

The Proper Use of Money

Lesson #1

Luke 16:1-31

The author of the Gospel of Luke is a gentile doctor and fellow worker with the apostle Paul. (Philemon vs. 24) He said he was doing a *“careful investigation of everything from the beginning”* and that he was writing an *“orderly account”* of that investigation for *“most excellent Theophilus.”* Luke’s stated purpose was *“so that you may know the certainty of the thing you have been taught.”* (Luke 1:2-4)

Using a thematic format, Luke begins with two birth narratives, John the Baptist and Jesus, linking them back to God’s Old Testament covenants and promises. He then moves to a narrative of Jesus’ ministry in the Galilee. Early in the ministry narrative, Luke establishes Jesus’ identity as the Messiah through miracles and witnesses. The climax comes in Luke 9:20 when Peter, on behalf of the twelve disciples, declares Jesus is the Messiah, the Christ.

After that confession of faith by Peter, Jesus revealed to them that he would not be the expected political king but rather *“The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.”* (Luke 9:22)

Then, *“as the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem.”* (Luke 9:51) The section of Luke (9:51 – 19:27) is called the “travel narrative” because Jesus is traveling toward Jerusalem and the cross. In it, Luke portrays Jesus as teacher and rabbi emphasizing the lessons he taught, especially to his disciples, regarding the kingdom of God. In God’s kingdom, money and possessions will be useless, but they can be used now in ways that will bring eternal benefits in the kingdom. So, using his favorite teaching method of parable, we begin with his teaching about a shrewd manager.

Parable of the Shrewd Manager – Luke 16:1-18

Background – Luke 16:1-4

1. To whom is Jesus speaking in this parable? (Luke 16:1a)
2. The main characters are a rich man and the manager of his estate. What is the manager accused of? (Luke 16:1)
3. What did the rich man do about this situation? (Luke 16:2)
4. The manager had a discussion with himself about his future options. Using 16:3 & 4:
 - What options did he rule out and why?

- In thinking through his options, what did he say was his goal?

The Plan – Luke 16:5-7

5. What was the first step in his plan? (Luke 16:5)
6. What was step two? (Luke 16:6 & 7)
7. How do you think his plan helped him meet his goal?

The Lesson – Luke 16:8-13

8. When the manager told his master what he had done, how did the master react? (Luke 16:8a)
9. What observation did Jesus point out about the nature of people? (Luke 16:8b)
10. What did Jesus tell his disciples about “worldly wealth?” (Luke 16:9)
11. Jesus continued by addressing the issue of trust. Using 16:10-12:
 - What did Jesus say about one who proves to be trustworthy when given very little?
 - What about someone who proves to be dishonest in small ways?
 - What was Jesus’ point in this?
12. Jesus concluded by saying, “*No servant can serve two masters.*” Using Luke 16:13:
 - Who are the two masters?

- Why do you think Jesus said that you cannot serve them both?

Using Luke 16:14:

13. When Jesus was teaching his disciples, they rarely seemed to be alone. Apparently, there were also some Pharisees present at this time.
- What did Jesus say about the Pharisees?

- How did the Pharisees react to Jesus' statement?

14. Using Luke 16:15:

- What did Jesus say they try to do?

- What does God think of that?

Warning - Luke 16:14-18

15. Then Jesus spoke about "The Law and the Prophets" (The Torah.) Using 16:16 & 17:

- How long did Jesus say the Law had been proclaimed?

- What about "since that time?"

- How is it being received?

- What did Jesus say about the future of the Law?

16. Jesus ended this teaching with an example of a common practice of the Pharisees that was a misuse of the Law. What did Jesus remind them they were doing? (Luke 16:18)

17. What additional information does Matthew add? (Matthew 19:8 & 9)

18. What did the disciples say to this? (Matthew 19:10)

Parable of the Rich Man - Luke 16:19-31

Background - Luke 16:19-23

19. In Jesus' next parable, he used two men on opposite ends of material wealth. How was the rich man described? (Luke 16:19)

20. What was said about Lazarus? (Luke 16:20-21)

21. The time came for the two men to die. What took place at Lazarus' death? (Luke 16:22a)

22. What about at the rich man's death? (Luke 16:22b, 23)

The Conversation - Luke 16:24-31

23. Following their deaths, Jesus tells of a conversation that took place between the rich man and Abraham. Using 16:24:

- How did the rich man address Abraham?
- What request did he make?
- Why?

24. Using Luke 16:25 & 26:

- In Abraham's reply, how does he address the rich man?

- What does he remind him of during his life?
- What does he say about the “after life?”
- What else does he say about the distance between the rich man and Lazarus?

25. Using Luke 16:27-31:

- What tone of voice does the rich man use in making his second request of Abraham?
- What does he ask?
- What is Abraham’s reply?
- The rich man said, “No, that won’t work!” What does he say will work?
- Notice Abraham’s answer and the key to this parable. How does Abraham end this conversation?