



June 9, 2024

## The Heart of Things

Luke 16:14-18

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### Let's Solve the Puzzle Like Detectives!

**First**, remember the governing rule of parable interpretation: one big idea

**Second**, context suggestions continuation with the parables of chapter 15

-Chapter 15 parables were answering Pharisee grumbling, and Chap 16 aims at Pharisees (vs. 15)

-What about 16:1 addressed to disciples? Yes, but see 16:14: the Pharisees are listening in!

**Third**, the parable tells a story of a man in trouble taking care of his future in an underhanded way

**Fourth**, we know Jesus' main point is not to cheat, not to be dishonest (look ahead to verse 10)

**Fifth**, first possible main point: be shrewd: 16:8

-It steps out of the parable and thus is a commentary on the parable

-It is consistent with other teaching of Jesus: see Matthew 10:16

-“Shrewd” can be translated wise, prudent, caution, mindful of one's interests

-Contrast with “sons of this age” shrewdness with their generation sets up something to model

-This supports another idea to follow (how then should the sons of light be shrewd?)

**Sixth**, best candidate for the main point is verse 9: “And I tell you” is the marker!

-Be shrewd by using “unrighteous” mammon (remember to distinguish \$ from love of \$: 1 Tim 6:10)

-To *make friends* (here is the key to the puzzle! Who does this refer to?)

-My initial thought: *Prioritize people over stuff; use stuff to bless people*

-So that when money fails these friends will receive you into “eternal dwellings” (what is this?)

-Parallels verse 4 “receive into their houses” but “oikos” has now changed to “skene”

-“Skene” can refer to generic tent dwelling, or to **the** tabernacle: see Hebrews 9:8-11; Revelation 21:3

-This word choice along with “eternal” signals (not proves) that these dwellings are those of God

-Which makes “friends” a stand-in for God Himself!

-Use unrighteous mammon to make friends with God!

-Which means use stuff in a way that pleases God, reflects His priorities (not bribes Him!)

**Seventh**, support for this interpretation can be seen in what follows:

-This parable is a call to faithful use of resources (to whom? Implied God): Luke 16:10-12

-One cannot love God and mammon; one either serves one or the other: Luke 16:13

-What is exalted among men (money) is an abomination to God: Luke 16:15

-Seek ye first (Matthew 6:33); Lay up your treasures in heaven (Matthew 6:20)