

- **Luke 16 – The Honest But Astute Manager Part 2 – Study Guide**

- **Study Guide**

- **I. Definitions of Key Words**

- **Parable:** A **figure of speech** defined as a "**likeness developed into action**". It uses physical, everyday scenarios to illustrate spiritual truths regarding the **coming earthly kingdom** of Jesus Christ.
- **Figure of Speech:** A deviation from standard language used by God as a "**stop sign**" to grab the reader's attention and highlight what **He deems important**.
- **Mystery of the Kingdom:** New revelations regarding the **earthly kingdom** that were **hidden in the Old Testament** but revealed by Jesus to His followers.
- **Shrewdness (Astuteness):** The ability to act with **strategic foresight** and practical wisdom, especially in managing resources for future benefit.
- **Unrighteous Wealth:** Worldly riches or "money" which, while often misused, are to be managed wisely by the "sons of light" to benefit others and secure eternal standing.

- **II. Expansion of Key Points**

- 1. The Nature and Purpose of Parables**

Parables are not merely simple stories for the masses; they were designed to **reveal truth to a "few"** (the called) while **obscuring it from those "outside"**. Understanding them is not optional because Jesus spoke the majority of His ministry in this format. A critical rule of interpretation is to seek the **one main truth** rather than ascribing symbolic meaning to every ancillary detail, which often dilutes the message.

- 2. The Shrewdness of the Unrighteous**

In the parable of the dishonest manager, the master praises the manager not for his fraud, but for his **shrewdness and strategic foresight**. The "sons of this age" are often more intelligent in handling their own kind than the "sons of light".

Jesus encourages His disciples to learn from this **natural intelligence**—specifically how to use worldly resources wisely to benefit others and prepare for the future.

3. The Stewardship of Wealth and Influence

The **main truth** of the parable is that believers should be **wise in their use of means, influence, and wealth**. Worldly wealth is a tool; it should be used to "make friends" (invest in others/the brethren) so that when it fails, the steward is welcomed into **eternal dwellings**. Wealth is also a test: if one is unfaithful with "very little" (money), they will not be entrusted with "true riches" (kingdom authority).

4. The Danger of the "Two Masters"

It is impossible to serve both **God and Wealth**. The Pharisees, who were "lovers of money," scoffed at this because they justified themselves before men while their hearts were detestable to God. Mismanagement of wealth is seen as a reflection of one's heart and their fitness for the coming kingdom.

5. Conditionality and Change

The word "**if**" is highlighted as one of the most important words in the Bible, acting as a **conditional clause** for kingdom inheritance. Entrance into and rewards within the kingdom require **repentance (change)** and **obedience**. One should never "assume" they are okay; even the Apostle Paul lived with the awareness that he could be disqualified.

• III. Study Questions

- **Observation:** Why does the speaker refer to figures of speech as "stop signs"?
- **Comprehension:** What is the "one main truth" of the parable of the dishonest manager?
- **Analysis:** In what way was the manager "astute" or "shrewd" even though he was dishonest?
- **Theological Inquiry:** What is the relationship between being faithful in "very little" and being entrusted with "true riches"?
- **Contextual Study:** Why is it dangerous to "jump into" a Bible verse (like Romans 8:1) without looking at the preceding chapters or the surrounding parables?
- **Comparison:** How does the reaction of the Pharisees (Luke 16:14)

contrast with the behavior expected of the "sons of light"?

- **Critical Thinking:** According to the text, what does "repentance" actually mean in the context of the kingdom?

- **IV. Answer Key**

- They signal the reader to **stop and take special notice** because God is highlighting something He deems critically important.
- We should be **wise and resourceful in our use of means, influence, and wealth** to benefit others and prepare for the future.
- He acted with **strategic foresight** by using his remaining time of authority to reduce the debts of others, thereby securing his own future welcome into their homes.
- Faithfulness in worldly wealth (the "little thing") is a **test and reflection** of how a person will handle kingdom responsibilities and true spiritual riches in the age to come.
- Taking verses out of context leads to **misunderstanding**; for example, "no condemnation" in Romans 8 is tied to the context of "dying to sin" in the previous chapters.
- The Pharisees "loved money" and justified themselves before men, whereas the sons of light are called to **use money to serve others** and recognize that God knows the true state of the heart.
- Repentance is **change**; it is a journey of faith and a life of obedience, not just saying "sorry" for a single sin.

- **V. Biblical References within the Sources**

- **Luke 16:1-13:** The Parable of the Dishonest Manager.
- **Luke 16:14-15:** The Pharisees' reaction and Jesus' rebuke.
- **Luke 16:19-31:** The account of Lazarus and the Rich Man.
- **Matthew 13 / Mark 4 / Luke 8:** The purpose of parables and the "mysteries of the kingdom".
- **Deuteronomy 8:18 & 15:7-8:** The purpose of wealth for a practicing Jew (to give God glory and help the needy).
- **Galatians 4:24:** An example of an allegory in Scripture.
- **Romans 8:1** The context of "dying to sin" and "no condemnation".

- **1 Timothy 6:9-10, 17-19:** Instructions regarding wealth and leadership.
 - **1 & 2 Peter:** The theme of suffering in the Christian life.
 - **Hebrews:** Regarding the discipline of sons.
- **VI. Exhortations**
 - **Don't Just Listen, Act:** The purpose of knowledge is **action**. If you understand that wealth is a tool for the kingdom, begin looking for ways to **love and serve the brethren** who are in need.
 - **Examine Your Master:** You cannot serve two masters. Evaluate whether your life revolves around your **bank balance** or your **service to God**.
 - **Value Small Faithfulness:** Do not despise the "small things" of life. Your daily honesty and management of resources are the **job interview for your position in the coming kingdom**.
 - **Embrace Change:** Repentance is a **journey of faith**. Be willing to let the Word of God change you, even if it makes you "unpopular" with the world.
 - **Study the Figures:** Make the study of **figures of speech** a priority so the Bible can "open up in a massive way" and you can understand what your Lord was truly communicating.