

“Life, Money and the Son of Man” – Luke 16:1-18

We are in the middle of an interaction between Jesus and the Scribes and the Pharisees. This started in chapter 15...

Luke 15:1-2

Then all the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him to hear Him. 2 And the Pharisees and scribes complained, saying, “This Man receives sinners and eats with them.”

This sets the context for the next few weeks. The Pharisees and Scribes have rejected Jesus and are now looking for every fault they can find in Him. As we saw last week Jesus still cares and wants to reach them by sharing three parables of how much God loves and seeks to save sinners. Remember that they were the older son who was all uptight that the father had forgiven the prodigal son. After we were all said and done, we find out that they are the prodigal! So, we pick up today with Jesus now turning to teach the Disciples about money and what we should be putting our trust in. Before we start this, you need to know why Jesus is bringing this up. He is not changing the subject but pointing out one of the main reasons for the deficiency in the Scribes and the Pharisees. It was ingrained in their mind that if you were rich, it was because you were blessed by God and if you were poor you were cursed by God.

Being Rich was a sign of your righteousness before God. This is what they thought. So, Jesus is not wanting His followers to think the opposite. That if you are poor, you are blessed and you need to just forget about money all together. We have a habit when we see something being abused that we reject it all together. Money is that very thing that causes Christians to go to extremes. (The Rich Young Ruler in Luke 18:18-30) Jesus is teaching them that there must be a balance and responsibility to those things in this life that we are entrusted to. Let's look first at the parable then the application...

The Shrewd Steward

Luke 16:1-8a

What we discover in this parable is a steward that had been squandering the goods of his rich master and someone turned him in. He was obviously in charge of accounting and had been cooking the books. Today we call that Embezzlement. It seems that the master had no proof and gave the man notice. This happens in the business world when one can't answer for fraudulent records and is given a 30-day pink slip. The board votes you out and replaces you. Time to start working on your resume! Notice as he starts doing that, he realizes his limitations. He can't dig and he didn't want to be homeless. So instead of continuing his embezzling for himself he passes

what he could have took now and gave it to the Master's vendors. This was smart on his part even though it was highly unethical. When he was out of work, he could now count on the vendors to hire him. Now, when the rich master catches wind of it he commends the guy. Just imagine if he put that kind of energy into an honest living! This is the point that Jesus is making in the next statement...

Luke 16:8b

For the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light.

The Pharisees were very shrewd with money. A matter-of-fact Jesus said this about them...

Matthew 23:23

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone.”

Jesus did not say this because they were handling their finances wrong but that their attitude about it was wrong.

What happens is believers see the abuse of money and decide they are not going to have anything to do with it. We never learn the proper use. Jesus knows the disciples heard His rebuke of the Pharisees and does not want them to think that they shouldn't seek financial wealth at all. This is why he says...

Use your wealth wisely

Luke 16:9-12

The Shrewd Steward thought about his future and used his current resources to store up for then. It was wrong and unethical, but it was wise from the world's perspective. If this is how the world uses wisdom when it comes to money, how much more the believer? Jesus is telling you that if we are in this world we are going to have to "make friends" with money. Yes, the bible says...

1 Timothy 6:10

For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

We need to be able to have a good grasp on money so that we can use it to glorify God. This is why Jesus applies it like this...

Luke 16:11

Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?

God uses the comparison for you to self-examine yourself. If you cannot be responsible for your personal finances, how do you expect to be responsible for spiritual things? (Explain Debt Free Living and being responsible in your means) Why?

Proverbs 22:7

The rich rules over the poor, And the borrower is servant to the lender.

But as in all things they need to be balanced out...

Luke 16:13

“No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”

Notice Jesus said to make friends with it and not to serve it. We are only to serve God. We live in a world where it takes money to live, let's use it wisely and for God's Glory. Now. The Pharisees did not like what He had to say. Maybe you don't like what I had to say.

Luke 16:14

Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, also heard all these things, and they derided Him.

Now we know why Jesus just said these things. He hit them right where it hurt them. But it reveals where their heart is at. This is what they had all their trust in. To deride in the original language is “turned up their noses at”. This is where we will build the context for next week. Jesus will now rebuke them and show them some of their deficiencies.

Jesus rebukes the Pharisees

Luke 16:15-18

The problem with the Pharisees was not the law but how they interpreted the law. They were right because they say so. They looked at themselves as righteous by their works and Jesus reminds them that compared to God they are lost. The concept in verse 16 is that this idea of self-righteousness was a stumbling block for those that are hearing the gospel. The Law and Prophets were until John. And after that Jesus was there and those that are hearing Him are “pressing” into it. Meaning it is hard for them because of the false teaching of works of the Pharisees. This takes us back to last week when I said how

hard it is to reach those stuck in traditions and religion. They twisted the true meaning of the law and made it very difficult for the common people to understand the true gospel. That is why he brings up the statement about marriage. This was expanded on in Matthew and Mark. Please do not take this one verse by itself as you need to see all the other scriptures.

Mark 10:2-5

The Pharisees came and asked Him, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?” testing Him. And He answered and said to them, “What did Moses command you?” They said, “Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce, and to dismiss her.” And Jesus answered and said to them, “Because of the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept.”

So, we see, this was said because they were misinterpreting the law.

Romans 3:19-20

Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

Galatians 3:24

Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

Romans 3:21-22

But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe.

Acts 16:31

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved”