How Jesus Wants You to Use Money, Part 2

Luke 16:9-13

December 12, 2021

Just want to invite all of you, to take your Bibles in hand and actually turn to Hebrews chapter 3, not preaching out of Hebrews 3, but I'm gonna use that to introduce what we're going to talk about in Luke 16. We are in Luke 16, which is a section of Jesus' teaching on stewardship and I wanna begin in Hebrews, a thought comes to mind about Jesus' use of a stewardship and want to start there. Luke set the scene in Luke 16:1, the section that we're in, and he told us there that Jesus was teaching his disciples, that instruction that we're going through, the parable of the unjust steward, and all that we've said about stewardship, what we'll cover today as well, all that is a lesson on stewardship for Jesus disciples, maybe you've never thought of your life that way, as a stewardship that you will give an account for, to God.

But Jesus sees stewardship as a fundamental principle of life. In fact, he sees stewardship as a fundamental principle of Christian discipleship. Our Christianity is a stewardship from God, the whole of

Christianity is a stewardship, the Gospel's a stewardship, truth from God's words is a stewardship, the change that he brings about in our life, renewing our mind, transforming our life, that's a stewardship that we must render unto God and be faithful with the change and the power that he's bringing to bear on our life. But everyone, whether a Christian or non Christian, everyone, whether a believer or an unbeliever, whether a person professes faith in Christ or not, whether a person acknowledges God or not, everyone will render an account to God for his or her stewardship.

Everything that we have comes from God, health, strength, life itself, breath, intellect, education, opportunity, experience, money, "What do you have that you did not receive?" You were born into this world, not because of your own effort. You were born into this world, because that was done to you, that happened to you, and everything else that's happened to you, whether it's strength, or intellect, or education or opportunity, everything has been given to you by God.

And so that means that everything that you have in life, all that you have, you have to answer for. There's someone who's given it to you, God, and he will demand an account. Christians have a special stewardship. Christians have an even higher accountability, because to us has been entrusted the eternal gospel of Jesus Christ.

We have words of eternal life that we can speak to other people. We're going to give an account for that, we have this gospel treasure, as Paul says, "Hidden in jars of clay." We're the jars of clay. As Paul said to Timothy, we have this "Good deposit" of the gospel that's been "Entrusted to us." So when our master summons us, like the master summoned his unjust steward. When our master summons us and says, turn in the account of your management. Well, we have to answer for what we've done with the gospel that's been entrusted to us, with everything that's been entrusted to us and we have before us a perfect example of stewardship in Jesus Christ. Perfect example, take a look at Hebrews chapter 3 verse 1, because it's there in Hebrews 3 that we see Jesus stewarding God's kingdom.

Hebrews 3:1 says, "Therefore, holy brothers, you who share in a heavenly calling." Here's the command. "Consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession." The writer describes us as Holy, that is, we're set apart for a special purpose. Holy means sacred, it means not secular, not temporal, not common. Holy means consecrated, holy means not profane, not mundane, but consecrated, sacred, set apart for purpose. The writer calls us, "Brothers."

It's masculine term, but it covers masculine and feminine. So brothers and sisters, this is filial language. This is family language. Because by God's grace in regeneration, we become children of God. If we put our faith in Jesus Christ and we trust in him, believe his saving gospel, that he died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and God accepted that sacrifice and raised him from the dead. According to the Scriptures. We have eternal life.

We no longer have fear of judgment or condemnation, that's been taken away in Christ because he paid the penalty. So if that's us, then we are members of God's family by regeneration. And we all then participate verse 1 says, in the family business, so to speak, we share in a heavenly calling. And that's why we're to consider Jesus because he is the apostle and the high priest of our confession, as the apostle of our confession. Apostle means one who is sent out. Jesus is the authorized agent to convey God's will, as the high priest of our confession, we know that he is the one mediator between God and man and God sent this mediator Jesus Christ to teach us what it means to be members of his family.

This is how we're to live, by a heavenly calling. Bottom line, how do we live according to this, how do we live up to this heavenly calling, to which we've been called? The bottom line, is it's all

about faithfulness. It's about faithfulness to a stewardship, verse 2, Jesus "Was faithful to him who appointed him, just as Moses also was faithful in all God's house." We have the record of Moses, we see his faithfulness, we also see as failures, but Jesus was faithful to him who appointed him.

Skip to verse 5, we see that "Moses was faithful," past tense verb, "Was faithful in all God's house" and he was faithful as a what? "A servant, to testify to the things that were to be spoken later, but Christ is," that's a present tense verb. He "Is faithful over God's house." Not as a servant but "As a son." So not was, but is, not a servant, but a son. Jesus is the faithful son, who runs the father's house.

