

Reflection Questions: Luke 16:1-15

For the message, "Kingdom-Minded Shrewdness" given by Pastor John Ferguson at Mercy Hill Church in Bryan/College Station, Texas, on January 30, 2022

These reflection questions are designed to help you apply the message from the Scriptures by helping you think through application to your personal life, your church life, and your city's life. You can use these by yourself for reflection, or with your family or small group for discussion. To review the message, go to MercyHillBCS.org/resources/messages.

INTRODUCTION

Pray. Take a moment to pray asking God to guide you in reflecting upon the Scripture text.

Read the Scripture text: Luke 16:1-15

1 He also said to the disciples, "There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was wasting his possessions. 2 And he called him and said to him, 'What is this that I hear about you? Turn in the account of your management, for you can no longer be manager.' 3 And the manager said to himself, 'What shall I do, since my master is taking the management away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. 4 I have decided what to do, so that when I am removed from management, people may receive me into their houses.'

5 So, summoning his master's debtors one by one, he said to the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' 6 He said, 'A hundred measures of oil.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.' 7 Then he said to another, 'And how much do you owe?' He said, 'A hundred measures of wheat.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, and write eighty.' 8 The master commended the dishonest manager for his shrewdness. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than the sons of light. 9 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.

10 "One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. 11 If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? 12 And if you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own? 13 No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money."

14 The Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard all these things, and they ridiculed him. 15 And he said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God.

A summary of the message: God is calling us to be shrewd, smart, intelligent, savvy, and perceptive in the way we invest our resources (time, talent, treasures) for the glory of Christ and for the good of others.

Bottom Line: People are more important than our stuff. Therefore, let's use our resources to make friends that will last forever.

Let's get started...

- What initially grabs your attention in this teaching? Is there a phrase or sentence that jumped out at you?

QUESTIONS

1. Let's think about how this text applies to our lives as individuals.

- Jesus told this story to give an example of how clever, intelligent, and shrewd people can be when their own interests compel them to act with foresight into the future. How would you finish this thought:
 - If the people of this world use what resources they have to further their own interests, how much more should the followers of Jesus use what resources they have been entrusted with to _____ . What would fill out that sentence, and why?
- Jesus tells this story in response to the Pharisees (those “lovers of money,” vs. 14) who grumbled that Jesus welcomed sinners and ate with them. And then he says within their hearing, “No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.”
 - How does this inform or challenge your relationship with God? With money?
- Jesus seems to think that if we were aligned with the priorities of the kingdom of God, we'll be doing the things he's doing (using resources to make eternal friends) and not be doing the things the religious leaders are doing (despising the sinners that Jesus is welcoming and sharing life with). How does embodying the central truth of this passage help us become more fully and truly ourselves, the people God is creating us to be?

2. Let's think about how this text applies to us as a community of Jesus' followers.

- What comes to your mind when you imagine a group of Jesus' followers using their resources to make eternal friendships?
- How can we use the gospel to encourage each other to do this more and more, and not use guilt or manipulation? Reflect on 2 Corinthians 8:9, “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.”

3. Let's think about how this text applies to our city.

- How does this text help us understand God's mission in our city, and how he wants to use us to further his mission?

CONCLUSION QUESTION

What is the one thing you want to take away from this study to remember or to make a change in your life?

Pray: How can we turn what we are learning into prayer?