

the unjust steward because he had dealt shrewdly" (Luke 16:8). Jesus is not praising his unrighteous actions. The admiration is for the brilliant planning.

We too have been warned that we do not have much time left for our stewardship. Life is short. It will not last forever. "For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away" (James 4:14). It will not be long before we will have to stand before our Lord and give an account of our stewardship. "And at it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment" (Hebrew 9:27). "So then each of us shall give an account of himself to God" (Romans 14:12).

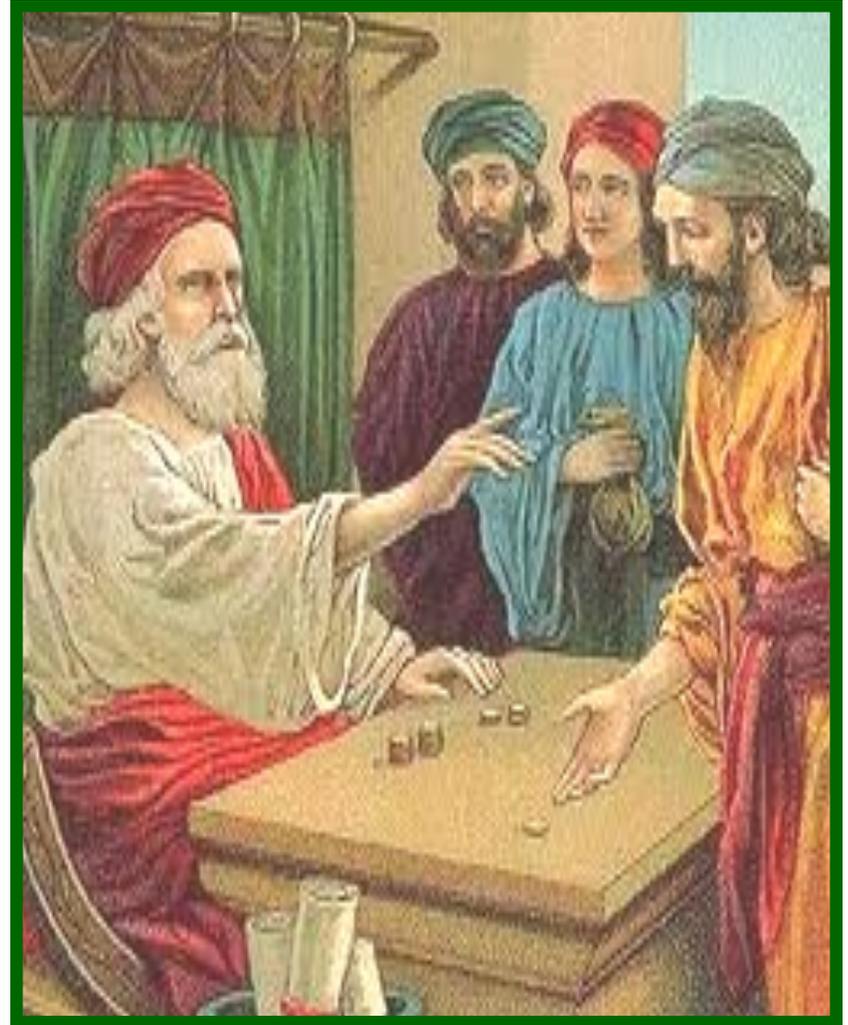
All parables are aimed toward a particular point. They start to break down when they are stretched too far or applied to the wrong point. In essence, Jesus is stating that the ungodly people in this world know how to get the most from worldly things that, truth be told, they do not even own; but the so-called godly people do not know how to get the most from spiritual things. "For the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light" (Like 16:8). The Pharisees were squandering precious resources. There were people in their midst who needed to be brought back to God and they refused to see their value.

If we are to receive praises from God in the Judgment, we need to make the most of the resources that God has given us to our best advantage. "And I say to you, make friends for yourself by unrighteous mammon, that when you fail, they may receive you into an everlasting home" (Like 16:9). The friends of whom Jesus is speaking are not worldly friends, but spiritual friends, for they are awaiting to receive us into an everlasting home. The Pharisees and scribes true problem was that they were too caught up in their current lives. They had lost the proper perspective. They lost sight of the spiritual goal and made a priority of living in the physical realm. "No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon" (Luke 16:13). Something must give. You have to make a choice regarding who you will serve. What will you do with the life God has loaned to you?

** (excerpted from: www.bible.ca)

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The Parable of the Unjust Steward



With the blessings God has granted to each of us comes a varying amount of ability. We each have different talents to use and God expects us to use those abilities well. "As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Peter 4:10).

The Parable of the Unjust Steward

A parable is a short, fictitious story that illustrates a moral attitude or a religious principle. Parables are never meant to be taken for the letter of their word. When taken literally, at face value, the entirety of its meaning is lost.

*In Luke 16:1-14, we read that: "There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and an accusation was brought to him that this man was wasting his goods. So he called him and said to him, 'What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.' Then the steward said to himself, 'What shall I do? For my master is taking the stewardship away from me. I cannot dig; I am ashamed to beg. I have resolved what to do, that when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.' So he called every one of his master's debtors to him, and said to the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' And he said, 'A hundred measures of oil.' So he said to him, 'Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.' Then he said to another, 'And how much do you owe? So he said, 'A hundred measures of wheat.' And he said to him, 'Take your bill, and write eighty.' So the master commended the unjust steward because he had dealt shrewdly. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light. And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon (riches), that when you fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations...No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, also heard all these things, and they derided Him."

*(excerpted from: www.bible-knowledge.com)

** The master in this story is easily recognized as the Lord God. To Him each of us are stewards of God's creation and the blessings God gives to us. When God created the world, He gave mankind dominion over it. "Then God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth'" (Genesis 1:28).

A steward is a fit description of our roles on earth. A steward does not own the things he manages. In the same way God gives us our lives to manage, but our lives and everything we have belongs to God. In Luke 12:42-48, it states that, "And the Lord said, who then is the faithful and wise steward, whom his master will make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of food in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes..."

With the blessings God has granted to each of us comes a varying amount of ability. We each have different talents to use and God expects us to use those abilities well. "As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Peter 4:10). One of the major duties God has given to Christians is the spreading of the gospel. "Let a man consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful" (1 Corinthians 4:1-2).

We naturally expect that a servant entrusted with a master's possessions and given a critical task would be faithful in fulfilling the trust the master placed in the servant. But how many of us are truly faithful stewards of God? Have we not all wasted precious time on the job, time that could have been profitably used in the Master's service? We have all bypassed opportunities that could have brought great profit to our Master. Instead, we often apply our talents toward things that our Master is not interested in. In short, we "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Just like the man in the parable, each one of us are unjust stewards.

The unjust steward did not want to work for a living; he was too lazy to put forth that much effort. Does that not describe you and I? How many of us look for the easiest way out, the way that requires least effort? The unjust steward refused to beg; he had too much pride. Here too most of us find there are things beneath our dignity to do.

Being forewarned that he is about to lose his job, the unjust steward brilliantly provides for himself by making use of his lord's resources. But note carefully that the master does not commend the mismanagement of his possessions. "So the master commended