

# What we can learn from the Unjust Steward – Luke 16:1-13

By Brent Paschall – [brent@brentnrachel.com](mailto:brent@brentnrachel.com)

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- I. Introduction
  - a. One of the strangest of Jesus' parables
    - i. A wicked man does wickedly and is praised for it
    - ii. No judgment
    - iii. No separation of the righteous and the wicked
    - iv. The parable itself ends with no word spoken against the villain of the story
    - v. Even his victims praise him
  - b. One of the most misunderstood parables
    - i. Who is the unfaithful steward?
      - 1. Hebrew teachers?
      - 2. Paul the Apostle?
      - 3. Judas Iscariot? Jesus?
      - 4. All of these have been suggested - "Notes on the Parables of our Lord", by Robert Trench
    - ii. What is the lesson?
      - 1. Cheat others to gain earthly advantage?
      - 2. Seek influence with the high and mighty in the world?
      - 3. If you gain money through wickedness, use some of it to help others, and you can keep the rest?
      - 4. No application for us today?
        - a. If you are like me, you have never heard a sermon on this parable
    - iii. Who is the audience
      - 1. This we know – the disciples – v. 1
- II. Key thought: This parable has several important lessons for all disciples of Jesus
- III. What happened – (v. 1-8)
  - a. The steward got caught wasting his masters goods
  - b. He was fired, but had to give an account
    - i. Turning over the books to his master
  - c. His plans
    - i. Prospects dim
    - ii. One advantage, he still can act on his masters' behalf
  - d. His actions
    - i. He conspired with the debtors of his master in order to cheat his master
    - ii. They had received X amount of goods which they still owed payment on.



themselves in the ways of the Lord which will equip them for an eternity with Christ?

- d. Typical person spends hundreds of thousands of dollars and thousands of hours of their free time over a lifetime on recreation, entertainment and luxuries
  - e. How many are willing to do the same for eternal riches?
2. Examples – Spiritual
- a. Satanist on airplane fasting and praying for the downfall of Christian leaders
    - i. Where are the Christians fasting and praying for the spiritual wellbeing of the church and its leaders?
  - b. Followers of the Muslim faith willing to kill to promote their beliefs
    - i. Where are the Christians who willing to die to promote their beliefs?
  - c. Followers of denominations exceeding all the bounds of scripture in their desire to serve God
    - i. Where are the Christians who are doing everything in their power within the bounds of Scripture in their desire to serve God?
- b. Lesson 2: Temporary riches should be invested to produce eternal benefits – v. 9
- i. The children of the world make friends of the world through the ungodly use of unrighteous mammon
  - ii. The children of light make friends of God by doing good deeds with the things of this world that they possess – Matt. 25:40; Eph 4:28
  - iii. Two kinds of riches
    - 1. True and false – v. 11
    - 2. Temporary and eternal
      - a. An eternal weight of glory – 2 Cor 4:17-18
      - b. Lay up treasures in heaven – Matt. 6:19-21
      - c. Rich toward God
    - 3. 1 Tim 6:17-19
- c. Lesson 3: In no way should Jesus’ disciples engage in underhanded business practices – v. 10
- i. We must be faithful
    - 1. In the most
    - 2. In the least
    - 3. In everything!
  - ii. Otherwise we will not receive our inheritance
    - 1. We will be giving up our birthright for a mess of pottage
    - 2. Will may gain the world but we will lose our soul

- d. Lesson 4: Our handling of our finances reflects our general level of faithfulness, and will have eternal consequences – v. 11-12
- e. Lesson 5: We must choose our master
  - i. Two choices
    - 1. God
    - 2. Mammon
  - ii. Both seek to claim us
  - iii. We cannot serve one without offending the other
    - 1. Their goals and aims are contradictory
    - 2. Their commands are opposed to each other
    - 3. If we try to serve both we will only offend both
    - 4. To be a friend of the world is to be the enemy of God
    - 5. All who desire to live godly will suffer persecution
  - iv. We WILL BE an unfaithful steward either to the world or to God
    - 1. If we act as God would have us act with respect to our money, the world will accuse us of wasting our goods and call us to account at every opportunity. Moreover, we eventually will be dismissed from this world and need to have a plan of how we will maintain ourselves when that happens.
    - 2. If we act as the world would have us with respect to our money, God will accuse us of wasting His goods and call us to account. We will be dismissed. Who will receive us then?

## V. Conclusion

- a. Choose this day whom you will serve
  - i. If you serve the world
    - 1. You have to heap up the things the world values
    - 2. He who dies with the most toys wins
    - 3. But after death?
  - ii. If you serve God
    - 1. You must use the worlds things to accomplish God's purposes
    - 2. Facing the scorn and opposition of the world
    - 3. But being welcomed by divine friends into eternal joy
  - iii. Choose your master, then please your master
- b. INVITATION