In Luke 15 terms, unlike the prodigal, Jesus never squandered his father's resources. He never squandered a single moment of his time. Never squandered one thought. Never threw away one word. There was not one idle word on his tongue, everything he said and did was intentional and purposeful and in pursuit of the stewardship. Unlike the older brother in Luke 15, Jesus never served his father begrudgingly, resentful, prideful, selfish, rather he was careful and attentive and intentional. He's the very model of stewardship, not because he had to, but because he loved to. He governs his father's

house as a son, a son who loves his father. He's devoted to his father out of a deep affection. Jesus' love for his father is what is behind his concern to teach all of us about stewardship.

It's near and dear to his heart because as a son in his father's house and as king in his father's kingdom, he's devoted to his father's interests in love at all times and it's all from a deep sense of affection and an abiding sense of joy to exercise such a stewardship. Is there anything greater in the universe than the kingdom of God, then the eternal kingdom, then the eternal gospel? Is there anything greater to be a part of? No, and Jesus is at the very pinnacle and head of that, and he exercises everything he does out of loves faithfully, perfectly. It's him, who comes to us and wants to teach us about stewardship. He comes as one who is fully satisfied in his work, one who's joyful in everything that he does, and he wants to come to us and say, "Come on in, let me show you."

So as you return to Luke 16, you go back there now as we go back to the Luke 16. Think about what this means, that this is the Son of God, who speaks to us, and when he comes and speaks to us and teaches us, instructs us, his disciples, he shares this blessed gift of stewardship with us. You may think, a high and holy honor and stewardship in this life, maybe to be the mayor of Greeley, or

governor of Colorado, or the President of the United States, or the king of the world, or whatever it is.

And think about all those different titles and the honor that they hold and the responsibility that that person bears. Jesus, the king of the father's kingdom, he has the highest and holiest and most perfect and eternal and lasting stewardship that there is. He wants to bring us into it.

He grants us the privilege of serving his father and to do it under his careful oversight. Alongside the likes of Moses and the prophets. That's who we're numbered with, when we join him in stewardship, alongside the holy apostles, holy apostles who wrote things like this. All of this to advance the purposes of his father's house and this is our stewardship. This is our time. This is what we get to use our life for. Is there anything more meaningful? Is there anything more significant than this? Not a chance.

In Luke 16:9 and following, Jesus encourages us in the exercise of a good stewardship. And he teaches us about the right motives of stewardship. We said last time, the right motives of stewardship, the right manner of stewardship, and the right master of stewardship, that's what we're going to get to today, but let's read that text.

We'll skip the parable and go right to the implications of the parable in verse 9.

Luke 16:9, Jesus said this, "And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth, so that when it fails," that is, when the unrighteous wealth fails, which it will, "They may receive you into the eternal dwellings. One who is faithful in very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? And if you've not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own? 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."

As I said, last time, we looked at motives of stewardship last week, four motives of stewardship, that was our first point in our broader outline, the motives of our stewardship. So we talked about discipleship, wisdom, fellowship, worship, all four of those motives of stewardship come out of verse 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."

So we said, the first motive, discipleship, Jesus says there, "And I tell you," that is in contrast to the little epiphany that the unrighteous, the unjust steward had in verse 4, Jesus says, "And I tell you," this is his good idea, makes this a matter, when he gives us something that's a good idea, we write it down and we execute in obedience. So this is a matter of obedience for us.

This is the essence of discipleship; is to obey him in whatever he says. We want to obey Jesus as Lord, we love him. Why do we love him? Because he died for us on the cross, every decision that he made, everything he did in his life was all for the purpose of obedience, that he might be the perfect sacrifice, that he might give himself as a ransom for all, as a ransom for you, as a ransom for me. Without him, we'd be lost. So we love him, we make it our aim to please him, we love to obey Christ as our Lord. And Jesus said, "Take unrighteous wealth before it fails." That is invest money now for future eternal benefit.

And this means second, our stewardship is motivated by wisdom. It's wisdom to take what's gonna go away, in a short, very short time and invest it for something that can never go away, right? Jim Elliott put it this way, he said, "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose." That's prudent. That is wisdom.

Jesus said, "Make friends for yourselves." We said stewardship is motivated third, by fellowship. We rejoice to use money, to make friendships, to enter into a fellowship. These are friendships that are forged in a deep bond of gospel partnership, here on Earth. These, we make friends for eternity. That's not only wise, but it's driven by this desire for have, having friends and fellowship, not just now, but for the life to come.

And then Jesus finally talks about worship as he talks about entering into eternal dwellings. We said literally, that means eternal tents, so eternal, and then something temporary, something that is a permanent, nonpermanent tent, is what it really says there. The word is *skene*, it's also translated, not just tent, but also in a number of places, tabernacle. Tabernacle that, that points to the motive of stewardship that is worship. Stewardship is an aspect, an outworking of our worship, who we worship is who we work for. Who we worship is who were devoted to. Our hope finally, as we can see promised here is consummated in God, to abide eternally with God in his holy, heavenly tabernacle. The holy habitation.

