intentionality to your spiritual lives.**

⁵ Bock, D. L. (1996). [Luke: 9:51–24:53](#) (Vol. 2, p. 1334). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

You're crushing it at work, but going through the motions when it comes to spiritual things. For what???

I don't think I have to convince anyone in this room that you can't take it with you, when you die that's it! Your done, game over and so what if you built an empire,

So what if you were the most successful at your job, or made it to the top **(the top/success is an illusion anyway)** I'm not in business but I'm preaching to myself right now too..

Success is an ever moving goal post... so i will never reach it because every time I get a little bit closer the goal post moves again

So sure when you're gone, they might say "man he or she was incredible, they were so successful" but what's it gonna matter compared to eternity...

what's it going to matter when you stand face to face with God and have to **give an account for how you lived your life???**

We do this in so many ways in our lives... we give such careful attention, we act intentionally, we have foresight and vision.

Think about how many areas of our lives we do this in?? Whatever your job is... how much time and energy do you spend thinking about it? Planning, prepping...

your kids... how much intentionality and forethought do you put into your kids school, or activities, etc

Please hear me on this... **i am not advocating for you to NOT be intentional in your job and with your kids or other things in your life**

But we give all of our attention and energy to so many things and we give whatever is left to our spiritual lives!

We can give everything we got in pursuit of so many different things... but heres what is happening... for most it's not as if we are sitting down

Going, ok, I am going to give all my attention to these areas: job, family, hobbies, friends... oh shoot I have nothing left to give to the kingdom of God.

No, we fill our lives with all these different things and don't even realize that we aren't focused or being intentional about the most important thing

We live our lives with no eternal perspective because if our focus was on the eternal it would radically reorient our lives.

We would give our time and attention to the things of God, to the kingdom of God.

We have to wake up and start really living.

And this means reorienting our lives around the kingdom of God. Remember back to Luke 12:40 **40 You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."**

We know the return of Christ is inevitable, the Scriptures have promised this, we know this, but do we believe it. **If we believed it then would we live as though it is true!**

we are to be about Kingdom living...

Jesus has given us very clear instructions on the things we are to be about, how we should live our lives, what we should give our lives to...

It should be all for the glory of God and the kingdom of God... we are not building our own kingdom... **we are called to pour out our lives for the sake of the gospel!**

We do so with heaven in sight, with what awaits us in glory, we live our lives in the here and now looking at what's to come

And because we know what is to come, we know our future reality... it shapes and dictates how we live in the present!

Are we being intentional with our spiritual lives?? Are we about the kingdom of God and the things of God?

Let's keep reading... vs 10

10 Whoever is faithful in very little is also faithful in much, and whoever is unrighteous in very little is also unrighteous in much. 11 So if you have not been faithful with worldly wealth, who will trust you with what is genuine? 12 And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to someone else, who will give you what is your own?

Here again we are brought back to **this idea of being faithful...** Much of the christian life is fighting to remain faithful, to be faithful in our calling, to be faithful with the things we have been given

to be faithful with the life that God has given us... how many of us would say, "Yes, I am being faithful"? and I don't mean the christian lingo

Well, we all have room for improvement! No, I am talking about real and genuine faithfulness

Where you would say, "**I am fighting everyday to walk in faithfulness to the Scriptures, to live out of my identity in Christ and I am pursuing God and the things of God above all else???**"

That's very different from, oh yea I am a christian, I go to Church

All throughout this series, through Luke we are coming face to face with **what it means to be faithful**, the idea of being faithful, to remain true and steadfast

- faithful to endure
- faithful to the task at hand

to be faithful, is to no matter what, no matter the circumstances, no matter how you feel you are going to press on, keep the faith, continue to fight

And I think what we are learning, or at least what I hope we are learning, is what it means to be faithful, because if you have believed in the gospel, in the finished work of Christ.

Now, you are trying to figure out what it means to **live faithfully** as a Christian... right

Isn't that the goal, why would we come to church??? Why would I read my Bible? why pray, why give, why serve, why do any of it

If our goal is not to love God and to faithfully follow Jesus...

