



The Truth About Stewardship

Luke 16:1-18

- *Who's job is it?*

- This is a little story about four people named **Everybody**, **Somebody**, **Anybody**, and **Nobody**.
- There was an important job to be done and **Everybody** was sure that **Somebody** would do it.
- **Anybody** could have done it, but **Nobody** did it.
- **Somebody** got angry about that because it was **Everybody's** job.
- **Everybody** thought that **Anybody** could do it, but **Nobody** realized that **Everybody** wouldn't do it.
- It ended up that **Everybody** blamed **Somebody** when **Nobody** did what **Anybody** could have done.

Main Point: God calls us to be good stewards of what He has blessed us with.

- As we have studied through the various aspects of Jesus' life and ministry, we have touched on a lot of different areas of our walk with Christ.
- There are lots of parables that are recorded in the Gospel of Luke. As we get closer to the cross, many of the teachings of Jesus are weighty in their implications. These are important teachings that help us understand the eternal implications of our walk.
- The focus is on knowing and understanding the truth. That truth has a drastic impact on our daily life. It also has a kingdom impact. An eternal impact.
- This parable is about stewardship, and it helps us to understand how earthly stewardship has an eternal consequence.
- The passage is focused on stewardship, priorities, and our allegiance in light of the kingdom of God.
- A few lessons we learn from this parable.

I. Be realistic

- a. There was an issue that had to be addressed here – the rich man's manager was wasting his resources – squandering his possessions.
- b. The only way that issue could be addressed is if there's an honest evaluation of the circumstances.
- c. This is not an easy conversation. He had to do a severe course correction regarding his circumstances, and it seemed to all essentially come down to the mismanagement from the person he put in charge.
- d. Lots of reasons stewardship and management issues go unresolved.

- i. Denial is not just a river in Egypt – Denial could be one of the most damaging aspects of stewardship.
- ii. It could also be a lack of preparation or guidance on handling certain issues that causes us to not address them. There is godly wisdom in obtaining good counsel.
- e. There was also a reality that the manager had to face. He said he wasn't strong enough to dig, and he was too ashamed to beg. I've always been told that beggars can't be choosers, but it seems to me that he was facing the reality and looked for another alternative.
- f. In fact, he was praised for his response in this circumstance. VERSE 8 – the word shrewdly could be translated – acted prudently or wisely.
- g. Although it was mismanagement that got him in this mess, his response was something to be recognized. He saw the reality and faced it head on.

II. Act decisively

- a. This is important when it comes to stewardship.
- b. He said in VERSE 4 – “I know what I'll do.”
- c. He then went to the people that owed his master money and sought to redeem some of the debts owed for his master.
- d. This is one of Jesus' more challenging parables to understand, but I think there are real life applications here.
- e. How was the manager able to reduce the debt that these people owed his master. One suggestion is that the manager cut out any money for himself from the amount owed.

- f. In other words, the manager may have received a certain portion of the money by going and collecting the debts. He may not have reduced how much his master received but instead reduced the amount that he would receive. This was done to reconcile things with his master.
- g. Whatever method he chose, the point was he chose this method and stuck with it.
- h. It was probably sacrificial, but it led to a wise decision and a good outcome.
- i. There are things that have to be addressed regarding stewardship, and in that we have to act decisively. To be indecisive is to make a decision. Not to act is to act.
- j. I think about this in regards to our debt on the building of our church. Eight years ago, we needed to act in order to pay this debt down.
- k. People were giving, it just wasn't going anywhere. Our church did what any family would do – we developed a plan and implemented that plan.

III. Be faithful in the small things

- a. The spiritual application here is pretty interesting.
- b. A few lessons here
 - i. Be faithful in worldly resources and there will be eternal blessings
 - ii. Trust is built with being faithful in the small things
 - iii. Devote yourself to doing what is right in the sight of God.
 - 1. Study His Word
 - 2. Be in prayer
 - 3. Seek wise, godly counsel
 - 4. Check your motives and intentions
 - iv. You can only serve one master.