

02-17-2019

Message: How Faithful Disciples Manage God's Money

Text: Luke 16:1-13

Introduction

- A. How many of us have said, "When I grow up I want to be a money manger for the rest of my life? Not too many? Well that's too bad, because whether or not we've grown up, we see Jesus teaching us in our Scripture text we just heard that God is holding all of us accountable to manage all the money He has given to us in a way that pleases Him.

- B. How we manage what God has entrusted to us, including our money, has everything to do with being a disciple, a follower of Jesus by faith in Him. Notice that Jesus is speaking the parable of the manager, a steward to His disciples to teach us how to follow Him with our money. The Pharisees are also listening and scoffing, but we are not to be like them. We are to be rich toward God and generous like Jesus.

Luke 16:1 **Now He was also saying to the disciples,** "There was a rich man who had a manager,

Luke 16:14 Now **the Pharisees,** who were lovers of money, **were listening** to all these things **and were scoffing at Him.**

- C. Some of us might be tempted to push back against what Jesus is teaching as did the Pharisees. Please, for our own soul's sake, let's not imitate them, but conform our hearts to the Lord's heart. Since Jesus is applying this parable to His disciples, let's apply it to ourselves step by step as we move through it.

I. 16:1,2 We are all born as God's faithless money managers in crisis.

Luke 16:1 Now He was also saying to the disciples, "There was **a rich man who had a manager** (oikonomos), and **this manager was reported to him as squandering his possessions.**² "And he called him and said to him, 'What is this I hear about you? **Give an accounting of your management,** for you can no longer be manager.'

- A. While there are other characters mentioned in this parable, the focus of Jesus is on the master and his manager. And right now our risen Lord is focusing these, His words, on you and me, obligated to serve Him, our Master.

- B. This household manager (oikonomos - from "oikos" = "house" and "nomos" = "law") had misused and squandered his master's wealth. The master was calling him to give and account, which would leave the manager excluded from the master's household and without a means to live.
 - 1. We are all accountable to God, who created us, Who has given us our bodies, our souls,

our abilities, our power to make money and possess houses, vehicles, phones, etc. We are grazing on God's ground.

Psalm 100:3 Know that the LORD Himself is God; **It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves**; *We are* His people and the sheep of His pasture.

Psalm 119:73 **Your hands made me and fashioned me**; Give me understanding, that I may learn Your commandments.

1 Chronicles 29:14 "But who am I and who are my people that we should be able to offer as generously as this? For **all things come from You, and from Your hand we have given You**.¹⁵ "For we are sojourners before You, and **tenants** ...¹⁶ "O LORD our God, **all this abundance** that we have provided to build You a house for Your holy name, **it is from Your hand, and all is Yours**.

2. Yet we have all mismanaged what God has given us, because we have all sinned against Him with our bodies, minds, money, possessions.

1 John 1:8 **If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves** and the truth is not in us.

Romans 3:23 for **all have sinned** and fall short of the glory of God,

We are all guilty of squandering what He has given us. We have all misused, misdirected money that He has given us, spending and keeping for ourselves what we should have given to God and shared with others in need, spending on what is illegal (marijuana, meth, cocaine, and for minors - Juul pods and pipes, cigarettes, alcohol). We have all been unrighteous managers of what belongs to God.

3. As a result, we must all stand before God's judgment seat when He sends Christ to return and judge the world in righteousness, and we will have no excuse before Him. Those found unfaithful, disobedient in the use of the wealth God has given us will be denied the riches of eternal life in the presence of God's glory. Faith that does not express itself in faithfulness is useless for salvation (James 2:14,20,26).

Luke 12:20 "But God said to him, **'You fool!** This *very* night your soul is required of you; and *now* who will own what you have prepared?"²¹ **"So is the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."**

Luke 14:33 "So then, **none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions**.

Luke 16:22 "Now the poor man died and was carried away by the angels to Abraham's bosom; and **the rich man also died and was buried**.²³ **"In Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment,** and saw Abraham far away and Lazarus in his bosom.

II. Luke 16:3-8 A manager's solution to provide for the future.

- A. 16:3-7 The manager, to provide for his future, uses his master's wealth to ingratiate himself to others who were indebted to his master. He has them rewrite the bill in their own hand to make it look original and reduces what they owed his master in hopes that in the future they will in some way take care of him, be it by charity or employment.

