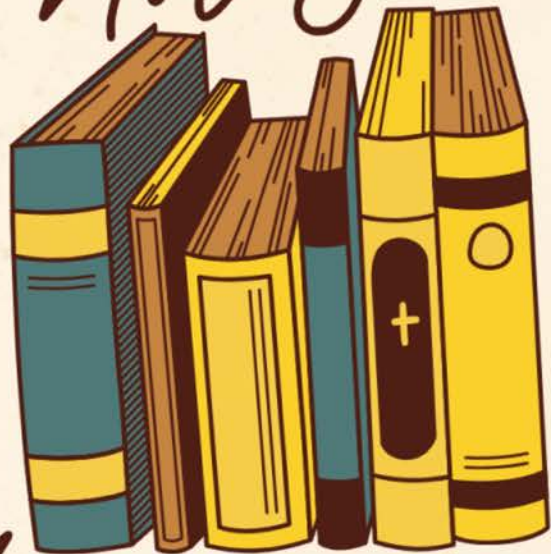


Not Just



Another Story

A story about wealth management

Luke 16:1-15



Context, Context, Context

1. Just three 'money' parables, all in Luke

Context, Context, Context

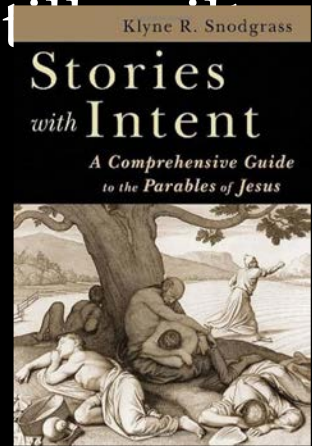
1. Just three 'money' parables, all in Luke
2. The Gospel of Luke captures other challenges about
money

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1. Just three 'money' parables, all in Luke
2. The Gospel of Luke captures other challenges about money

- 1. 'Journey to Jerusalem' themes:**
 - a. Challenges those in power
 - b. God loves those on the margins
 - c. God rejects empty religiosity

“This parable is notoriously difficult... Richard Trench [n 1864] complained of the manifold and curious interpretations of this parable, stating that ‘very many interpreters... had “overrun their game.”’ A bewildering number of explanations exist, many of which are still of overrunning their game.”



~Klyne R. Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent: A comprehensive guide to the parables of Jesus* (Nashville: Eerdmans, 2008), p. 401.

“I am going to tie myself to the mast and pray for an additional dose of the grace of God and that this and next week will be over quickly so I can get on with more pleasant passages. The sixteenth chapter begins with the parable of the unjust steward, which is almost **universally** considered by biblical scholars to be the **most difficult** of Jesus’ parables to understand.”

~R. C. Sproul, sermon accessed July 2023
<https://www.ligonier.org/learn/sermons/parable-unjust-steward>



Luke 16:1-15 (NIV)

1 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.’

Luke 16:1-15 (NIV)

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[a] 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[b] of wheat,’ he replied. “He told him, ‘Take your bill and make it eight hundred.’

Luke 16:1-15 (NIV)

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. 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?

Luke 16:1-15 (NIV)

12 And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own? 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."

Some observations

Some observations

...There was a rich man whose manager was accused of wasting his possessions. 2 So he called him in '...Give an account of your management, because you cannot be manager any longer.'

- Steward/Manager - responsible for the owner's money
 - But is not the true *owner* of the money

Some observations

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.’

- Lots of interest being exacted via commodities
 - Jews not allowed to do so with money
 - Choice of the owner? Or manager?

Some observations

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.

- Clear label of an 'unrighteous' steward, yet commended as 'shrewd'
 - Neutral word
 - cf. Mt 10:16

Some observations

...For the people of this world are more shrewd...
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.

- Jesus seemingly gives the punchlines in vv8-9
 - Not a *clear* punchline
 - Different readings and interpretations for v9

Some observations

10 Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much...

13 No one can serve two masters...

- Verses after, vv10-15, read like appended teachings
 - Feel tangential
 - Parallel to other Gospels
 - Add to Jesus' overall teaching

Some observations

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...”

- Audience is not only disciples; Pharisees ‘eavesdropping’

Diving in

Manager
faces a
threat to
his future



Diving in

Manager
faces a
threat to
his future



Uses his
abilities to
get some
'insurance'



Diving in

Manager
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Uses his
abilities to
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Jesus asks "how
much more"
ought the people
of light do so?



How is this *not* just another story?

How is this *not* just another story?

Not a guide to 'making it' in business

Not a story of winning God's approval/blessing

How is this *not* just another story?

Not a guide to 'making it' in business

Not a story of winning God's approval/blessing

Jesus is telling his audience that God's way is a
different kind of investment

Diving in

Jesus is asking “how much more” ought the people
of light invest *wisely*

Diving in

Jesus is asking “how much more” ought the people
of light invest *wisely*



To what end? *Don't you know the gospel, Jesus?*

Diving in

Jesus is asking “how much more” ought the people
of light invest *wisely*



To what end? *Don't you know the gospel, Jesus?*

Analogy, and not allegory

Stick the landing

The manager is making a wise choice due to the pressure of his future reality

Stick the landing

The manager is making a wise choice due to the pressure of his future reality



The people of God have a real, eternal future *secured*
by Jesus Himself

Stick the landing

The manager is making a wise choice due to the pressure of his future reality



The people of God have a real, eternal future *secured* by Jesus Himself



How much more, then, ought we use our money in a way *inspired by* our future?

Knead it in

God gives us our wealth

God wants us to use our wealth with an eternal perspective

Knead it in

God gives us our wealth

A closed-handed belief: “every good and perfect gift is from above... from the Father of heavenly lights” Js 1:17

God wants us to use our wealth with an eternal perspective

An open-handed practice: give money to the poor, give money to the church, support programs you agree with

Knead it in

Luke 8

Joanna the wife of Chuza, the manager of Herod's household; Suzanna; and many others. These women were helping to **support [the disciples] out of their own means.**

Knead it in

Luke 21

As Jesus looked up, he saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury. He also saw **a poor widow put in two very small copper coins.** “Truly I tell you,” he said, “this poor widow has **put in more** than all the others.”

Knead it in

2 Corinthians 8

In the midst of a very severe trial, [the Macedonians'] **overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity.** For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability... they urgently pleaded with us for **the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord's people.**

Knead it in

2 Corinthians 8 (cont.)

I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others. **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 through his poverty might become rich.**

Knead it in

Jesus Himself has paid for our secure future!



Knead it in

Jesus Himself has paid for our secure future!



We must then invest our 'worldly', short-lived resources for God's kingdom

Parachurch
Ministries

People in need

Hope CC!!!



μαμωνᾶς

NGO's

Each other

Foundations/
Trusts

Neighbors

Membership Renewal:

“We believe God has called us to live in Biblical community through loving relationships and accountability to one another... to live out the obedience of faith & grow in Christ through loving God and serving in His work on earth - being good stewards of the time, talents, finances, and other resources God has entrusted to us... to demonstrate His grace and love in all we do. Together as a church, we covenant together in carrying out His vision for this church.”

Gospel Response

*God is generous with us through Jesus,
now and for eternity*

What motivates your giving?

*Is there some way that God might want you to
change your 'investment strategy'?*