



Can God Trust You With His Money? (Luke 16:1-13)

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I. Understanding of Luke 16:1-9

Jesus tells a parable about a man who has a steward that he decides to fire. When the steward finds out about his master's decision, he decides to go to his master's debtors and settle their accounts. Instead of making them pay their full debt, he cuts their debt in half and collects their payments immediately. The master then has money in hand, but more importantly, the steward has made friends for the future by his benevolent act to the debtors. The takeaway of the parable is that disciples should be faithful with the money God has entrusted to them. They must benevolently show kindness to others with their wealth.¹

Luke found no difficulty in urging his readers to prepare themselves for the coming judgment, as the dishonest manager did, by acting "shrewdly." How that shrewdness is to be manifested is, of course, quite different. It is not through dishonesty but in the wise stewardship of possessions (16:9–13).²

II. Understanding of Luke 16:10-13

- A. Worldly wealth does not really belong to the disciples; they hold it in trust from God.³
- B. The faithfulness or lack thereof with which disciples of Jesus Christ handle God's money on earth has an impact as to what they will be entrusted with in relation to heavenly wealth and responsibilities.⁴
- C. You cannot live to gain wealth and live for the glory of God at the same time; you will fail to give God the exclusive loyalty that He demands.⁵
- D. When being faithful to God, money will be your servant for the glory of God and the advancement of His Kingdom.
- E. When being unfaithful to God, money will be your savior for the glory of self and the advancement of your own kingdom.

¹ Douglas Mangum, ed., *Lexham Context Commentary: New Testament*, Lexham Context Commentary (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2020), Lk 16:1–13.

² Robert H. Stein, *Luke*, vol. 24, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 412.

³ I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, *New International Greek Testament Commentary* (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1978), 623.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 622.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 624.

Central Point: The money we think we own is not really ours. It belongs to God and we are no more than stewards of it.⁶ Have you been handling God's money as if it is your own or have you been a good steward over what God has allotted to you? Can God trust you with His money? If He were to come back right now, what would He say to you about how you have been handling His money?

III. Signs you are being faithful with worldly wealth

(1 Thessalonians 4:11-12, Luke 12:13-21, 1 Timothy 6:17-19, 1 John 3:16-18, 3 John 1:5-8, Proverbs 11:25, Proverbs 19:17, 1 Timothy 5:8, 2 Corinthians 9:6-15)

From reading these passages we can conclude that:

- A. You are spending money in such a way that you can richly enjoy it without lacking in taking care of your **bills**, without lacking in take care of your **responsibilities**, without being a burden to others in this life, and without lacking in **giving** to God's Kingdom agenda.
- B. You are saving money in such a way that you are not **hoarding** for this temporal life. You are saving so that you will be able to live your life and have enough to spend, to serve in order to advance God's Kingdom for eternal rewards, and to avoid being a burden to others in this life.
- C. You are serving with money, using it to advance God's kingdom agenda by helping **family members** and **members of the local church and abroad** without keeping them dependent upon your resources.
- D. You are serving with money, using it to fund the **ministers and ministries** of a local church and abroad in ways that advance God's Kingdom agenda.
- E. You are serving with money, using it to help the **meager** in our communities in ways that advance God's Kingdom agenda.

Questions:

1. Is your spending of money leading you to flourish or fail in functioning according to your God-given roles, responsibilities and service?
2. Is your saving of money leading you to flourish or fail in functioning according to your God-given roles, responsibilities and service?
3. Is your serving with money leading you to flourish or fail in functioning according to your God-given roles, responsibilities and service?
4. How are you blessed or burdened by your spending, saving, and serving with money?
5. How are your family and friends blessed or burdened by your spending, saving, and serving with money?

⁶ Leon Morris, *Luke: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 3, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 267.

6. How is your church community blessed or burdened by your spending, saving, and serving with money?
7. What do you need to continue doing in your spending, saving, and serving to flourish in your God-given calling?
8. What do you need to change in your spending, saving, and serving to flourish in your God-given calling?

The moral of the story is: Use your resources to serve people according to God’s biblical guidelines and guardrails because you are God’s manager of everything you have.⁷ It does not belong to you. Believers must use the things of this world (1) to help people come to know Christ and (2) to help believers live in a God-honoring way.⁸ Are you being faithful with what is not your own? Can God trust you with His money? The way you are spending, saving, and serving right now is answering that question.

⁷ Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), Lk 16:9–13.

⁸ Robert James Utley, *The Gospel According to Luke*, vol. Volume 3A, Study Guide Commentary Series (Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International, 2004), Lk 16:11.