Psalm 46:4 says, "The holy habitation of the Most High." That's our permanent, and our eternal home. So those are the four motives we

talked about last week that are to drive our stewardship, discipleship, wisdom, fellowship and worship, four motives. Jesus is the apostle and the High Priest of our confession. He wants us to be properly motivated for taking up the mantle of stewardship, that we've been granted because of the gospel. And then he comes into verses 10 through 12. Here's a second way that Jesus encourages our stewardship by clarifying number two, in a broader outline there, the manner of our stewardship, the manner of our stewardship.

We talked about the motives of our stewardship, number one and number two, the manner of our stewardship. You can see it, you saw it as we read the, the central concern in verses 10-12 is, is matter of faithfulness. That's the manner of our stewardship. That's how we execute stewardship. We want to exercise a stewardship faithfully. It's the chief characteristic of Christ's stewardship, as we read from Hebrews, he was faithful. So Jesus starts with this, oh so important principle of faithfulness in verse 10. "One," it's just the principle here "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."

Faithful you probably know is the word *pistos*. It can also be translated there, *pistos*, can also be translated as believing. Here, faithful is the, is the better translation considering the context,

but you take the word faithful or you take the word believing, those are words that have meaning that are in relation to a standard above them, above you, an absolute standard of, a perfect standard of truth, a perfect standard of righteousness. So we're loyal, we're faithful, believing in regard, believing in regard to truth, we're loyal, faithful in regard to a standard, a perfect standard of righteousness. So we could boil that all down and say that faithfulness is a matter of righteousness.

And if we're going to be righteous, we must be faithful, the two are connected. So that's why Jesus contrasts faithful in this principle in verse 10, the word *pistos* with the word *adikos, adikos. Adikos* is translated here in the ESV as dishonest, but it's usually translated just simply as unrighteous. The D.I.K. little root there, is the root word for righteous or righteousness. *Dikaio* is to be declared righteous. So here, *adikos* unrighteous, sometimes in some contexts, maybe even appropriate here, it's the word untrustworthy or unfaithful. Those who are *adikos* are those who are not loyal to the truth. Those who are *adikos* do not adhere to the standard of righteousness, they're not trustworthy. So boiling it down, unfaithful is unrighteous. Unrighteous is unfaithful, those two are connected.

So this, the manner of our stewardship, how we execute our stewardship has the standard of divine righteousness in view, stewardship is a matter of righteousness. Those who are *pistos*, who are faithful are those who walk righteously before God. And if you're going to walk righteously before God, you must be faithful. Those who are *adikos* are those who are unfaithful, untrustworthy, not reliable, those who do not walk righteously before God, all of that together. So faithfulness here, you can see is the key principle of stewardship. It's the manner of our stewardship, it's how we conduct our stewardship, and the measure by the standard by which we're measured is, are you faithful? It's not how much you have? It's what do you do with what you have.

Paul puts it simply very straightforwardly in 1 Corinthians 4:2 applying this to himself as a minister, a minister of the gospel, he says, "It's required of stewards, that they be found, faithful," faithful. God gives to his stewards varying, in varying measure, he gives to one this amount of gift and ability and then to another this amount of gift and ability. He gives to all of us different giftings. We're not all omni competent, omni gifted, only Christ is. We, in reflecting his glory, we each have parts and in different measures and so in order to judge all of us, in order to, to hold all of us to account, it's not how much we have, in what we have. It's what we do

with what we have. It's are we faithful? That's a one size fits all measure of judgment.

Are you faithful? For stewards to be found faithful, stewards must be first tested. And it says here, they're "Tested with a little, in order that they may be entrusted with much." Everybody in leadership knows that "Faithful in little means faithful in much." Everybody in leadership knows unfaithful in little means unfaithful in much. It's a principle that's true in all of life, whether it's the public sector or the private sector, whether it's in the sacred realm or the secular realm, faithful in little means faithful in much, unfaithful in little, unfaithful in much. You see this in leadership, you see it in business, you see it in governance, you see it in church ministry, faithful in little, faithful in much. Unfaithful in little, unfaithful in much. You've probably seen this at times in your place of employment.

Those who enter into employment or try to, in your place of work, who have this entitlement mentality, they kind of come in, um, prancing as they go, you know, they consider themselves already pre-qualified for whatever it is the position that they're after. They come not to be tested or proven, but rather to be discovered by you and by everybody else in the company, right? So because they're great,

they have great potential and they know it, even though they've never done the job ever before, but just trust them. So they're not so ready to come in and pay their dues, not ready to put in the time, or do the hard yards, or do the tough plowing, they seem to be in such a great hurry; really impatient for you to get along in trusting them, believe me, give me what I want, and pay me more because I, I'm worth it.