Luke 16:3 "**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; I am ashamed to beg.⁴ **I know what I shall do, so that when I am removed from the management people will welcome me into their homes.**"⁵ "And he summoned each one of his master's debtors, and he *began* saying to the first, 'How much do you owe my master?'⁶ "And he said, 'A hundred measures of oil.' And 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?' And he said, 'A hundred measures of wheat.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, and write eighty.'

- B. 16:8 The master critiques the worldly wisdom (not the ethics) of the manager, commending him for having the wisdom and foresight to use his present access to his master's wealth to provide for his own future. Jesus's application is to critique the relative lack of heavenly wisdom and foresight of disciples to use their access to their Master's wealth to provide for their eternal future.

Luke 16:8 "And his master praised the unrighteous manager **because he had acted shrewdly** (*phronimos*); for the sons of this age are more **shrewd** (*phronimos*) in relation to their own kind than the sons of light.

III. Luke 16:9-13 Jesus's gracious guidance leads us to inherit true eternal riches.

- A. Use the wealth God entrusts to us to help others in need.

Luke 16:9 "And I say to you, **make friends for yourselves by means of the wealth of unrighteousness, so that when it fails, they will receive you into the eternal dwellings.**

1. "Mamonas" is an Aramaic word for wealth or possessions. Wealth is not inherently unrighteous, but it tends to tempt us to be unrighteous, to be unfaithful to God and to love the things of the world that money provides. We must love God, not money.

1 Timothy 6:9 But **those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare** and many foolish and harmful desires **which plunge men into ruin and destruction.**¹⁰ For **the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil,** and **some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith** and pierced themselves with many griefs.

2. At stake, according to Jesus, is our eternal destiny, our being received into "eternal dwellings."

3. The reference to those receiving us into eternal dwellings is thought to be:
 - a. angels receiving believers into heaven
 - b. the believers to whom believers have shown kindness in loyalty to Christ, testifying at the judgment of our gospel faithfulness to Christ.

Luke 11:31 "**The Queen of the South** will rise up with the men of this generation **at the judgment** and condemn them, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.³² "**The men of Nineveh** will stand up with this generation **at the judgment** and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.

- c. a circumlocution or round about way of referring to God Himself. Regardless, it is ultimately, God through Christ Who will be the final Judge of who does and does not enter His eternal kingdom. We can see from the context in 1 Timothy 6 that this is not a call to take hold of eternal life by merit, but by faith in Christ. This is how true faith in Christ, love toward Christ is expressed.

1 Timothy 6:17 Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or **to fix their hope** on the uncertainty of riches, but **on God**, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy.¹⁸ **Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share,¹⁹ storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed.**

1 Timothy 6:12 Fight the good fight of **faith; take hold of the eternal life** to which you were called,

4. In our small group video David Platt quotes the authors of When Helping Hurts: How to Help the Poor without Hurting the Poor: "By any measure, we North American Christians are the richest people to ever walk on planet earth." It's true, we have comforts and conveniences that the rich of Jesus's day did not enjoy. But the truly destitute of the world are just as destitute today. Platt's statistics: 1 billion people in destitute poverty live on \$1.00 per day, and 2.6 billion on \$2.00 per day. 16,000 children die each day from hunger related issues. This can overwhelm us. What can we do? We can be faithful with what God gives us, and here is one way His Word guides us.
 - a. Remember, all of the commands in the Old Testament, the Law and the Prophets reflect the heart of God and teach us (at least in principle) how to love God with all of our heart and our neighbor as ourselves.

Matthew 22:37 And He said to him, "YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND."³⁸ "This is the great and foremost commandment.³⁹ "The second is like it, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.'⁴⁰

"On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets."

b. So God gave us laws of tithing (giving 10%) and others to teach us how to wholeheartedly love God and others with our wealth. That is why when the faithless, tormented rich man in the last parable of Lk 16 pleaded that someone warn his brothers to avoid his faithlessness and torment, (Luke 16:29) "But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.' Here are some examples of how God through Moses taught us to be generous like God Who is rich in mercy and love toward us (Ephesians 2:4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,)

(1) Individual benevolence. This is an act of faith toward God and love toward God and others.

Deuteronomy 24:19 "When you reap your harvest in your field and have forgotten a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it; **it shall be for the alien, for the orphan, and for the widow, in order that the LORD your God may bless you** in all the work of your hands.