But I believe that for the majority, it is your desire to love God, to honor him, to faithfully follow Jesus and live as disciples but let's be real with ourselves

a part of following Jesus is regularly taking inventory of our lives, our hearts because we know we are prone to wander - we take our eyes off of Jesus, we lose focus on the kingdom of God

Tim Challies says, "Within our lives there are these opposing desires to honor God and to honor self, to flee from sin and to flee to it."

Which means daily we are engaged in a battle, a battle against our flesh and this battle will rage on for as long as we have breath in our lungs

this battle is, to live faithfully as a disciples **OR** to feed the flesh, to pursue the things of this world, to pursue the desires that we might have

And we say this all the time around here, **those desires might be for good things** and the reason that we constantly bring this up is because if we are honest with ourselves

We know we do this... we know that at times those desires (as good as they might be) get out of order and we make them ultimate things - **which is idolatry**

And so we have to, we absolutely have to examine our hearts - what are they fixed on, what is the desire of your heart??

Is it the things of God, is it his kingdom, is it awe of Jesus or is it fixed on the temporary? the earthly?

and **to be faithful is to walk in obedience**

Walking in obedience is that we are being good stewards of the things God has given us.

God has given you a life to steward and to steward well. Does that mean to perfection, no, but being a good steward does mean that there is intentionality behind what we are doing.

*Being a steward is **Leveraging your time, talent and treasure through service, hospitality, and generosity for the sake of the church family and your neighbor.***

Matthew 25 tells us **We're not owners** of what we've been given, we're stewards, and we're to steward the time, talent and treasure God's given us for His glory!

A disciple is growing in their **stewardship** of their **time, talent** and **treasure** that God's given you... Understanding that God gave you what you have to leverage for Him!

To be faithful is to steward well...

In other words... if you are faithful to steward little you will also be faithful to steward much... but if you couldn't be trusted to steward worldly wealth, who can trust you with what is genuine

and like the manager... you can't be a steward that which is someone else's, why do you think you will manage that which is your own??

Sometimes I think we have done a disservice to people by saying... "Do great things for the kingdom, go change the world for Christ, do some grandiose thing for God

Coming out of college I thought, man I have to go turn the world upside down for Christ, I have to do big things and I found myself feeling like a failure

Even to this day I wrestle with it, oh if we don't have 200 college students in Image College I have somehow failed??

But this turn the world upside down mindset I think that it's missing the mark and misleading, and leaves us feeling like failures

You want to change the world for Christ??? Be faithful with little so that you are faithful with much.

We look at the disciples and say things like, they turned the world upside down, you know how they did that... **they were faithful to the mission that Jesus gave them**

You want to change the world for Christ, you want to do something incredible for the kingdom???

Be faithful with what God has given you!!!

****CHART**** Have you ever seen this before?? It's a chart to help explain addition vs multiplication. Basically it shows you that if you add x number of people each year how many you would have after 30 years

But if you started with one, and that one person reached 2 and discipled them, and then those two each went and reached two and so on that in 30 years you would reach the whole world

Yes we are all about multiplication and not addition here at Image but the point I want you to see is this

Be faithful... it's not your job to change the world, it is your call to be faithful.

Be faithful with what God has given you, if you are faithful with little, you will be faithful with much.

And finishing out our text this morning, vs

13 No servant can serve two masters, since either he will hate one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money."

Here Jesus addresses the main point of this parable, specifically the treasure piece.

But why, why does Jesus care so much about money??? **Because he knows if there is going to be one thing that keeps people out of the kingdom of God, its money!!!**

Wait what?? Money?? Really??

So many people think the church talks about money so often because we trying to get it from you, that's not it at all... **it's not about getting money out of your pockets but idols out of your heart⁶**

Should you give money to the church??? Yes! Absolutely... you should give back to God that which is his to begin with.

Remember we are just stewards, it's from God, and belongs to God, it's already his and so we give.

But when we talk about generosity here at Image we are talking about **Living Generously!**

Living generously is far more than just giving your tithe to the church... It's about all of life. That our **lives are marked by radical generosity.**

It's not just that we generously give to Image Church to see the mission of God carried out in our city, YES we do, do that

But in every aspect of our lives we are generous. We generously give our time, talent and treasure...