They seem really irritated with those who are in positions of authority, in positions of responsibility over them when they want to test them first. When they want to prove them, when they want to take time to know them, test them with a little things that they're not gonna ruin the company with. Little things here, little things there, here sharpen this pencil, if it comes back nice and sharp, great, you know, then I know you've got pencils down, then we'll move you on to something else. None of you in your normal work life would advance or promote someone like that. Someone entitled, someone who wants you to take them at their, as they come untested and sight unseen. All of you understand the necessity of paying your dues, of proving your competency and your character, of, of showing your faithfulness in your work.

We all get this in every area of life. Why do we forget it when it comes to the most important things in life like heaven and

eternity? Why do we forget it there? Why do we forget it when we come into the church? Faithful in little, faithful in much, unfaithful in little, unfaithful in much, that's just a basic principle of normal human life. It's one we know by instinct, and it's one we practice by instinct, we don't even think about it.

Principle's especially important when it comes to qualifying or disqualifying men for church leadership. This morning, elders and deacons met together, we're talking to the deacons, we just happen to mention there in, you know how Paul says in 1 Timothy 3:9-10, he's talking about deacon qualification. He says "Let the deacons, let them who are proposed to be deacons, let them also be tested first, then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless."

Deacons are men who are faithful, they're godly, they're spiritually minded men, they're tested, they're proven, and then they're found to be blameless, and then they serve. And so when they're identified as deacons, all of you can know, that's a guy who's been tested. That's a guy who's been proven, he's faithful. Stakes are even higher when it comes to pastors and elders, those who want to be teachers in the church, those who want to handle God's word, those who have greater influence. Paul says in 2 Timothy 2:2, "What you've heard

from me in the presence of many witnesses," What is that? It's the gospel, it's sound doctrine.

It's the entire corpus of the faith, the Apostolic Faith. "What you've heard from me, Timothy, in the presence of many witnesses," They're all there. "Entrust" that body of knowledge and truth "To faithful men, who will be able to teach others also." It's interesting, in testing faithfulness in the church, to see how people respond when you assign a task to them for which they consider themselves rather overqualified.

When they're given a task that they may find uninteresting, or, or relatively unimportant, interesting to see what they do with that. Faithfulness is tested in the little things in life, isn't it? In the seemingly insignificant things, if you can handle things that, that everybody counts as insignificant, little, small, and you're faithful with that?

Keep the motivation up to know that there's somebody else watching who counts all the little things as big things and the insignificant things, he sees it all. Person who is mindful of all those things. They're faithful, they're faithful in their character, they can handle more responsibility. Those who are faithful in

character first, who they are in private is who they really are. They know that.

So they govern themselves, they're disciplined, their self controlled, they attend to the fruit of the spirit, before anything in their life. They're concerned to see growth, change, character, transformed, in order they might not lead anybody astray. Proverbs 4:23 says, "Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the issues of life." They get that. Paul tells Timothy, watch your life and your doctrine closely. So watch your character and the things you teach very closely. You do it all the time.

People like that are humble people. They're teachable. They're meek. It's upon that foundation of godly character that God grants them gifts and grants them opportunity to exercise those gifts, to practice faithfulness in using their gifts, developing skill in their giftedness, growing in competency as stewards in what God has given. It all starts and lands on the foundation, the bedrock of godly character. That's the principle in verse 10. And so we see operating in every sphere of life, faithfulness is the key and those who respect that principle of faithfulness, they reap great rewards. Those who ignore this principle, they do it at their peril, and probably the peril of many others as well.

Look at verse 11. If then Jesus says "If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? And if you've not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own?" Those verses just illustrate the principle, verse 10, take it forward, but they do it from the negative perspective, so unfaithful in little, unfaithful in much. First half of each verse shows what it's like to be unfaithful in little. Handling unrighteous wealth in verse 11, that's a little thing, how you steward what belongs to someone else in verse 12. That's also the littler thing.

Whoever's unfaithful in little things won't be rewarded with greater honor. That is to take on more responsibility here, the true riches and also that which is your own. Let's start with this little matter of money, wealth, verse 11. Little thing called money we, we talked about the word *mammon*, last time. I'll just give you a brief review on that, Jesus has used this word *mammon*, it's an Aramaic loan word and it's used for money here the word *mamonas*. And that *mamonas* word from the Syrian background, it points to the idolatrous Syrian god of money, of wealth. So it really does point to the idolatrous temptation of the love of money being devoted to money, like a god, like an idol.

