

- **Luke 16 – The Honest But Astute Manager Part 3 – Study Guide**

- **Study Guide**

- **I. Definitions of Key Words**

- **Parable:** A **figure of speech** defined as a "**likeness developed into action**". It is designed to deliver a specific **main point and truth** rather than being a story where every minor detail has a symbolic meaning.
- **Mysteries of the Kingdom:** Spiritual truths regarding the **coming earthly kingdom** of Jesus Christ that are revealed to the "few" (disciples) but hidden from the "many".
- **Context:** The essential framework of Scripture consisting of what **precedes and follows** a verse; it is the primary factor in determining the correct meaning and interpretation of any text.
- **Place:** The specific location in the Bible where God has positioned a subject. The "**place**" is divine and essential to understanding why a truth is revealed at a particular time.
- **Astuteness:** Strategic foresight and the wise **utilization of resources** and money to secure a future outcome.
- **Natural Intelligence:** The innate human ability to reason, perceive, and act wisely, which is contrasted with **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**.

- **II. Expansion of Key Points**

- 1. The Purpose and Selection of Parables**

Parables were not intended to make Jesus' message easier for the masses to understand; rather, their purpose was to **reveal mysteries to a "few"** while ensuring the "many" would see but not perceive. This fulfilled the **prophecy of Isaiah**, indicating that those with "dull hearts" and "closed eyes" would hear the words but lack spiritual perception. Understanding these mysteries is a **sovereign grant** from God.

- 2. The Critical Nature of Context and Place**

To understand the parable in Luke 16, one must look at the **contextual flow**

starting from earlier chapters. E.W. Bullinger is cited to emphasize that taking a verse out of context is "nothing less than a crime". A verse isolated from its context can be made to "prove anything," but within its God-given place, it teaches a singular, divine intent.

3. Layers of Understanding in Luke (Chapters 10–15)

The parable of the astute manager (Luke 16) is the culmination of several chapters of teaching:

- **Luke 10-11:** Focuses on the privilege of the disciples, the **Good Samaritan** (mercy/service), and the importance of **persistence in prayer**.
- **Luke 12-13:** Warns against **greed**, encourages seeking the kingdom first, and stresses the need for **preparation and repentance** to avoid being locked out of the kingdom.
- **Luke 14-15:** Highlights **service to others** (inviting the poor to feasts) and the stewardship of **money** (the lost coin and sheep).

4. The Main Lesson of the Astute Manager

The core truth is that followers of Jesus should be **shrewd and resourceful** with their worldly means. The manager was not praised for his dishonesty but for his **foresight**—using his current position to ensure a "home" for the future. Similarly, believers are to use their resources to **serve the brethren**, which impacts their standing and **"eternal dwellings"** in the coming kingdom.

5. Service Over Self-Interest

True discipleship involves **giving up possessions** and focusing on the needs of others rather than self-blessing. The account of **Lazarus and the Rich Man** (placed immediately after) serves as a warning: the rich man's lack of generosity led to his exclusion from a place of comfort, while the poor man was comforted in an **"Ionian dwelling place"**.

• III. Study Questions

- **Recall:** What happens to the "many" who hear parables but have not been "granted" understanding?
- **Analysis:** Why does the speaker warn against becoming overly dependent on technology/AI in the context of spiritual understanding?
- **Theological Inquiry:** According to E.W. Bullinger, what is the danger of interpreting a verse "apart from its context"?

- **Application:** How does the "Good Samaritan" parable in Luke 10 provide a "layer of understanding" for the manager in Luke 16?
 - **Observation:** In Luke 14, what specific group of people does Jesus say we should invite to a reception, and why?
 - **Synthesis:** What is the "motivation" provided in the parable of the astute manager for being wise with resources today?
 - **Reflection:** According to Luke 17, what should be our attitude after we have obeyed all of God's commands?
- **IV. Answer Key**
 - They keep on hearing but do **not understand**, and they keep on seeing but do **not perceive** because their hearts have become dull.
 - Dependency on technology can cause people to **lose their natural intelligence** and spiritual astuteness.
 - It can be made to **"prove anything"** and interpreted as something completely foreign to its original intent.
 - Both deal with the **utilization of resources** (monetary or otherwise) to provide benefit and housing for others.
 - The **poor, crippled, lame, and blind**, because they cannot repay you; your reward will instead come at the **"resurrection of the righteous"**.
 - The impact our current actions have on our **standing and "eternal dwellings"** in the coming earthly kingdom.
 - We should say, **"We are unworthy slaves; we have done only that which we ought to have done"**.
 - **V. Biblical References within the Sources**
 - **Matthew 13:10-17:** The purpose of parables and the prophecy of Isaiah.
 - **Luke 10:9, 21, 23:** The 70 sent out, the kingdom at hand, and the privilege of the disciples.
 - **Luke 11:11-13, 28:** Giving and the importance of obedience.
 - **Luke 12:15, 20-21, 30-34:** Warnings against greed, storing treasure for self, and seeking the kingdom.
 - **Luke 13:24-29:** Assumptions about entering the kingdom and the need for preparation.

- **Luke 14:12-14, 33-35:** Inviting the poor, giving up possessions, and the metaphor of salt.
 - **Luke 15:** The lost sheep, the lost coin, and the wasteful son.
 - **Luke 16:1-13:** The Parable of the Dishonest but Astute Manager.
 - **Luke 16:19-31:** Lazarus and the Rich Man.
 - **Luke 17:7-10:** The parable of the unworthy slave.
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- **VI. Exhortations**
 - **Develop Kingdom Vision:** View your life through "**kingdom glasses**," recognizing that your service to others today is a direct investment in your future reward.
 - **Prioritize Others:** Shift your mindset from "**me, me, me**" to "**you, you.**" Do not come to the assembly to be served, but to seek out those with great needs.
 - **Be Resourceful:** Use your **natural intelligence** and worldly resources astutely to help the brethren. Do not "sell out" to the world, but be wise in how you use what you gain from it.
 - **Avoid Assumptions:** Do not assume your preparation is correct simply because of your background or traditions. Ensure your faith is evidenced by **actions and obedience** in the here and now.
 - **Practice Humility in Obedience:** Even when you are perfectly obedient, remember you have only done your duty. **Go "over and above"** in your generosity and love.