

SIDE BY SIDE

The Shrewd Manager

Craig Smith • May 19, 2019

In Luke 16 Jesus uses a negative example to make a positive point about stewardship...

Jesus told His disciples: "There was a rich man whose manager was accused of wasting his possessions. So he called him in and asked him, 'What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your management, because you cannot be manager any longer.' The manager said to himself, 'What shall I do now? My master is taking away my job. I'm not strong enough to dig, and I'm ashamed to beg – I know what I'll do so that, when I lose my job here, people will welcome me into their houses.' So he called in each one of his master's debtors. He asked the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' 'Eight hundred gallons of olive oil,' he replied. The manager told him, 'Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it four hundred.' Then he asked the second, 'And how much do you owe?' 'A thousand bushels of wheat,' he replied. He told him, 'Take your bill and make it eight hundred.' The master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly. For the people of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the people of the light." (Luke 16:1-8)

Let's unpack the facts:

PHYSICAL FACTS	SPIRITUAL COUNTERPART
<u>Rich man</u> – Calls manager to account for his oversight/ management of possessions.	<u>God</u> – Calls people to account for their stewardship of resources given them.
<u>Manager</u> – Accused of squandering owners' resources. Later found to be shrewd.	<u>Christians/People</u> – Failure to steward well all that God entrusts; some are wise however.
<u>Possessions</u> – Material goods (oil, wheat, etc.)	<u>Time, talent and treasure</u>

PHYSICAL FACTS	SPIRITUAL COUNTERPART
<u>Debtors</u> – Debts are diminished by managers decision to reduce their bill.	<u>People in need</u> – Will God's people meet their needs?
<u>Shrewdness</u>	<u>Wise investment-planning</u>
<u>Commendation</u>	<u>Divine approval</u>

Jesus explains the stewardship applications...

- **Investment: use your resources for eternity** – “I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings.” (v. 9)
- **Character: demonstrate your faithfulness** – “Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own?” (vv. 10-12)
- **Devotion: choose your Lord** – “No servant can serve two masters. 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 both God and Money.” (v. 13)

So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. (2 Cor. 4:18)