Jesus could've used other words for wealth, other words for money. The word *Craema* refers to money in general or even property, wealth, riches, the word *arguyran*, that's the word silver, literally silver, that's the kind of metal that many of the coins were made of. It's what gave the coinage its value, the *arguyran*, but *mamonas* comes from the verb *amman*. It's the same verb in Hebrew and Aramaic. It means to put trust in, it means to rely on. So literally the word *mamonas* means, that in which one trusts, that in which one relies on. So it's a, it's a word that personifies the Syrian god of wealth, or the money idol. They made an idol to money, to prosperity.

Man do we see so many false prosperity gospels all around our land, and they're bowing down to this very god, *mamonas*. Jesus chose the word *mamonas*, I think, intentionally to cast this matter of allegiance, what you're devoted to, in sharp relief and he shows us that how we use money reveals what it is that we worship, are we serving God or money? Where's our allegiance? What has the loyalty of our hearts?

Back to verse 11, in verse 11 here's the idea, he says if the way you spend money reveals a love of money, it's idolatry. If you're unfaithful in the little things like money, it's idolatry. So if

you're unfaithful in the little things by committing idolatry, why would God entrust to you the true riches? You might say it this way, if you can't be trusted with Monopoly money, who's gonna give you a real cash or a credit card.

Faithfulness with money means that we spend and we invest in the way that Jesus commands us to in, verse 9, "Make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous mammon." If you don't do that, then you're disobedient. If you don't do that, you're untrustworthy. So why entrust anything more to you? What are the true riches? End of verse 11, literally Jesus says, "If therefore, in the unrighteous *mammon*, faithful, you have not been, the true who to you will entrust?" We don't translate it that way because it makes Jesus sound like Yoda. That's not a sign, a helpful association for us, but it does let you hear the association or the emphasis in the original and what you hear coming across in the original it's not the true riches, but simply the true.

If you're not faithful in little things, in the little, who's going to entrust to you the true? True what? Translators add, worches, words like riches, true riches, or wealth, true wealth to this, to clarify this, what's basic and on its own a*ta alethinon* the true, the true, the true what? True riches, true wealth, but if we drop those

clarifying words, wealth, riches, the idea of the true is contrasted with everything that this world's money is not.

In contrast to this world's money which has changing value. I mean, we're going through a period of pretty significant inflation right now, right? Where the money that we thought we had, it doesn't go as far. Doesn't happen with the true. The wealth of our age is not truly lasting, it doesn't hold its value, it's not eternal, it has no spending power in the age to come.

In fact, you take your wealth overseas and try to spend it there. Let's flip that around. Let's say you take rupees from India, and you bring them here and try to spend them, very little value, right? You don't have that with the true, the valuation is based on the infinite riches of the treasure house of God. You don't have that with the true, the true it holds its value forever, eternally. Money now, we, we use it because it gives us power, it gives us ability, and influence, and we can get the things that we want, and do the things that we want. The true, that has no value later, it has no value after you die. The true, it has power, spending power, effectual power for eternity. Maybe we shouldn't limit the true by putting riches or wealth next to it. Let's just talk about the true infinite treasure of the eternal kingdom, the true.

All that's to say, we don't want to say that earthly money is unimportant. We don't wanna make that mistake. The, the money of this temporal age is important, it is useful. The money that we use every day is the currency of our earthly stewardship. It's a currency of our earthly management. It's how we get things done, how we spend it speaks volumes about our hearts. It tells a lot about what we love, talks a lot about our wisdom. How we spend money reveals our stewardship. So Jesus broadens the application, in verse 12, to point, going from money in the little things he goes on to greater things. He talks, goes from how we spend money in verse 11, to how we exercise our earthly stewardship in verse 12.

"If you have not been faithful in that which is another's." That is, if you're not a faithful steward, that which is another's, could be another's property, could be another's business, could be another's reputation, could be another's fill in the blank. "You haven't been faithful in that which is another's." That is, if you're not a faithful steward. "Who is going to give you that which is your own?"

How is it going to qualify you to have your own property, your own business, your own reputation? Who's gonna put you in charge, when they're doling out what ultimately belongs to them, that which is

another's? What's that? Back to the unjust steward, think about him. How did he treat that which is another's? How did he treat his master's money? How did he treat his master's properties?

The rents, the relationships with the tenant farmers? How did he handle the stewardship that his master entrusted to him? Well, he squandered it, didn't he? And his master fired him for it. "You can no longer be manager," Verse 2, we get that. We could think, that's completely appropriate. We'd done the same thing. We imagine a better set of circumstances here with a steward has not squandered his master's money, not squandered his master's resources and relationships and rents and all the rest, but instead, he has proven himself. He's been faithful, he's been wise. Now, what's the master likely to do? The master is going to reward such a steward, isn't he?

