

Luke 16:1-15

If there is one thing that is hindering us from experiencing awakening and revival, I believe it to be our worship of, our pre-occupation with, and love for money and material things.

1. We spend, according to statistics, more of our waking time thinking about money than not thinking about money, how to acquire it, how to acquire more of it, how to spend it, how to save it, how to invest it, how to borrow it, and even counting it.
2. If you live until 85, statistics say that you would have spent nearly 50 years of your waking time thinking about money. That's too much.
3. Money and material things dominate a large portion of our lives.

If there is one thing that is hindering us from experiencing awakening and revival, I believe it to be our worship of, our pre-occupation with, and love for money and material things. Jesus must have seen the danger as well because about a third of all of Jesus' parables deal with money in some way. Before us is one of those parables.

READ/PRAY

### **I. People v1a**

*Now He was also saying to the disciples There was a rich man who had a manager*

1. There was a rich man.
2. This rich man, had a manager; a steward of his resources.
  - a. The Greek word for steward conveys this is a free man who was hired, not a slave.
  - b. He would be of high social status and high responsibility.
  - c. He would be trusted because he would have the right to act on behalf of his master.
4. This manager however is a bad steward. He is wasteful, deceitful, and thieving.
5. He's just throwing away his master's resources: He is totally irresponsible

### **II. The Predicament v1b-3**

*There was a rich man who had a manager, 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.'*

He is accused of wasting the master's resources and is in turn fired

1. Give an accounting of your stewardship.
  - a. This is not an investigation to save his job. Bring me your numbers.
  - b. No. This is turn in your numbers, your office key, computer, and all your files.
2. Clean out your desk and bring me a final accounting of my possessions.

*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.'*

What shall I do?

1. Digging jobs are always available, but he's not cut out for that.
2. On the other hand he can't bring himself to beg.
3. He's just been fired for being irresponsible, unqualified, and dishonest, so he isn't getting a referral. That's for sure.
4. As he looks ahead he doesn't have much hope.

### **III. The Plan v4-7**

*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.'*

A light bulb finally goes off in his head. He's going to contact all the people who owe his master debt.

1. He is contacting his master's debtors one by one!
2. We have an example of 2, but he did not just summon 2. He summoned them all one by one.
3. His idea is to go to each of these debtors one-by-one, and to strike a deal to greatly discount their debt.

And the idea here is one at a time he brings these debtors in.

1. They'll pull out the contract paperwork and he'll renegotiate the whole debt and gives them some amazing deals!
2. They had no real reason to doubt the legitimacy of this deal.
  - a. This was the manager of the business.
  - b. It is kind of like your loan officer refinancing your house at a lower interest rate.
3. His plan is ingenious! He reduces the debt so they're all indebted to him. They are now obligated to return the favor.
  - a. In Jewish society, if somebody did something for you, you did something for them.
  - b. If somebody put on a luncheon, you put on a luncheon for them.
  - c. If they put on a banquet for you, you put on a banquet for them.
  - d. It was the way society went and if somebody did a huge favor for you, you owed them a huge favor.
4. Since they have this great obligation to him because of his great generosity they all owe him big time and he's going to claim that when he leaves this master.

#### IV. The Praise v8a

*8 And his master praised the unrighteous manager because he had acted shrewdly;*

Here is the shocker of the story.

1. The master commended the unrighteous steward.
2. And he has just embezzled his master out of a fortune.

He praised the unrighteous steward

1. He didn't praise him for being wasteful, irresponsible, or for being a thief.
2. He praised him because he had acted shrewdly.
3. He found an opportunity and took advantage of it.

He is praised for his quick thinking and his shrewdness.

#### V. The Point v8b-15

Don't miss the point!

1. The point is not: connive, deceive, and embezzle to get ahead in this life
2. Pad your pocket for your future by any means necessary.

The point of this parable is unfolded for us in the following verses.

- **Saints should be as shrewd for eternity as sinners are for the temporal. V8b**

*for the sons of this age are more shrewd in relation to their own kind than the sons of light.*

1. Sinners are more shrewd than saints.
2. The sons of this age have always been concerned about their worldly temporal earthly future because that's all they have and that is all they desire.
3. If we made plans for eternity like we do for the earthly, we would be dangerous
4. If we invested in eternity like we do in the earthly, we would be dangerous
5. If we worked as hard for eternity as we do for the earthly, we would be dangerous!