- to the church
- to our neighbors
- to our friends
- to our co-workers
- to the widow
- the orphan
- the stranger

- the refugee
- your community

but here is the thing... **we don't get to choose between time, talent and treasure** on which we will be generous...

This is not, here are three options now pick one... No, **to live generously** means that we generously give of our

- time
- talent
- treasure

Remember who is listening to this parable... the pharisees. They were called lovers of money, they were about their profit and their gains

and so Jesus constantly addressing money, he is teaching us to have a different perspective and view of money

But we have an interesting relationship with money... it is something that you need on some level...

you need it to pay for basic human life (shelter, food, water) etc.

There are certain things that we just have to have and you need money in order to live... the way that we get money is by working. Maybe you love your job, maybe you hate your job or somewhere inbetween

But money also can give you a certain lifestyle, it can buy things you want, and can take you places you want to go, money can do alot of things for you

It can buy you the home you want, the nice car to drive, the fun vacations

But It can also cause anxiety and stress... it can cause tension in your marriages - whether that's not having enough to make ends meet... or when you aren't on the same page when it comes to how you spend your money

⁶ Not original with me

Early on in my marriage, well to be fair we only have been married four years so we are still early on in our marriage, so I just mean not recent but at one point...

Princess and I would get into disagreements about money... all petty stuff. See I see money as one should, to buy stuff... I was and still at times willing to pay the convenience tax... meaning if I was thirsty stop and get a drink, if I was hungry get something to eat.

For **Princess** though, money is more security. So she wants to see our savings grow.

I enjoy spending money, she gets anxious when haven't had our budget meeting. I'm more like, *"babe don't bind me up"* and she is more *"babe I don't want to live on the street"*

Some people are savers and some are spenders neither are inherently wrong, **but both can operate out of an unhealthy and even sinful view of money.**

The saver isn't believing that **security ultimately comes from God and not your accounts.** The spender **has no intentionality behind their money and is most likely not being a good steward.**

And I don't mean because the spender isn't investing or saving... you should probably do both, but don't take financial advice from me, finances is just math with money on the line and I don't do the math so well.

But The reality is that most people have hang ups when it comes to money... how your parents handled money, growing up with less, growing up rich, struggling financially now, you have money now and you enjoy the finer things in life, you have anxiety about the future

We have to reorient our hearts and minds, how we view and think about money. If you have been around Image for any period of time - even the last two weeks or like 10 minutes ago

Then you have heard us talk about stewardship - **we have a responsibility to steward the resources we have been given**

All of it is from God, he has given all of it to us with the expectation that we steward well

So we live generously, we leverage our incomes and our finances for the kingdom of God and the glory of God. We don't hold tightly to our wallets but joyfully give.

As Pastor Greear said, **"Jesus didn't talk about money because he needed it; he talked about it because he knew that what we do with money and how we relate to it is the best indicator of where our hearts are."**

And the truth is, most of us love money... I'm not talking scrooge mcduck where we dive into our money pit and swim around

But we want to use **"our" money** on the things we want, we want to live a certain life and you might say, I am not pursuing the American dream,

But it might be a quote on quote Christian offshoot of the American Dream, so it's still the pursuit of the American Dream wrapped in Christian language.

At the end of the day, **does our view of money and the way we use it look more like the Pharisees or is modeled after the teachings of Jesus?**

Listen, what we do with our money, how we spend it, says a lot about the things that we value and treasure.

Our money will follow the things that we love, the things we care about, money follows our priorities.

How are we stewarding the resources that God has given us?

Your home? How are you leveraging most likely the largest investment you have? Your home right, is an investment. No one buys a home thinking “gee I hope my home loses value over the next couple decades.”

No, your home is an investment, **it is a resource that you possess**, but ultimately that God has given you. How are you leveraging it?

Do you host community group or at least offer? Do you open your home to friends, to neighbors? Are you actively creating a space for people to gather?

If discipleship happens in relationships, and it does, space is needed.

Conclusion -- VAMP

I have shared this with you all before, Princess and I really desire to buy a home and Lord willing we will be able to do so soon.