He's gonna see great potential in this guy, he's gonna see him as useful, as valuable. He's going to give him more resources, greater stewardship, greater honor, greater authority, more responsibility, putting him in charge of more and more, to manage more and more, to do more and more. It's a great honor. Listen, that's what's coming for us, if we're faithful. That's what's coming for us, if we're faithful in this life with the little. If we're faithful in the stewardship of a little here, now. Jesus told the Twelve this, in Matthew 19:28, he

said to you, "Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

What's that refer to? First, to the millennial kingdom, that's specific to the nation of Israel, it's a role that's specific to the Twelve. Great honor, a faithful in a little, they're gonna be faithful in much. They're going to be entrusted with much. What about us Gentiles, non apostles? What about us? Paul tells the Corinthians there's a stewardship for non Jews too. There's a stewardship for the church, the faithful in the church age, 1 Corinthians 6:2 says, Paul says, and this is in a passage of rebuke, but it's, there's a truth here, he says, "Or do you not know that the saints," me and you, "Will judge the world? And if the world is to be judged by you, are you incompetent to try trivial cases?" So he's saying, be faithful in little.

Judge the trivial cases of a, in this context, it's lawsuits among believers, I mean, really? Believer going to law before the courts, the secular courts against another believer? Paul says, are you kidding me? Handle that already. Deal with the little things. Judge the trivial cases because don't you know, we're bound to judge the entire world? “Do you not know” verse 3, 1 Corinthians 6 “that we

are to judge angels?" How much more than matters pertaining to this life? Jesus himself in Revelation encourages the faithful in the Church of Thyatira, "Those who keep his works to the end." Another way to say that is those who are faithful.

Those who continue in righteousness, exercise a good stewardship. Revelation 2:26, "The one who is victorious and keeps my works to the end. I will give him authority over the nations." And then Jesus quotes from Psalm 2:9 about himself. "He will shepherd them with the iron scepter. He will shatter them like pottery." So this is Jesus pictured ruling in the millennial kingdom and he says "I have received this from my father." Beloved listen, we exercise a stewardship in this life. We have a stewardship and money is the currency of our stewardship. So let's be faithful in the little things.

We exercise a stewardship in this life over all that God has entrusted to us, our time, our gifts, our talents, our education, our training, our skill, our experience. What we have. What we give an account for. What we have we give an account for all the money and all the rest. Everything that we have our time, our energies, what we have is a gift from God and it's a gift from God for us to use, to use for his glory. We have it as a stewardship and that means we're going to give an account for it. Christians exercise a special stewardship over

the gospel that he's entrusted to us, over the word that he was pleased to reveal to us.

Christ gives gifts and he gives gifted people to his local churches, and he gives a measure of gospel influence to every single one of his churches in order they may spread his saving truth, that they may be faithful in their time, in their place, in their area, and be faithful. So listen, what we do in this life. It really does matter. This isn't for nothing. This isn't holding our breath until Christ comes again. Saying, I'm good, got salvation, got eternal life in my back pocket, 'cause I trust Jesus for my, my salvation and I'm good. I'm just gonna coast now from here on until Christ returns. And then I'm going to go into heaven, eternal glory and float on a cloud and it's going to be so good as I play my harp. Where's that come from?

We do in this life really matters. How we live now counts in the life to come. It counts beloved, and it counts for all of eternity. You hear people say at this point, wait, whoa, whoa, whoa, sounds like legalism. Sounds like you're trying to bind my conscience to some kind of works. Don't bind my conscience to obedience and good works. That is legalism and my salvation doesn't depend on works." That is true. Your salvation is by grace alone, it’s through faith alone, it's all

because of Christ alone, that is exactly what the gospel teaches, but the gospel continues to deliver good news and that is that God's grace in your life has a real effect.

People who speak that way are those who profess to know him, but they deny the power. The gospel has effect, the gospel comes with power, it renews your mind, it changes your life and if it doesn't, it's not the true gospel. Power of the gospel, matures in your life in proportion to your faith. This is "The victory that's overcome the world." 1 John 5:4, the victory is our faith. How's that connected? Well, William Gurnall referred to faith as "a self emptying virtue." Faith is a conduit through which God's grace, he ministers his grace to us, his grace comes to us like a conduit of faith and through that conduit of faith, his grace comes to us and his divine grace is made evidence in us, in none other than God-wrought works. His grace produces good works in us.

So listen, no works, no grace. If there is no grace, there's no faith at all. Your faith is empty and useless. James says it's demonic. Now replace the word works with the word stewardship and you get the idea, no stewardship, no grace because stewardship and works really synonymous here. No stewardship, no grace, if no grace, then no faith, if no faith then no genuine salvation at all. True Christians

are stewards. We're saved by faith alone, but not by a faith that is alone. Our faith is accompanied by good works. Our faith is accompanied by an actual execution of a stewardship in real time, something that can be seen. So if there is no stewardship, but only the use of wealth for personal pleasure, if there is no stewardship, but only a squandering of what doesn't even belong to you, but it belongs to God and is given to you, trusted to you.

