

Luke 16 - God's Value System

vs 15 What people value highly is detestable in God's sight.

- Detestable = to stink or idolatry

Luke 16:1-31 NIV Jesus told his disciples: "There was a rich man whose manager was accused of wasting his possessions. (2) 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.' (3) "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-- (4) I know what I'll do so that, when I lose my job here, people will welcome me into their houses.' (5) "So he called in each one of his master's debtors. He asked the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' (6) "'Nine hundred gallons of olive oil,' he replied. "The manager told him, 'Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it four hundred and fifty.' (7) "Then he asked the second, 'And how much do you owe?' "'A thousand bushels of wheat,' he replied. "He told him, 'Take your bill and make it eight hundred.' (8) "The master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly. For the people of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the people of the light. (9) I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings.

This is not a parable describing God and us...

- God would never commend a dishonest action

It is a story teaching a comparison between what Jesus calls

- **"People Of This World"** - focus on a dwelling for himself & the here and now
- **"People Of the Light"** - focus on others & eternal dwellings

JESUS' LESSON: About how we use worldly wealth

- Use worldly wealth to "gain friends"
- ---- BUT for eternal dwellings
- He is teaching about differing value systems

In a Practical Sense:

- It is critical to combine social service work with the preaching of the gospel
- Foreign mission - to help with physical, and not forget the spiritual
- Give to the poor, meet a need
- Use your home - (last night we had our monthly bible study in Youngstown) - the lady who was hosting it invited a young man who was a neighbor, and he gave his heart to Jesus
 - He will welcome her into eternal dwellings

1) The foundation of God's value system is Stewardship: "He owns everything"

- A steward is one who manages ***the resources of another***
- A steward is ***accountable*** for what has been ***entrusted*** to his care
- In this case he ***wasted them*** - same word used in Lk 15 - prodigal son squandered wealth
- A steward ***MUST be faithful***

Living with a stewardship mindset - EVERYTHING belongs to Him

- Psalm 24:1 — "The earth is the Lord's and ***everything*** in it, the world, and all who live in it."
- Psalm 50:10 & 12 — "for ***every*** animal of the forest is mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills...for the world is mine, and ***all*** that is in it."
- 1Co 6:19-20 KJV What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in ***your body, and in your spirit, which are God's***.

2) The heart of God's value System - Faithfulness

(10) "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. (11) So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? (12) And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own?"

Faithfulness is required

1Co 4:1-2 KJV Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. 2 Moreover it is ***required in stewards, that a man be found faithful***.

- Required = to seek - it is upon us to ***pursue faithfulness***
- Faithfulness is doing what is in the heart and mind of another
 - 1Sa 2:35 KJV And I will raise me up a ***faithful priest***, that shall do according to that which is ***in mine heart and in my mind***: and I will build him a sure house; and he shall walk before mine anointed for ever.
 - It is using my resources, my assets (Which are God's) for the purpose that HE has in mind

If we are "of this world" we will be shrewd - if we are "of the light" we will be faithful
The steward "had to" be shrewd because he had been unfaithful. Disciples that are faithful do not need to be shrewd.

- To be faithful in the little = **faithful in much**
- To be faithful in handling worldly wealth = **true riches** (and he described that above as using it to bring people into the eternal dwellings)
- To be faithful in someone else's property = **he will give you your own**

3) The strength of God's Value System - To Love God above all

Remember that what people value is "detestable" an idol in the sight of God

(13) "No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money." (14) The Pharisees, who loved money, heard all this and were sneering at Jesus. (15) He said to them, "You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of others, but God knows your hearts. What people value highly is detestable in God's sight."

vs 13: Single-minded love and devotion to Christ

- If you serve two - love/hate, devoted/despised kind of relationship
- **EXAMPLE The Pharisees "who loved money" were sneering at Jesus -**
- 2 Tim 4:10 Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world

4) God's value system is tied to the unchanging nature of God's word

(16) "The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John. Since that time, the good news of the kingdom of God is being preached, and everyone is forcing their way into it. (17) It is easier for heaven and earth to disappear than for the least stroke of a pen to drop out of the Law. (18) "Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery, and the man who marries a divorced woman commits adultery."

They sneered at Jesus -

While he was teaching the things of the kingdom of God...he was saying that even though a new "era" has come [law and prophets UNTIL John -- SINCE THAT TIME - the good news] -

the word of God has not changed.

The Rich Man: An example of a man whose values were not eternal [until it was too late]

(19) "There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. (20) At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores (21) and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores. (22) "The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died

and was buried. (23) In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. (24) So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.' (25) "But Abraham replied, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. (26) And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been set in place, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.' (27) "He answered, 'Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my family, (28) for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.' (29) "Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.' (30) "'No, father Abraham,' he said, 'but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.' (31) "He said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.'"

[Rich man and Lazarus] We live hectic and complex lives...***but in the end***, when all is said and done - all the complexities of life become boil down to something very simple and very one dimensional - "***Where will I spend eternity?***" - and beyond that "***Where will my five brothers spend eternity?***"

Everything during his life that held such importance is now totally meaningless

- all of his money & self indulgence
- his clothing [purple and fine linen]
- his life of luxury
- all the good he had received in this life
- The rich man had worldly wealth
- He spent it on himself - and failed to consider **eternal dwellings for his brothers**
- Even Lazarus **could have been** one that welcomed HIM into eternal dwellings
- Note he was not in Hades because he had wealth (see vs 30 indicates he knew he was there **because he had not repented**)
- **Jesus stressed the sufficiency of Scripture in leading people to Christ**
- **They will not believe even if someone rises from the dead**

Summary - God owns everything - do I live with God's values?

Have you embraced the heart of a steward?

- How do you view your resources and assets - as yours or as God's?
- What would happen if we began to pray and ask God (what do I do with YOUR money that has been entrusted to my care?)

Is there a struggle in your heart between God and anything?

- Do I value what He values?
- Do I value the unchangeable nature of God's word?

Who will welcome you to eternal dwellings?

- Will anyone be glad to see you in heaven?

- Will anyone say, “Thanks for making sure I got here?”