



June 2, 2024

Making Friends with Whom?

Luke 16:1-15

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)

Singing Psalm 22

1 My God, my God, why have **yôu** forsaken me?

Why are you so far from saving me, so far from my **criës** of anguish?

2 My God, I cry out by day, but you **dô** not answer,

I cry out by night, but I **find** no rest.

3 Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One; you are the one **Îsrael** praises.

4 In you our ancestors put their trust; they trusted and you **delivered** them.

5 To you they cried out and were saved; in you they trusted and were not **pût** to shame.

6 But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by everyone, despised **by** the people.

7 All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, **shaking** their heads.

8 “He trusts in the Lord,” they say, “let the Lord rescue him since he **delights** in him.”

11 Do not be far from me, for trouble is near and there is no **ône** to help.

13 Roaring lions that tear their prey open their mouths **wide** against me.

14 I am poured out like water, and all my bones are **ôut** of joint.

My heart has turned to wax; it has **meltéd** within me.

15 My mouth is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to the roof **ôf** my mouth;

16 Dogs surround me, a pack of villains encircles me; they pierce my **hânds** and feet.

17 All my bones are on display; people stare and gloat **ôver** me.

18 They divide my clothes among them and cast lots **fôr** my garment.

19 But you, Lord, do not be far from me. You are my strength; come **quickly** to help me.

21 Rescue me from the mouth of the lions; save me from the horns of the **wild** oxen.

22 I will declare your name to my people; in the assembly **Î** will praise you.

23 You who fear the Lord, praise him! All you descendants of **Jâcob**, honor him!

24 For he has not despised or scorned the suffering of **thê** afflicted one;

he has not hidden his face from him, but has listened to his **cry** for help.

27 All the ends of the earth will remember and turn **tô** the Lord,

28 for dominion belongs to the Lord and he rules **ôver** the nations.

29 All the rich of the earth will **fêast** and worship;

all who go down to the dust will **knêel** before him—

30 Posterity will serve him; future generations will be told **abôut** the Lord.

31 They will proclaim his righteousness, declaring to a people yet unborn: **Hê** has done it!