

# The Unjust Steward Luke 16:1-18

by R.A. Torrey

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of faithful stewardship and the consequences of faithless stewardship, highlighting the choice between serving God or mammon.*

**Scripture:** Luke 16:1

**Topics:** "Faithfulness", "Stewardship"

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## Description

R.A. Torrey expounds on the parable of the Unjust Steward in Luke 16:1-18, emphasizing the importance of wise stewardship of earthly wealth in light of eternal consequences. He highlights that while the unjust steward acted shrewdly to secure his future, believers should be even more prudent in using their resources to benefit others and prepare for eternity. Torrey warns against the dangers of covetousness and the love of money, which can lead to spiritual ruin and a lack of true riches. He stresses that all stewards will be held accountable for their management of God's resources, and that faithfulness in small matters leads to greater opportunities in God's service. Ultimately, the sermon calls for a choice between serving God or wealth, urging believers to prioritize their eternal stewardship.

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## Transcript

### DISCOVERY OF THE FACTS

1. The Unjust Steward, vv. 1-13 To whom was this parable spoken? Of whom are the parables in this chapter a rebuke, and of what characteristic (v. 14)? Against what sin was it especially directed (v. 14)? What use of money was it intended to teach as being the wise one (v. 9)? Did our Lord intend to hold up this steward's action for the imitation of His disciples in every respect, or merely to teach that as a child of this world is shrewd so to use the money committed to him as to provide for the future time when his stewardship is taken from him, so much more a child of light should be shrewd to so use the money committed to him that when his earthly stewardship is taken from him he will have provided for a future eternity?

How do we know that He did not approve of the man's action from a moral standpoint (v. 8)? Are there any other parables where wicked or selfish men are held up by way of contrast to show how much more God or godly men may be expected to act in some way suggested? (18:6, 7; 11:5-8; Matt. 12:11, 12.) Who are the stewards? (1 Cor. 4:1; Titus 1:7; 1 Peter 4:10.) Of whom? How much of what we sometimes call our own belongs to Him? (Haggai 2:8; Ps. 50:10-12.) What is required of stewards? (1 Cor. 4:2.)

What accusation was brought against many of God's stewards? What are some of the ways in which they waste His goods? What were the two results of the steward of the parable wasting his lord's goods? What will be the two results if we as stewards of God waste His goods? How many of us will have to give account of our stewardship? (Ro. 14:12; 2 Cor. 5:10.) To whom? Of what? (Matt. 12:36; Ecc. 12:14; Ro. 2:16; 1 Cor. 4:5; 2 Cor. 5:10.) Will the stewardship of the unfaithful steward of God be taken away? (19:21-26; 12:20; Matt. 25:24-28.)

Will anything else be done? (Matt. 25:30.) In what state of mind is he represented as being at this announcement of the termination of his stewardship? Does his inability to labor and his unwillingness to beg represent anything in the position of the man of the world when suddenly confronted with the termination of his earthly stewardship? What seemingly shrewd scheme did he hit upon in his perplexity and dismay? Do God's stewards who all their lives long have wasted God's goods ever try to provide for their future by being generous with God's money in the last hour when they can't keep it any longer if they would?

Was the trick discovered (v. 8, R. V.)? Is it likely then that it succeeded? Is the similar attempt of men likely to succeed? Who is the lord who is represented as commending the unjust steward? (R. V.) What was it he commended? In what respect are the children of this world wiser than the children of light? (See R. V.) What is the principal lesson that our Lord draws from His story? What is meant by "the mammon of unrighteousness"? Why is it so called? (1 Tim. 6:9, 10.) What is meant by "making friends by means of the mammon of unrighteousness"? (Matt. 19:21; 25:35-40; 6:19; 1 Tim. 6:17-19; Prov. 19:17.)

