

Foothills Christian Assembly Sermon April 12, 2020
Luke 16: 1 – 13 “Parable of the Shrewd Servant – Part 3”

1 He also said to His disciples: "There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and an accusation was brought to him that this man was wasting his goods. 2 So he called him and said to him, 'What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.' 3 Then the steward said within himself, 'What shall I do? For my master is taking the stewardship away from me. I cannot dig; I am ashamed to beg. 4 I have resolved what to do, that when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.' 5 So he called every one of his master's debtors to him, and said to the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' 6 And he said, 'A hundred measures of oil.' So 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?' So he said, 'A hundred measures of wheat.' And he said to him, 'Take your bill, and write eighty.' 8 So the master commended the unjust steward because he had dealt shrewdly. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light. 9 And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon, that when you fail, they may receive you into an everlasting home. 10 He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much. 11 Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? 12 And if you have not been faithful in what is another man's, who will give you what is your own? 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."

I. Introduction

- a. On the cross, weighed down with hell's anchor, made by His Father to be sin, Jesus the spotless Lamb, cried, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" Alone, all alone, rejected by His Father, He suffered and suffered and suffered, without comfort or relief. Behold your God on the cross afresh today, dear Christians. There, we hear of His inner misery: "My heart is like wax; It has melted within Me." At His Father's command, the full storms of Hades battered His beautiful soul made ugly beyond measure with sin, with all the reserved wrath of Creation's Judge focused down upon Him, an endless flood of lonely crushing. Spurgeon wrote, "Our blessed Lord experienced a terrible sinking and melting of soul. ... Deep depression of spirit is the most grievous of all trials; all besides is as nothing. Well might the suffering Saviour cry to his God, "Be not far from me," for above all other seasons a man needs his God when his heart is melted within him because of heaviness. Believer, come near the cross this morning, and humbly adore the King of glory as having once been brought far lower, in mental distress and inward anguish, than any one among us; and mark his fitness to become a faithful High Priest, who can be touched with a feeling of our infirmities."¹
- b. Brothers and sisters, as we come to our text today, let us all first go back to the cross again, remembering Jesus our elder brother's unfaltering generosity, faithfulness and love, contemplating His lonely, bottomless suffering- the cup He

¹ Spurgeon, C. H. (1896). [*Morning and evening: Daily readings*](#). London: Passmore & Alabaster.

drank down in solitude, an ocean of misery and death, for you, for me, for His Father's glory. Because He drank the cup of endless woe, we now drink the Cup of endless Joy in Him. And now, today, we celebrate with hearts lifted up, with forgiven souls, reaching up to God once again, loving Him because He first loved us, saying with all gratitude, "HE IS RISEN! HE REIGNS! NEVER TO DIE AGAIN!" Only our loving gratitude to God (that great Spirit-wrought gift!) can sustain a life of generosity and faithfulness to the end.

- c. In verse 8, our Lord states the moral of this parable: "...the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light." At that time around AD 30, those outside the Kingdom of God, those considered sinners by the Pharisees, were more careful, diligent and active in securing their temporary, physical livelihood than the "sons of light" were in advancing the Kingdom of God. Jesus shames the Pharisees by making it clear they love God less than sinners love their money. And, as we've considered in past sermons, our generation in AD 2020 has also earned this rebuke. The slumbering Bride loves Her comfort more than Her King, while the diligence of sinners shows they love their money more than the Church loves Her Lord. And, we discussed how this coronavirus pandemic is being used by our Lord to shake His Bride unto repentance, to awaken and return to Him with pure hearts of grateful devotion.
 - d. Last week, in v9, we saw how **generosity** with the wealth of this world displays our love and worship toward God. As we peered deeper, we saw God's matchless generosity beneath, around and over us as we walk as His stewards, under the shadow of His almighty love.
 - e. In v9-13, our Lord teaches some specific applications of the parable of the shrewd servant.
 - i. V9 – Steward God's resources *Generously* – Last week
 - ii. V10 – 12 – Steward God's resources *Faithfully* - today
 - iii. V13 – Steward God's resources *Lovingly* – next week
- II. Steward God's Resources Faithfully v10-12
- a. Faithfulness defined (the Greek word):
 - i. Trusty, faithful
 - 1. of persons who show themselves faithful in the transaction of business, the execution of commands, or the discharge of official duties
 - 2. one who kept his pledged faith, worthy of trust
 - 3. one that can be relied on
 - ii. Easily persuaded
 - 1. believing, confiding, trusting
 - 2. in the NT one who trusts in God's promises
 - a. one who is convinced that Jesus was raised from the dead
 - b. one who has become convinced that Jesus is the Messiah and author of salvation
 - iii. Note this Greek word carries both trusting in Christ and being trustworthy. Faith in Christ: essential to faithfulness.