Then ultimately if there's none of that, ultimately, there's no true discipleship. There's no Christianity at all. There's no eternal life. You're not obedient to Jesus' command in verse 9, Luke 16:9 to "Make friends for yourselves by means of wealth." Then look, you're not a steward of his, you're no disciple of his and you're not heading to Heaven as your eternal home. If that's you, if I, do I tell you bad news right now, I'm telling you bad news that leads to good news, because if we can identify that, you can see it as unrighteousness and sin that can be repented of, and you can put your faith in him.

Every true Christian is a steward of God's gifts. Every true Christian senses the need to exercise his or her stewardship. In fact, as I speak this and I know there are so many of you true Christians, you're hearing this and your heart warms to it. Your heart is excited

about stewardship, about pleasing him with your life. You're excited, we're not worried about standing before the judgment seat of Christ, 2 Corinthians 5:10, "To give an account for the things in the body, whether good or bad." You're, you're excited to go before the judgment seat of Christ and talk to him and say, "Ah, this is what I did with what you gave." Every Christian senses this.

So the only question then is this matter of faithfulness, degrees of faithfulness, what that means for the life to come. But the chief concern in conducting our stewardship is faithfulness, be faithful. Be faithful. Question then, that comes to mind, should come to mind, is like, well, okay, well, whoa, wait, wait, wait, timeout, before I run to the bar of you know, bema seat of Christ, 2 Corinthians 5:10. Excited. How do I know whether I'm being faithful? I mean, what does that look like? Thanks for asking. Look back at verse 9. What does he say, "I tell you make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth. So when it fails, they may receive you into the eternal dwellings."

We said last week, verse 9 is parallel to verse 4 and the elements of each verse are parallel to one another. So go back and see what that unjust steward did in the parable, verse 4, "So that when he's removed, people may receive him into their houses." After he

loses his job. What did he do? We saw in verses 5-7 in the parable, the unrighteous steward gave each of his master's renters a 500 denarii discount, a very generous gift, didn't he? He not only succeeded in his very clever plan to make friends for the sake of future employment, for the sake of future friendship being so generous, same time, he gained a great reputation for his master for being so generous.

You say, wait a minute, but he gave away his masters' money, not his own money. Anyone can be generous with money that doesn't belong to him. And I say, exactly. You got it. That is the point. You say, but his master would have been irritated over how his reputation was improved in the community with this unexpected generosity of his, he didn't even know he was doing. I say, right, again, you're getting it.

Plant this thought deepen in your mind that all the money that comes into your life via a paycheck, or a gift, or because of interest, or dividends, or intre, investments or any money that comes into you. You can always keep in mind that that money is not your money. Anyone can give away money that's not his right? It's not your money, it's God's.

You can be extremely generous, can't you? If it's God's money and not yours, then you can feel very free to give it away. You can feel very free to invest it in kingdom work. God doesn't mind that one bit. I've got it on good authority. Now an earthly landowner and earthly business owner, he's in business to make money so just want to warn you don't go out and spend your employer's money that way, as you see fit, for kingdom purposes or whatever.

But your highest master, your father in heaven, he rejoices in generosity. His heart is generous, it's kind, he loves to give. So Jesus even said in Sermon on the Mount, "If you do good and if you lend expecting nothing in return." What will you be? Sons of the Most High, you'll be putting the character of your heavenly Father on display in generosity.

The extra funds that God brings into your life, God wants you to spend it. He wants you to spend it. Yeah, sometimes on yourself and enjoying the good things he's given. But he also wants you to spend it on others. He also wants you to spend it on needs, people who have needs, he loves it when you spend, "Not letting your left hand know what your right hands doing." Do it in private, do it in secret. Let, just bless people. He loves you to be generous. He loves you to take, plan and take money, extra funds and invest that back into Kingdom

work to see the gospel go forth that friends might be made for eternity.

So to be generous with this earthly unrighteous wealth presupposes a few things, doesn't it? Most basic is that you have to have money in order to be generous with money. Some people have no money to spend because they squander it, frankly. They're like the unrighteous steward in the parable. They don't have anything left because they keep spending it, blowing it on bubblegum and such. Other people, or the adult equivalent of bubble gum, whatever it is.

Other people simply feel like they don't have enough money to give to others, don't have enough to share, but it's really just covering over a stingy heart. It's really covering over a self-centered heart or let's add this, it's covering over an anxious, worried heart because you're worried about finances.