(2) Corporate benevolence by God's people, the church. This is an act of faith toward God and love toward God and others. This is a second tithe in year 3 and 6 of Israel's 7 year economic cycle.

Deuteronomy 14:28 "**At the end of every third year** you shall bring out **all the tithe of your produce** in that year, **and shall deposit it in your town.**²⁹ "**The Levite**, because he has no portion or inheritance among you, and **the alien, the orphan and the widow who are in your town, shall come and eat and be satisfied**, in order that **the LORD your God may bless you** in all the work of your hand which you do.

The principle of this command in terms of proportion and direction of our annual income can be achieved by adding to a first tithe to Christ's church a second tithe \ collected by the church for the poor. 3 years x 3.33% = 10% by year 3.

Year	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
OT church			10%			10%	x
NT church	3.3	3.3	3.4	3.3	3.3	3.4	

This proportionate, corporate principle was taught in the NT church by Christ's apostle Paul.

1 Corinthians 16:1 Now concerning **the collection for the saints**, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so do you also.² **On the first day of every week each one of you is to put aside and save, as he may prosper**, so that no collections be made when I come.³ When I arrive, whomever you may approve, I will send them with letters **to carry your gift to Jerusalem**;

Romans 15:25 but now, **I am going to Jerusalem serving the saints**.²⁶ For **Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem**.

B. 16:10-12 Be faithful to Christ with the money He entrusts to us.

Luke 16:10 "He who is faithful **in a very little thing** is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous **in a very little thing** is unrighteous also in much.¹¹ "**Therefore if you have not been faithful in the use of unrighteous wealth, who will entrust the true riches to you?**"¹² "And **if you have not been faithful in the use of that which is another's**, who will give you that which is your own?"

1. 16:10 money is a 'very little thing' to God. Yet how we use it exposes our heart toward Him, whether or not our confession of Jesus as Lord is sincere. Faithfulness is a way of life, whether in the smaller and larger matters of this life. If we constantly lie about small things but not large things, are we not all liars just the same?
2. 16:11 "true riches = an eternal inheritance with Christ isn't the glory of His Father.
3. 16:12 our present money/wealth is "that which is another's," it belongs to the Lord our Master.

C. 16:13 Love and serve God, not money/possessions. Money is not our god; Christ is our God!

Luke 16:13 "**No servant (oiketes) can serve two masters**; for either he will **hate the one and love the other**, or else he will **be devoted to one and despise the other**. You cannot serve God and wealth."

1. What we love most is given most priority, devotion. Money, wealth, possessions are a litmus test of what is in our hearts.
2. Don't push back against Christ as did the Pharisees, who did so while professing to be devoted to God, but altered God's Word to justify their own selfish love of money.

Luke 16:14 Now **the Pharisees**, who were lovers of money, were listening to all these things and **were scoffing at Him**.

3. Honor God first and above all with the wealth we possess. (Don't listen to those who tell

you otherwise.)

- a. Be rich toward Him by supporting the ministry of Christ's body, the church.

Exodus 22:29 "**You shall not delay the offering** from your harvest and your vintage.

Proverbs 3:9 "**Honor the LORD from your wealth and from the first of all your produce;**

Malachi 3:10 "**Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse,** so that there may be food in My house,

- b. Be generous to the needy.

Proverbs 14:31 He who oppresses the poor taunts his Maker, but he who is gracious to the needy honors Him.

Proverbs 19:17 One who is gracious to a poor man lends to the LORD, and He will repay him for his good deed.

Matthew 25:40 "**The King will answer** and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, **to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.**'

Conclusion

- A. Jesus teaches us that God is holding all of us accountable to manage all of the money and wealth He has given to us in a way that pleases Him, for it is all ultimately His.
- B. We cannot love the Lord and others without being rich toward God and generous toward others, beginning with levels of giving that God defines as rich and generous.
- C. Those who love God love being like Him, love having our hearts synchronized with His by His indwelling Spirit's power.

Ephesians 2:4 But **God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,**⁵ even when we were dead in our transgressions, **made us alive together with Christ** (by grace you have been saved),

- D. If we are Christ's sheep, then follow the voice of our Good Shepherd, who today calls to us from heaven ...

Luke 12:33 "**Sell your possessions and give to charity; make yourselves** money belts which do not wear out, **an unfailing treasure** in heaven, where no thief comes near nor

moth destroys.³⁴ **For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.** ... 16:13 ...
You cannot serve God and wealth."