Had the steward any right to use his master's goods to make friends for himself? Has the steward of God any right to bestow the goods of his Master upon the needy? (Matt. 24:45; 1 Peter 4:10.) Will our entrance into the kingdom of God be any more sure and abundant because of our generous use of God's money upon the needy? (Matt. 19:21, etc.) Is not our entrance into the kingdom dependent upon faith alone? How then can benevolence have anything to do with it? (Gal. 5:6; Jas. 2:18.)

What further lesson did our Lord teach (v. 10)? (19:17; Matt. 25:21.) If a man is not faithful in some humble place of service will he be faithful in some high place of service? If then we wish God to promote us what must we do? Who is the most conspicuous illustration of one who was unjust first in little, then in much? (John 12:6; 13:2, 27.) What is the practical application our Lord makes of the principle of v. 10? If then we do not use the earthly wealth committed to us (whether much or little) faithfully for God, of what may we be sure?

What are the true riches? (12:33; 18:22; Prov. 8:18, 19; Eph. 3:8; Jas. 2:5; Rev. 3:18.) Are the earthly riches we have our own? (1 Peter 1:4, 5.) What if we are not faithful "in that which is another's"? What if we are faithful in it? What are many professed servants of God trying to do (v. 13)? How many can succeed in that attempt? What must we do then? (Joshua 24:15.) If we hold on to the world and mammon what is our relation to God? (1 John 2:15; Jas. 4:4.) 2. "That Which is Exalted Among Men is an Abomination in the Sight of God," vv. 14-18 Who most needed these teachings of our Lord?

Did they have them? Did they do them any good? What was the result to themselves of their derision? Do men nowadays ever receive in that way our Lord's teachings which convict them? What will be the result? How did He reply to the derision of the Pharisees? Are there those today who justify themselves in the sight of men? Do they succeed in justifying themselves in the sight of God? Why not? How does God often regard those whom men regard highly? What change was there in preaching since the time of John?

What is meant in v. 16 by "Every man presseth into it"? (See R. V.) In what words does our Lord set the stamp of His endorsement upon the absolute inerrancy of the law? In what words does He set forth the sacredness of marriage? Is there any ground upon which a man can put away his wife and marry again? (Matt. 5:32; 19:9.) CLASSIFICATION OF TEACHINGS

#### 1. God

Knoweth our hearts, abominates that which men regard highly, 15; demands our absolute and single-hearted service, 13; His law inviolable, 17.

#### 2. Covetousness, or the Love of Money

The sin of many religious and highly respected people, 14; severely rebuked by Jesus Christ, 1-14; incompatible with the love and service of God, 13; an exceedingly difficult sin to save men from, hardens the heart against the teachings of our Lord, leads to derision of His teachings, 14; shuts out from obtaining the true riches, 11; brings dismay and ruin, 4.

#### 3. Riches

The two kinds--the mammon of unrighteousness, 9, 11; the true riches, 11;

To whom they belong--the earthly riches not our own, the heavenly riches our own, 12;

How the true riches are obtained--by faithful stewardship of earthly wealth, 11;

How lost--by faithless stewardship of earthly wealth, 11;

Earthly riches a temporary stewardship to test our fitness for the eternal ownership of the true riches, 11;

The wise use of earthly riches to make friends of those who are bound for the everlasting habitations, 9;

Men of the world more shrewd in the use of their wealth in the light of time (to provide for future time, 4) than the children of light in the light of eternity (to provide for a future eternity), 8, 9.

#### 4. Stewardship

All men are God's stewards, 1, 8; God carefully notes how men fulfill their stewardship, 1;

Many waste their Lord's goods, 1;

Every man will be called to account for his stewardship, 2;

The faithless steward will be filled with perplexity and dismay in the day of reckoning, 3;

The faithless steward will have his stewardship taken from him, 2, 10, 11;

The faithful steward will be made a proprietor of more excellent treasures, 10-12.

#### 5. Service

Only one master possible, 13;

Each must choose a master for himself, 13;

The choice is--God or mammon, 13;

Faithful service in little things will bring opportunities for service in larger things, 10;

Faithless service in little things will exclude from larger opportunity, 10.

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