- **Eternal investments last for eternity whereas temporal investments only last for time. V9**

*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. We hear over and over again, prepare for your future.

2. Build up that nest-egg, that retirement, that 401-K...for what though?

3. John MacArthur said, “*Maybe you enjoy it for five years and then you hit 70 and you can't see like you could see, and you can't hear like you could hear, and you can't taste anything and who cares? Maybe you could buy the car of your dreams, but they take your license away.*”

4. What if we worked as hard to invest in our eternal reward as our earthly retirement

5. John Piper's Seashells story...

*Three weeks ago, we got word at our church that Ruby Eliason and Laura Edwards had both been killed in Cameroon. Ruby was over eighty. Single all her life, she poured it out for one great thing: to make Jesus Christ known among the unreached, the poor, and the sick. Laura was a widow, a medical doctor, pushing eighty years old, and serving at Ruby's side in Cameroon. The brakes give way, over the cliff they go, and they're gone — killed instantly.*

*And I asked my people: was that a tragedy? Two lives, driven by one great vision, spent in unheralded service to the perishing poor for the glory of Jesus Christ — two decades after almost all their American counterparts have retired to throw their lives away on trifles in Florida or New Mexico. No. That is not a tragedy. That is a glory.*

*I tell you what a tragedy is. I'll read to you from Reader's Digest what a tragedy is. “Bob and Penny . . . took early retirement from their jobs in the Northeast five years ago when he was 59 and she was 51. Now they live in Punta Gorda, Florida, where they cruise on their thirty foot trawler, playing softball and collecting shells.”*

*That's a tragedy. And people today are spending billions of dollars to persuade you to embrace that tragic dream.*

6. Matt 6:19-20 *"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.*

7. You can't take it with you when you go, but you can invest it where you are going and cash it in when you get there.

**• If we are not faithful with material resources we cannot claim or expect faithfulness with spiritual resources. V10-12**

*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. This is a stewardship.

- a. You don't even own what you think you own.
- b. Hag 2:8 *The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, declares the Lord of hosts.*
- c. Everything you have is a stewardship, not just the money you give to God, not just what you put in the church.
- d. Everything you have belongs to God. It is all to be used for his glory.

2. People who can't trust God with their \$\$, claim to trust him with their eternal souls. What?!

3. If you're sinful in the use of your money, who then is going to entrust to you the true riches?

- **You will serve God or you will serve money, but you will not and cannot serve both. V13**

*13 No servant 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."*

A. W. Pink wrote this: *"These two are diametrically opposed, God and money. One commands you to walk by faith, the other to walk by sight. One to be humble, the other to be proud. One to set your affection on things above, the other to set them on the things that are on the earth. One to look at the things that are unseen and eternal, the other to look at the things that are seen and temporal; one to have your conversation in heaven, the other to cleave to the dust; one to be careful for nothing, the other to be all anxiety. One to be content with such things as you have, the other enlarge your desires. One to be ready to distribute, the other to withhold; one to look at the things of others, the other to look at only one's own things; one to seek happiness in the Creator, the other to seek happiness in the creature. Is it not plain," he says, "You can't serve two such masters."*

- **Your response to this message will reflect your heart v14**

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

1. Lovers of money don't like this.
2. Are you a lover of money?
3. 1 Timothy 6:7-10 *For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. 8 If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content. 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.*

- a. What is the definition of loving money?
- b. We need to be very careful!

2. If you want to pour your money into this world and plow for your fortune here and pad your future here, if you want to do that then you're not going to like sermons like this.
3. So, what is your response? Your response will reflect your heart.

- **What impresses men on earth disgusts God in heaven v15**

*15 And He said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves in the sight of men, but God knows your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men is detestable in the sight of God.*

*"Be Thou my vision, riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise, Thou my inheritance now and always. Thou and Thou only first in my heart, high king of heaven, my treasure Thou art."*