

PARABLE OF THE DISHONEST MANAGER

Luke 16:1–13

The Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard all these things, and they ridiculed him. [v.14]

In this parable, Jesus reminds his disciples that how they live on earth matters for eternity. As stewards of all that he entrusts to us, we will one day be required to give an account. At the same time, our Lord delivers a sharp rebuke to the Pharisees, “who were lovers of money” [v14]. They understood the parable, but responded with scorn.



Paul Vos, The Tax Collector (1543)

The parable concerns a steward who neglected his master’s accounts. When the master learns the truth, he demands a final account before releasing the man. In despair the steward considers his options. Finally, he decides to use his authority while it is still his. Going to each of his master’s debtors, he offers each one a great discount on what they owe. Discovering these last-minute deals, the master praises his dishonest servant for being clever. The debtors won’t forget the favor and in return will give him room and board.

Despite his sin, the dishonest man deserves praise for using resources he will soon lose to secure a future home. Jesus then says, *“For the sons of this age are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than the sons of light.”* [v8] Followers of Christ can forget their role as his stewards here on earth. We own nothing, and our true home is Heaven! {Mat. 25:34} While we still have them, shouldn’t we be using our worldly possessions to benefit others for the cause of Christ?

“And if you have not been faithful in that which is another’s, who will give you that which is your own?”, Jesus asks [v12]. In the Parable of the Talents, we observe the downfall of a servant who didn’t love his master and refused to serve him. Jesus also asks, *“If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches?”* [v11] God blessed Job, Abraham and Solomon with great wealth, which by itself cannot be evil. However, an overwhelming desire for possessions above all else can be a trap. As for ‘true riches’, Jesus taught, *“Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.”* [Mat. 6:24]

Jesus often taught that the things of this world will quickly pass away. But Jesus came into the world to save us from sin. So, when we as Kingdom Disciples squander what He has given us, in love our Lord offers forgiveness and restoration. He also provides wisdom to avoid the grave error described in the next parable found in Luke 16:19–31, *Lazarus and the Rich Man*.



Return of the Prodigal Son, Pompeo Batoni

Evening Lesson, Wednesday, May 1, 2019