- b. Faithfulness: A character trait independent of the situation
 - i. V10 “He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much.”
 - ii. Faithfulness, flowing from faith (union with Christ), is an ever-present expression of our love and gratitude unto Him, in every moment. God-wrought faithfulness wavers not by day or by night. Unlike the shifting sands of self-based efforts, Spirit-gifted trustworthiness rises as surely as the tide of God’s love in our forgiven and grateful souls. Similarly, unfaithfulness, being “unjust” is a persistent character trait, always present. We don’t have a little soul switch to click back and forth between faithfulness and unfaithfulness.
 - 1. Bock “Character is character whether one is dealing with little things or larger issues. ...What one is, one is. ... All of one’s activities matter, for they reveal the nature of one’s character. Whether the area of responsibility is big or little has no bearing from a moral standpoint. Selfishness in little things reveals one’s character and can indicate how big areas will be handled.”²
 - iii. The temptation is to believe we can be sloppy in our habits with little things (making the bed, cleaning the room, etc) while maintaining the ability to be diligent and faithful with the big things (relationship with God and others, our hearts, our speech, our behavior, our eternal souls, God’s Word, the Kingdom of God). Furthermore, this text assumes we know the difference between that which is “least” and that which is “much” – yet, even this wisdom and discernment is lost when we mistakenly believe God doesn’t care about that which is “least”. For example, we end up believing worldly wealth is a big thing, but verse 11 shows it is amongst “what is least”.
- c. Faithfulness: Greatly tested by money
 - i. V11 “Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?”
 - ii. Again, “unrighteous mammon” is not that which is gained via unrighteous actions. Rather, it is simply physical wealth of this world, so tied into all the unrighteous actions of fallen men. It is worldly wealth.
 - iii. By extension from verse 10, this worldly wealth is amongst that which is least. So, the first way we are unfaithful with worldly wealth is to mis-categorize it. Think of it: all the time and effort we spend to get transient wealth while ignoring God and our eternal souls.
 - 1. Mk 8:36 “For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?”
 - iv. So, to be faithful with worldly wealth, step 1 is to rightly prioritize our physical resources as amongst that which “is least”. Mammon can never be included in the “true riches.” But, when we spend worldly wealth by

² Bock, D. L. (1996). [Luke: 9:51–24:53](#) (Vol. 2, p. 1335). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

investing it into the Kingdom of Christ, it becomes that which is much, true riches enduring forever. Learn to enjoy spending worldly wealth on God's Kingdom for His glory.

1. 1 Corinthians 3: 11 – 15 “For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. 14 If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.”
- v. This verse also contains a warning. If you worship worldly wealth, your future rewards are lost, and your soul may be in grave jeopardy. This worship of worldly wealth can come out as both greedy, miserly hoarding for self and greedy, wasteful spending for self. Idolatry turns money into a big thing. When your heart is sick like this, and you live like this, you need to hear Christ's warning: “who will commit to your trust the true riches”? What if much of your work is burned up and suffered as loss as you transition into glory? Or worse, what if you are forfeiting your soul as you try to gain worldly wealth?
- vi. Bock “There are things greater than money, but if one cannot handle money, who is willing to let that one administer greater riches? The point here is that being faithful in a small thing like money demonstrates that one is ready to handle more important items, “the true things,” ...The one who commits such true future riches to people is God, and the reference pictures future reward for faithful service.”³
- d. Faithfulness: Greatly tested by being a steward
 - i. V12 “And if you have not been faithful in what is another man's, who will give you what is your own?”
 - ii. The disciples needed to understand they were being entrusted with a stewardship. We need to understand this as well. How do you handle the possessions of others entrusted to you? Are you more or less careful than you would be with your own possessions?
 1. 1 Cor 4:1,2 “Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. 2 Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.”
 - iii. In context, Jesus is the Man Who owns all things. He has received all “the nations for His inheritance, and the ends of the earth for His possession.” (Ps 2:8) So, the key question is, “How does your love for Christ impact how you spend His resources?” Herein lies the connection between our

³ Bock, D. L. (1996). [Luke: 9:51–24:53](#) (Vol. 2, pp. 1335–1336). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

love for Christ and our faithfulness to Him with His resources. And, thus, Jesus gives up opportunities to express our love for Him and store up treasures in heaven by how we use all the resources He has given us.

1. Bock “If one cannot care in this life for what God has given, how can one expect anything from God in the life to come?... This earthly life is a God-given stewardship for which one is responsible. It is a preparation for life to come and in fact helps determine how much the person will possess in the age to come.”⁴
- e. We love Him because He first loved us. Our greatest need is to have Jesus Christ always as our First Love. Let us cry out to God for pure hearts, untainted by any love for His gifts, but rather flowing full and clear as fountains from His ocean of love.
 - i. Spurgeon “Come in, O strong and deep love of Jesus, like the sea at the flood in spring tides, cover all my powers, drown all my sins, wash out all my cares, lift up my earth-bound soul, and float it right up to my Lord’s feet, and there let me lie, a poor broken shell, washed up by His love, having no virtue or value; and only venturing to whisper to Him that if He will put His ear to me, He will hear within my heart faint echoes of the vast waves of His own love which have brought me where it is my delight to lie, even at His feet forever.”⁵

III. Questions to know, love and obey God

⁴ Bock, D. L. (1996). [Luke: 9:51–24:53](#) (Vol. 2, p. 1336). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

⁵ Spurgeon, C. H. (1896). [Morning and evening: Daily readings](#). London: Passmore & Alabaster.