

c. Serve God, not materialism (v.13)

- 1) Jesus made it clear that serving God and serving mammon or materialism are opposites. If we love the material things of this world, we do not truly love the God of eternity. Life is either about pleasing God or pleasing self.
- 2) It is impossible to serve BOTH God and materialism.
- 3) Remember the words of (1 Timothy 6:7) "For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out." We will leave behind all that we store up on this earth.
- 4) Where are you laying up the most treasures? One way that we can lay up treasures in heaven is by giving to missions to help spread the Gospel.

d. Adjust your values (v.14-15)

- 1) The Pharisees who were covetous or literally lovers of money heard what Jesus said, and they scoffed at His words.
- 2) Note what Jesus said to them in verse 15. He reminded them that God knows man's hearts. We cannot hide our heart attitudes from God.
- 3) The things that men highly esteem (e.g., money, fame, possessions) are an abomination in the sight of God. They are foul, putrid and offensive to God.
- 4) God wants us to adjust our values. Invest in reaching the souls of men with the Gospel and God will reward you eternally.

Conclusion: How much are you investing in eternity? If that has not been part of your investments, will you begin doing so today? Give to God's work in your local church. Give to missions. You can also give of your time and your talents. Remember, all that you gain for self in this world will be lost in eternity.

Song: Have I Done My Best - 368

Investing in Eternity

4 July 2021 AM – Luke 16:1-15 – Parables21 – Scott Childs

Introduction: Somebody defined money as, "an article which may be used as a universal passport to everywhere except heaven and as a universal provider of everything except happiness." (Quoted by Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, p.238). Money is not bad; we need it to purchase necessities. Yet the Scriptures tell us that the love of money is the root of all evil. The Lord wants Christians to use money wisely. We are not to serve money or live for it, but we are to use it prudently.

Having just told the parable of the Prodigal son who wasted his entire inheritance (Luke 15:11-32), Jesus then spoke this parable about investing money. He addressed it to His disciples (v.1), but the Pharisees who love money also heard it (v.14). Read Luke 16:1-15.

Transition: This parable is one of the most difficult to understand of Jesus' parables, but once understood, it has in it a valuable lesson for us to learn. As we look at this parable, I want us to note the illustration, the commendation and the application.

1. The Illustration of a Wise Investment (v.1-7)

a. The steward had been wasteful

- 1) We do not know what he had done wrong. Jesus said he had wasted his boss's goods. Later (v.8) he is called an unjust steward (manager). His waste, whatever it was, was not the right thing for him to do.
- 2) His boss now calls the manager into account and terminates his job (v.2).
- 3) He can see that he has a big problem (v.3). He did not want to dig as a farmer to till the soil. He was ashamed to beg for his food. He needed friends that would help him.

b. The steward invested wisely

- 1) He devised a wise plan to gain friendship with the debtors of his boss (v.4).
- 2) I do not believe he further cheated his boss by dishonestly decreasing the debts. The lord would never have commended him for adding to his previous failures.
- 3) He did, however, call each debtor in and decreased his

debt. The only explanation of this that makes sense to me is that he forfeited his commission on each of their debts. High commissions or usury on such debts was common. This is similar to the commissions the publicans charged when they levied taxes.

- 4) By forfeiting his commission (which he would not get anyway since he lost his job), those in debt would befriend him, and they would honour the boss's kindness.
- 5) This manager wisely invested (or gave up) his commission that he was about to lose anyway to gain friends and to bring honour to the boss whom they thought was being very generous. He used what he would lose to gain that which would last.

2. The Commendation of a Wise Investment (v.8)

a. **The lord commended the steward**

- 1) It is impossible to know for sure if "the lord" is his boss or the Lord Jesus.
- 2) The wording in the first half of the verse sounds like the boss was commending him, but the second half of the verse sounds more it was the Lord Jesus.

b. **The steward had acted wisely**

- 1) Either way, he was commended for acting wisely by investing what had been his to make lasting friends.
- 2) He had forfeited his own profit to make friends.
- 3) Sometimes the children of the world (unbelievers) use their money in wiser ways for their earthly futures than the children of light (believers) do for their eternal future.
- 4) Thus, the steward was commended for his wise investment as he sacrificed his commission to gain friends and please the boss.

3. The Application of a Wise Investment (v.9-15)

a. **Invest in eternity (v.9)**

- 1) Jesus told His disciples to use their money to make friends in this world so that when they fail, they may receive them into their eternal dwellings. What does this confusing verse mean?
- 2) Thomas Constable explains it this way. "They should

spend their money to make friends who would welcome them into the kingdom and heaven when the disciples died. In other words, disciples should spend their money to bring others to faith in Jesus and so secure a warm reception into heaven."

- 3) On another occasion, Jesus said, (Matthew 6:19-20) "*Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.*"
- 4) Unbelievers invest for their earthly future; we must invest for our eternal future.
- 5) G. Campbell Morgan tells this story. "Many years ago I remember in the home of a very wealthy man, who was a Church member and a Christian, one morning at Family Prayers he was eloquent and tender as he prayed for the salvation of the heathen, and for the missionaries. He was startled beyond measure when the prayer was over, one of his boys, a lad of ten, said to him, "Dad, I like to hear you pray for the missionaries." He answered, "I am glad you do my boy." And the boy replied. "But do you know what I was thinking when you were praying, if I had your bank book, I would answer half your prayers!"
- 6) It is easy to talk and pray, but how much of your money are you using to invest in eternity?

b. **Be faithful with what you have (v.10-12)**

- 1) Those who are faithful in little things can be trusted with much. Those who cannot be trusted with a little cannot be trusted with a lot either (v.10).
- 2) Jesus said that if we have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon (i.e., earthly possessions), we cannot expect God to commit to our trust the true riches in eternity (v.11).
- 3) If we have not been faithful with things belonging to others, why would God give us things of our own (v.12)?
- 4) You may not have much, but you **CAN** be faithful with what you have.