



DISCUSSION GUIDE

WEEK 6: THE DISHONEST MANAGER

Read the Text

Luke 16:1-13

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. 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.”

Main Point

Throughout Scripture, we see God use broken sinful people to illustrate a point. In this parable, we see the shrewdness of a dishonest manager point us to the Kingdom of God.

The rich man firing the manager is analogous to Jesus coming to earth to tell us that His Kingdom is waiting for us and to orient our hearts to the Kingdom instead of to this world. Like the manager, we are forced into a decision of how we'd like to respond to this information. But either way, ***Jesus' arrival into this world is a reminder that we can't earn our own way into the Kingdom.***

So what are we to learn from the manager's response? It's confusing that on the one hand, he is dishonest, but on the other hand, he is commended for his shrewdness. The lesson isn't necessarily from the manager's sinful choice. Rather, it's that he was forced into a crisis of decision. In this case, the manager decided to let go of managing the rich man's money and to instead build relationships with people that he would leverage later. This is a reminder to us that ***we have a short window of time to decide how we will prioritize our life.*** Will we prioritize the things of the world or the things of the Kingdom?

When we come to know Jesus, it leads to a re-prioritization of our lives. Whereas the world values money, possessions, and status, Jesus calls us to trust in Him and to worship Him with those things. ***How we navigate our crisis of decision will determine who or what we worship.*** As Jesus says, we can't worship both God and money. It's wise of us to prayerfully consider where our worship lands and where our true joy comes from.

Reflect Together

1. Looking back on your walk with the Lord, where have you seen your priorities change? Specifically as it pertains to wealth and relationships?
2. How did the manager show shrewdness? What do you think of when you see that the Bible calls us to be shrewd? How does your life demonstrate shrewdness? Consider your stewardship with time, talent, and treasure as you answer this.
3. We cannot serve God and money. How do you struggle with this tension? How do you know if you're serving one or the other? Do you have any built-in accountability to help you discern when you're being drawn more towards money than to God?