

Title: The Parable of the Unjust Steward

Text: Luke 16: 1-13

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Place: SGBC, New Jersey

In this parable we have a **certain rich man**. The certain rich man represents the Lord our God. **In the parable is an unjust steward**. A steward of God is what we all are. **What is the message?** God is teaching us to walk in the light he has given us—trusting him who has provided all the believer's righteousness and to use everything he has given for the furtherance of his name.

Believer, everything we have, God has given—**his goods**. **What is included in everything?**—For every believer—we have all—all by the grace of God. Christ our Righteousness is ours; Christ's inheritance is our inheritance

1 Peter 1: 4: To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you

Everything which we have been given in the earth (this is so for all men) believers and unbelievers all is God's. He has allowed us to use that which is his.

What are we to do with his goods, with this life, with all that are and have? We are responsible to use everything God has given us for the glory of his name and the good of his people, according to his will. Everything—all light, every spiritual blessing, every temporal blessing, ourselves, our time, our talents, our possessions, our family.

Divisions: 1. The parable; 2. The exhortation the Lord gives

I. THE PARABLE—THIS IS AN EARTHY EXAMPLE—AN ILLUSTRATION.

A. (v1) He wasted his lord's goods—the unjust steward either embezzled his master's goods, misapplied them, or through carelessness lost them.

Note: The Lord is speaking to his disciples but he is speaking to and particularly of the Pharisees. This is exactly what Israel had done. They had taken all that God had given and used it for personal gain—lower the debt owed to God as the unjust steward did.

They attempted to come to God **by the works of their own hands**—embezzled their masters goods. They **laid heavy burdens** on and whipped and oppressed poor sinners who needed the unsearchable riches of Christ. In other words, they misapplied God's goods. They refused to set forth the unsearchable riches of Christ because they sought personal, temporary gain for themselves in this world. Notice their response to this parable (**v14.**) That is how the Pharisee always receives the word of the Lord—in their day and in our day.

But, we behold our wretched sinful nature in the unjust steward. Why did God make man? To honor God in serving God. The certain rich God who owns all things in heaven and earth—entrusted his goods to man—but we used—used all for self—we wasted our Master's goods.

B. (v2) The Master called him to himself

The steward did not give account to anyone but his master. For the believer that is glorious good news. We will not give account to each other—

1 Corinthians 4: 5: Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

2 Corinthians 10: 18: For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.

But for the unbeliever this is horrible news—we shall stand before Christ Jesus and give account!

Hebrews 9: 27: And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

Every sinner is here for a little while. We have been given the goods of God to use for our souls benefit and the good of his people. We will be out of our stewardship in a very little while. What did this unjust steward do when he found out he was about to be removed from his stewardship?

C. (v3) The unjust steward realized that he had no ability—would not, could not bring himself--to earn his livelihood by digging and he was too proud to beg.

Do you see our sinful condition in this unjust steward?

We cannot, by the works of our hands, save our souls. *“By the works of the law there shall no flesh be justified.” “Man is not justified by the works of the law.”* Salvation is by grace. It cannot be earned or won by works (Eph. 2:8-9). And we cannot do as the Pharisee—lower the standard of the law.

And by nature, we are all too proud to beg for mercy. A beggar seeks grace at the hands of another, by the work of another. To beg God’s mercy is to put your trust entirely in the hand of Christ trusting Christ to provide you Bread—Life—Righteousness. Someone said, “The gospel is one beggar telling another beggar where he got bread.”

D. But, the unjust steward used the time he had to prepare for his future (vv. 4-7). That is what is commended in this unjust steward (v. 8).

What is commended? Not lessening the bills of his masters debtors—that was unjust. He is commended because he did not sit idle. He prepared to provide a future home for himself. Therefore, we read, *“The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.”*

Knowing that we will not always be the stewards of God in this earth, we must soon die, we must give earnest diligence to prepare for that day. The unjust steward merely laid up treasure for himself on this earth—the Lord is not teaching us to do that—such is what the religious Pharisee does and the covetous worldling.

But with the same diligence and intensity with which the unjust steward prepared merely for his earthly well-being—*so every sinner ought to give all our diligence to seek the Lord. (v16; Mt —are you pressing to draw near to the Lord?)*

Look past the end of our noses, the end of this day, the end of this life, you and I have an eternity to spend. The things of this life are fleeting, temporary, they are not the true riches! Christ is the Pearl of great price! Live not for this life, but for the next.

2 Corinthians 4: 18: While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal. 5:1:

For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

II. The parable ends, now listen to the word the Lord gives. (v9)

Use your riches in this world—everything God has given you—for the good of your soul—for the glory of God. That these gifts shall be friends—witnesses for us, not against us--that they bear witness in the day of judgment that our salvation was not in material things but in the Lord Jesus Christ.

A. Giving all our goods—will not save us. We are saved only by the precious blood of Jesus Christ

1 Pet 1:18: Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; (19) But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: (20) Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, (21) Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.”

B. Our earthly riches cannot get us into heaven, no matter what we do with them. But earthly riches—security anywhere but Christ—will keep us out! (Matt. 13:22).

Matthew 13:22: He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.

1 Timothy 6: 10: For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

Illustration: Bob to Brian

Use everything God gives you to seek the Lord first and his glory first and to promote the gospel of Christ first AND the good of his people first. We are privileged to serve God for a little while.

- Go to college where you can hear the gospel
- Get a job to support the gospel
- Use all that God gives you to give to others this glorious good news!

C. (v10-12) What is least and what is greatest?

God calls riches of this earth—least. Men call them the greatest. God calls much—“*The unsearchable riches of Christ*” (Eph. 3:8). “*God’s riches in glory by Christ Jesus*” (Phil. 4:19). God calls the riches of this earth *unrighteous mammon*. The *true riches* of Christ are *true riches*. The goods we have in this world are not our ours—they are another man’s. The inheritance belongs to Christ. We are stewards of his goods for a very little while and then we leave them to another. Spiritual, eternal riches is what God gives to his children forever!--our own. Righteousness is mine forever! Inheritance incorruptible that fadeth not away is mine forever! My beloved is mine and I am his!

D. (v10-12) What is faithfulness and what is it to be unjust?

He that is faithful with these temporal things which are least—using them for God’s glory—is faithful also in the unsearchable riches of Christ. He that is unjust in the least is unjust also in the unsearchable riches! If we rob God of the worship due to him, the time due to him, the service due to him for these things which are

least then we rob God in that which is greatest! **Remember:** faithfulness is measured by God not men. Faithfulness is measured by lives, not by isolated acts.

Mark 8: 35: For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. 36: For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? 37: Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

The FINAL WORD: the Lord Jesus Christ gives us an absolute impossibility.

Luke 16: 13: No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

If we love God, we will make all our worldly interests, subservient to the worship of God. If we love the world, we will fit God in where we can. God says it is impossible to serve God and this world. This is a heart matter! Meditate on this word of our Lord and you will find it is so.

Matthew 6: 21: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

AMEN!