

MORNING SERMON OUTLINE

THE PARABLE OF THE UNRIGHTEOUS STEWARD

Luke 16:1-15

Our Lord's Parable of the Unrighteous Steward confronts us with some challenging questions of interpretation. But when these are sorted out, we find our Lord truly challenging us in regard to important issues in our lives. Do we live to serve the "mammon" (wealth) of this world, or do we live to serve Christ and the good of people, using in that service the wealth with which we have been entrusted as stewards.

Do you serve mammon or use mammon to serve the Lord?

1. The story of the wasteful & unrighteous steward – vv.1-8a

The wasteful steward ("prodigal") – vs.1

The reckoning – reports, "You're fired!" – the audit.

The steward's clever scheme.

TWO interpretations

But on either understanding, Jesus calls him "unrighteous" (v.8).

How then, can He also commend him (through the mouth of the Master)?

NOT: "I applaud the clever steward for acting unrighteously."

BUT: "I applaud him for his foresight and acting shrewdly."

Note: Be careful in how you apply parables – for examples:

"The Importunate Widow" (Lk. 18:1-8) is not commending unjust judges, nor the "Master & His Servant" (17:7-10) harsh masters, nor is "the Workers in the Vineyard" (Mt.20:1-6) a lesson in labor-management relations.

2. The point of the parable – vv.8b-13

The parable & our Lord's lesson from it –

a. warns of a coming Audit, in which OUR accounts will not balance;

b. & therefore urges us to take prudent actions in preparation in regard to our attitude toward & use of the wealth which has been entrusted to us.

Points of correspondence (application):

a. The steward was astute in preparing for his (this world) future.

As a "son of this age", he challenges the "sons of light" to be just as astute in the conduct of our affairs.

NOT: Christians should be as sneaky & dishonest in business dealings as many non-Christians.

BUT: We should prepare for the future (God's reckoning) with the same foresight & application that non-Christians show in ordering their worldly affairs.

b. The steward used his master's wealth to secure his future by gaining the gratitude of the debtors he helped.

We also should use worldly wealth ("unrighteous mammon") to a **similar** end. NOTE: "similar" does not = "same"

Think of the needy who may be your welcoming committee in heaven.

How you exercise your stewardship over the wealth God has

entrusted to you reveals your character. Do you need to repent?