

# **Investment Strategy for Eternity from a Bad Example**

Luke 16: 1-13

# Living in Eternity's Light

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. <sup>2</sup> Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. <sup>3</sup> For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. <sup>4</sup> When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. (Colossians 3: 1-4)

# Living in Eternity's Light

So we don't look at the troubles we can see now; rather, we fix our gaze on things that cannot be seen. For the things we see now will soon be gone, but the things we cannot see will last forever.

(2 Cor. 4: 18; NLT)

# Only 2 possibilities; 2 mindsets

- above / below
- heaven / earth
- Above: Christ is seated at God's right hand
- Below: Satan's territory
- Above: eternal
- Below: temporary

# Heavenly or Earthly focus determines our ...

- Attitude toward God
- Attitude toward Wealth & Possessions
- Perception of People
- Attitude toward Pleasure & Pain
- Commitment to a Lifestyle of Purity

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# A story which took place ~10 years ago

- Principal in a San Francisco school conducted an experiment ...



Describe this principal in one word

?

Define this word ...

SHREWD

# Shrewdness

- understanding how things work ...
- then leveraging that knowledge ...
- to apply the right force in the right place at the right time ...
- to achieve the desired result(s)

# Parable of Shrewd Manager (Luke 16) has puzzled and stumbled many

- main function of story parables is to “call forth a response” from the hearer
- just like one gets “caught” as the joke is being told, Jesus wanted his original hearers to get “caught” by the story parable ... and to respond
- assume most of the original hearers could identify with the points of reference in the story and were “caught” off guard by the unexpected turn in the story

# Other “bad” examples in Jesus’ parables/teachings

- Parable of the Persistent Widow (Luke 18: 1-8)  
– a judge “who neither feared God nor cared about people”
- Story of the Reluctant Friend at Midnight (Luke 11: 5-8)

# Dishonest manager about to get fired

Jesus told his disciples: “There was a rich man whose manager was accused of wasting his possessions.

So he called him in and asked him, ‘What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your management, because you cannot be manager any longer.’” (Lk. 16: 1-2)

- very rich master: owned lots of land
- manager handles all the affairs of the master; acts on behalf of the master; very trusted person

# Dishonest manager has an “exit strategy”

“The manager said to himself, ‘What shall I do now? My master is taking away my job. I’m not strong enough to dig, and I’m ashamed to beg—I know what I’ll do so that, when I lose my job here, people will welcome me into their houses.’”(Lk. 16: 3-4)

- gracious master: did not ask manager to pay him back, or throw him in jail, only firing him
- asked manager to hand in the “books”; only master and manager know about the firing
- small window of time to execute his plan

# Dishonest manager executes his plan

“So he called in each one of his master’s debtors. He asked the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’

“‘Nine hundred gallons[~ 3,000 liters] of olive oil,’ he replied.

“The manager told him, ‘Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it four hundred and fifty.’

“Then he asked the second, ‘And how much do you owe?’

“‘A thousand bushels[~30 tons] of wheat,’ he replied.

“He told him, ‘Take your bill and make it eight hundred.’” (Lk. 16: 5-7)



# Price of Olive Oil & Wheat THEN and discount given to debtors

## OLIVE OIL

- 3,000 liters from ~150 olive trees;  
approx. worth = 1,000 denarii, less 50% = 500 denarii

## WHEAT

- 30 tons of wheat from ~100 acres of farmland;  
approx. worth = 2,500 denarii, less 20% = 500 denarii
- 1 denarius = day's wage for unskilled laborer

# Manager leveraging his earthly future

- improve his chances of getting another job?
- count on the return of “favors”?

# How does this story end?

- “The rich man had to admire the dishonest rascal for being so shrewd.” (Lk. 16: 8a; NLT)
- The master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly. (Lk. 16: 8a; NIV)

# What is Jesus teaching his disciples?

- “And it is true that the children of this world are more shrewd in dealing with the world around them than are the children of the light.” (Lk. 16: 8b; NLT)
- “For the people of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the people of the light.” (Lk. 16: 8b; NIV)
- “So, you’re not shrewd when it comes to the stock market. But no worries. Compared to the 70-80 years these people have to enjoy what they have gained, let me show you how to invest for eternity so you can enjoy what you’ll gain for billions of years!”

# Jesus' 2<sup>nd</sup> statement

- “Let me show you how to be really shrewd for eternity!”
- “And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth, so that when it fails they may receive you into the eternal dwellings.” (Lk. 16: 9; ESV)
- “Here’s the lesson: Use your worldly resources to benefit others and make friends. Then, when your possessions are gone, they will welcome you to an eternal home. ” (Lk. 16: 9; NLT)

# Jesus' Investment Strategy

- “And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth, so that when it fails they may receive you into the eternal dwellings.” (Lk. 16: 9; ESV)
- “Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, **a treasure in heaven that will never fail**, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. (Luke 12: 33)
- Use money to meet people's needs; that's how we can to have a treasure in heaven

# Jesus' investment strategy for eternity

- “Use your resources to do as much good as you can for the glory of God and the eternal good of others.” - John Piper

# What “caught” you in this parable?

- need to respond immediately



# Lessons from this parable

- We are all managers/stewards
- Invest your assets for eternity, rather than for this life only
- Use your assets to do as much good as you can for the glory of God and for the eternal good of others – NOW!

Let's conclude with another story