Right now we live in a fairly small apartment. And for the first bit living there I didn't want people really coming over. I mean sure 1-2 was fine

but I got embarrassed by how small our place was, I remember just after we had moved to Atlanta Princess did a surprise birthday party for me and so we went out to dinner

Came home and there were a whole bunch of people in our apartment... wall to wall people. **I was embarrassed that it was so tight.**

But over time the Lord showed me, **if you can't be faithful to steward well the small things you won't be faithful in much.**

So we do the best we can to steward our 830 square feet for the kingdom of God, and invite people to gather on our floor and share meals.

Maybe one day the Lord gives us a house of our own, maybe he doesn't I don't know, **what I do know is that I am called to steward well what He has given me.**

Lives marked by radical generosity, all of life, every area, living generously for the kingdom of God.

Church listen, where your treasure is, there your heart will be also

“What you do with your stuff, what you do with your money and resources, is an indicator of where your heart is, and where your heart is, is an indicator of where you will spend eternity” - Mike McKee

Remember the Scriptures..

- Jesus tells the rich man who wants to be his disciple to go and sell all he has and give to the poor, it was too much for him and so he walked away
- Zacchaeus gives half his possessions to the poor and pays back everyone double he stole from and Jesus says “Salvation has come to this house”
- Jesus said that it would be unbelievable difficult for a rich man to enter the kingdom
- the early church sold their stuff and gave to anyone who had need

Church we can't ignore this... please don't ignore this...

Your sacrifice in this life pales in comparison to your reward in the next⁷

And your sacrifice in in this life, pales in comparison to what Christ has done for you

“Christ himself is our ultimate treasure. All else pales in comparison to Him and the joy of knowing him.”⁸

You cannot serve both God and money.” You may not think you are serving money, but are we leveraging our money, our resources to serve God?

Image Church, would we be people who are in awe of God... that we overtaken by the majesty of God, the glory of God, the beauty of Christ

⁷ Thought taken from Treasure Principle by Randy Alcorn pg. 12

⁸ Treasure Principle by Randy Alcorn pg. 12

That as an act of our worship of the Most High King, we worship him through radical generosity in response to the overwhelming generosity that he has shown us!!!

While we were still sinners Christ died for us... when we didn't deserve it, when there was nothing we could do to earn salvation, in our brokenness and in our despair

God extravagantly lavished his grace and mercy on us and sent Jesus, who would give his life for ours, would take our place on the cross, who would bring about salvation for any who would simply look to him and believe...

Generosity in all of life is an act of worship, it is a response to the goodness of God, that we would gladly lay down our treasure at the feet of the ultimate treasure, Christ Jesus!

How do you need to respond this morning?

Are you here this morning and you have yet to believe? Living a life of generosity in all areas maybe doesn't make a whole lot of sense to you?

I pray that you would believe that Jesus is the risen Savior, who loved you so, that he gave his life for yours. Trust and believe that Jesus is Lord.

Maybe you are here and need to give for the first time? What keeps you from giving? What is it? Is money security?, pleasure? What lie are believing?

Others of you, are you leveraging all of life for the kingdom of God? Your income, your resources, your time and talent.

Are you living generously in all of life?

What does it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his soul?

What good does it do to store up for yourselves treasure here on this earth, where it doesn't last and we know it fade, we will leave it behind

Would it not be better for us to sell everything we have, to give it all away, to empty our bank accounts and live the rest of our lives destitute but have Jesus

Than to have everything we ever wanted, every need and want that we could ever possibly have but live apart from him?

Church, do you believe that Jesus is all you need for everlasting joy?
Do I believe that??

Would we look to Jesus, know the promise that awaits us in glory, and would leverage all of life for his glory and kingdom?

Would we respond to the good news of the gospel through **radical generosity**, leveraging our incomes, leveraging our resources for his kingdom and the advancement of the gospel.

when we talk about leveraging our lives for the sake of the gospel...

Leveraging means to use (something) to maximum advantage. We are called to leverage our lives... leverage our time, talent and treasure and to leverage those things

leverage means to use them to maximum advantage, and **some of you are using sparingly what God has called you to pour out!**

Would Jesus be the treasure that we seek, and would we count it all as rubbish, that we would dare not hang on to but gladly give, with great joy would we leverage that which God has given us to be faithful stewards over!!!

Lets pray