

PARABLES

THE STORIES TOLD BY JESUS

The Parable of the Shrewd Manager ***July 5th, 2015***

OBSERVE & REFLECT

(This section is designed to encourage us to reflect on and observe the scripture and weekend sermon.)

READ Luke 16:1-14

- ☀ Read the text at least twice. Try reading the text from two different translations.
- ☀ What do you observe in the text? What jumps out at you and grabs your attention? What questions do you have from the text? Pay attention to any action words or phrases and observe what the implications are.

INVESTIGATE & APPLY

(This section focuses on what the scripture has to say as we dig deeper into the Word. It is oriented to create discussion on the Scripture.)

1. On the surface, this is a very strange and difficult parable. What parts of this parable and passage do you struggle with?
2. Why did the master commend the “shrewd” manager? Was this a commendation of his dishonesty? Why or Why not?
3. How do the characters in this parable correspond to us? Who is the Rich Master? Who is the manager?
4. What does it mean that the people of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the people of light? What is Jesus calling us to do as his people?
5. What has God entrusted to you? Think beyond just the financial realm. Jesus’ speaks of ‘true riches’ that go far beyond the financial and material realm. Everything that we have and are is from God. Are you guilty of wasting your master’s possessions in any way?
6. How can you use your worldly wealth to gain friends who will specifically help you to be welcomed into eternal dwellings?

What is a Parable?

The word “parable” (παροβολε) comes from two Greek words, *para* which mean “alongside”, and *ballo* which means “to throw”. It literally means “throw alongside”. In a parable, something familiar is placed alongside something unfamiliar or mysterious in order to help reveal the unknown. Jesus usually used the natural world, which was well-known by His audience, to teach about the unknown and mysterious kingdom that He was ushering in.

NEXT STEPS

- “Capital” is a word that we use to describe the goods or assets that we have in our possession. For most of us, when we think of “capital”, we think only of money. This parable is pointing us to the truth that money is one form of capital. However, it is only one form, and it is the least valuable in the kingdom of God. Take a second to think through these other forms of capital, and to order their value in your life. Remember, all of these capitals will serve the one that you value the most (this is what Jesus meant when he said “No servant can serve two masters”).
 - Spiritual Capital- (relationship with God)
 - Relational Capital- (relationships with others)
 - Physical Capital- (health, time, energy)
 - Intellectual Capital- (knowledge, creativity, ideas)
 - Financial Capital- (money, possessions)
- Read 2 Corinthians 5:10, and note that this is speaking to believers who have been forgiven of their sin and given the righteousness of Christ. This isn’t a judgement for sin, it is an evaluation of the values that one lived for. Take a moment to imagine this moment when your eyes meet Jesus’ eyes for the first time. What is important to you now that won’t be important then? What will be important to you then? How can you begin to live for that moment daily?