

## Invest Wisely Now

(Luke 16:1-13)

### Introduction

1. [Series] Resonate: Tune into Jesus' frequency to experience the power of the gospel & impact the culture.
2. Jesus teaches about Kingdom life expressed in how we manage wealth & resources.

### A good steward is shrewd [Luke 16:1-8]

1. [1] A rich man's financial manager is not doing a good job of earning, saving, spending or investing his boss' money.
  - a. [2] The boss wants to audit & fire him.
  - b. [3] The manager is too soft to dig, too proud to beg, so he comes up with a plan.
  - c. [4-7] Before he's fired, he will use his work authority to give massive discounts, hoping his favors will create friendships & job opportunities.
  - d. [8a] Jesus' twist in the story: The master commends the manager's "shrewdness."
2. Jesus reframes how we see our wealth/possessions: Stewardship.
  - a. "Manager" is also translated as "steward", a significant word for Christians (cf. 1 Pet 4:10).
  - b. Steward: One entrusted with what belongs to another, to manage, use & distribute on behalf of that person.
  - c. As the manager is simply a steward of the rich man's wealth, we are stewards of God's.
  - d. When we know all we have is not ours, but His, it changes how we treat & manage our resources.
  - e. So we spend on things we need, save some for a rainy day, give to the purposes of God & the gospel, help the poor & needy with generosity/grace, & make investments for the future.
3. What makes a good steward? Shrewdness.
  - a. Prudent, clever, wise, & discerning regarding the use of resources.
  - b. [8b] Non-Christians are good at this; Christians are often naive and/or irresponsible.
  - c. Do you understand how to make money, spend wisely, save, invest & track money?
  - d. Application: Are you a shrewd steward?
  - e. Like Joseph in Genesis, during the "fat years", we must learn to set aside enough for the "lean years."
  - f. If you just get more money without getting more wisdom, you'll just make the same mistakes.

### Be a shrewd steward so you can be a generous giver [Luke 16:9]

1. Be a good steward so you can leverage your wealth/resources to love & bless people.
  - a. [9a] "I tell you." Jesus stresses the importance of the application: Be shrewd so you can be generous.
  - b. People respond to those who are generous & are repelled by those who are selfish/stingy.
  - c. [9b] God may bless you, not to increase your standard of living, but to increase your standard of giving.
2. Make friends through your wealth
  - a. [Prov 18:24] If you want friends, be friendly. One way that Jesus prescribes is by being generous.
  - b. [9c] Make eternal friendships through generosity.
  - c. Generosity confuses non-Christians with preconceptions about Christians; it's a different take on evangelism.
  - d. Application: Be a shrewd steward so you can be a generous giver.
3. [9b] Motivation: When (not if) wealth will fail you.
  - a. Wealth fails you in this life to provide comfort, acceptance, security.
  - b. Wealth fails you at the end of life: You can't take it with you.
  - c. We can't pay for salvation; it's a gift we receive from God through Jesus.

- d. This life is an opportunity to love people & serve God.

### **What you serve is what you worship [Luke 16:10-13]**

1. [10-12] Be a shrewd, generous, good steward for God, even with what little you have, so that He can entrust you with even more true, spiritual riches in the life to come. How?
  - a. What you serve is what you worship. Use wealth; don't worship it.
  - b. If you pursue wealth & the end goal is not to serve God with it, you worship it, & it will possess & destroy you.
  - c. Wealth is a wonderful tool, but a horrible god.
2. [13] Serve & worship God not money.
  - a. What you serve is what you worship. Use wealth; don't worship it.
  - b. If you pursue wealth & the end goal is not to serve God with it, you worship it, & it will possess & destroy you.
  - c. Wealth is a wonderful tool, but a horrible god.
3. With Christians, there are 2 ways we let wealth mediate between us & God.
  - a. Prosperity theology: If you love God, you'll be rich.
    - i. Error: You're not loving God, but using God to get the god you really care about: wealth.
  - b. Poverty theology: If you love God, you'll be poor.
    - i. Error: The less you have, the closer to God.
    - ii. Truth: You can't get closer to God than through the grace of Christ.
  - c. Having more or less stuff doesn't bring you closer to God; only Jesus brings God near.
  - d. Jesus was both rich & poor, so it can't be that being one is better than the other (cf. 2 Cor 8:9).
  - e. Whether rich or poor, it's about being a good steward of God's stuff by worshiping God not money.

### **Conclusion**

1. How we deal with wealth is an indicator on the dashboard of our lives to reveal our hearts.
  - a. Your treasure always goes to where your heart is (cf. Luke 12:34).
  - b. If you worship money, you'll be greedy, stingy, hoard & covetous. If you worship Jesus with your money, you'll be a shrewd steward so that you can be a generous giver in the name of Christ.
2. Challenge: Do you really believe that Jesus is a better God than money?
  - a. In wealth, we look for our identity, security & comfort, but Jesus is the only One that gives true identity, security & comfort.
3. Challenge: If Jesus set your budget, how would it be different?
  - a. Write down some things that need to change.