What did Jesus say? "Don't be anxious about what you eat, or drink or what you put on." Don't do that. Most of us if we're honest, we can see that we do have a little extra. Even if it's just a very little, we have extra. We're able to share with others, we really are. I got a few cross references about thinking about your finances. If you can just follow along and turn some pages and keep up with, start

in Ephesians chapter 4 verse 28. Ephesians 4:28, Paul, Paul is speaking here to a whole series of different kinds of sins that need to be repented of and one of them is about people who steal, people who are thieves.

And Paul tells in Ephesians 4:28, these repentant former thieves, he tells him how to repent, he says, labor. Labor that is the word *kopiao* which means to work hard enough that you become physical weary, work hard enough that you sweat a bit, exert yourself, strive, struggle, tire yourself out. So Paul says, "Labor doing honest work with your own hands so that you may have something to share with anyone in need." So how does the thief workout his repentance? Not just getting a job, not just getting a job and having extra money, not just taking care of all the bills and everything in his life. He still isn't repentant, not until he replaces that covetous, greedy heart with a heart of generosity. Generous heart, so you can share with someone in need.

You're going to share with someone in need, what does it mean? It means you're looking out for those who are, have needs right? It means you're connected into the church, it means you're connected and you know, you know people, you know their situation, you know them well enough to know where they're struggling, where it hurts. And you come

and apply a little, a little balm of a little extra money here and there because you want to help them, you want to bless them. Got to know people in order to do that right? Can't be disconnected, aloof, on the fringe. Help people in need.

Turn over just a few books, over to 1 Thessalonians, in 1 Thessalonians, Paul is actually rebuking certain people, he's telling certain people in the church to stop being lazy, stop being idle, to stop using their theology as a cover for their indolence and laziness. They'd used, interesting, they use Paul's teaching on Christ imminent return as a reason to quit their jobs in preparation for his return. Like worldly employment isn't important anymore, because I'm going to heaven. Like any minute now. You know, he's coming back. So they sounded oh so pious, in all their reasons for not working. They had all these righteous reasons for doing all the wrong things. In reality, they just love the idea they no longer had to work.

Days turned into weeks, weeks turned into months, and Christ still had not returned. They became mendicants. What's that? They're beggars. They became ministers of mooching, refusing to work and for, all for righteous reasons, they were saddling others in the church with their laziness. So in 1 Thessalonians 4:11, Paul commands the church there to "Aspire to live quietly and to mind your own affairs,

and to work with your hands as we instructed you." Well that's a novel idea, Christian, make it your aspiration, make it your chief ambition to live a quiet life. Mind your own affairs, mind your business, and work with your hands as we instructed you.

In this Thessalonian church, which really was a model church, excellent church, but there were some who didn't listen to this exhortation, in 1 Thessalonians. So turn a couple pages to 2 Thessalonians. Paul writes to them again and he deals with these lazy, indolent people within the body, becomes more insistent, if you look at 2 Thessalonians 3 and well, I mean, the whole section from verse 6 all the way to verse 15. That's one section, "We command you brothers in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ," verse 6, "That you keep away from any brother who's walking in idleness, and not according to the tradition you've received from us." So he's dealing with the same group of people, but here you can see him expanding this teaching like, hey, you didn't get it the first time. Maybe, maybe I wasn't clear enough. Let me give you a few more verses.

So in verse 10, skip ahead, he says, "For even when we were with you, we would give you this command, if anyone is not willing to work let him not eat." The section we skipped is showing Paul and his, his fellow workers as working really, really hard and not taking an income

from the church. So he, his fellow workers worked, he gave them an example to imitate. "So if anyone's not willing to work, let him not eat for we hear," Verse 11. "Some among you walk in idleness not busy at work, but busy bodies, so such persons we command and encourage in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly," There's that same language again, "And to earn their own living." Look, if we're going to conduct our stewardship in generosity, everyone needs to pull his own weight. Everyone needs to earn his own living, and not be a burden to other people.

Look at 1 Timothy 5:8, you're in 2 Thessalonians, turn a few pages to your right, 1 Timothy 5:8, "If anyone does not provide for his relatives, especially the members of his own household." What does it say there? "He has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever." So listen, if we're going to be, if we're gonna, if we're gonna to take up this mantle of faithfulness in our stewardship, if we're gonna to be generous in our stewardship, which is what it is to be faithful, we got to work hard, we got to work really hard, provide for yourselves, provide for your families, take care of your responsibilities, but don't stop there. So many people say, it's just me and my family and that's it. I just circle the wagons around my family and that's all I do. No, to be faithful means you look beyond your household, you're looking for those in need.

You want to be generous to those outside of your house as well. It's not righteous to think only of yourself and only of your family. It is righteous, to be generous to others. That is faithfulness. Generosity means you need to be wise, you need to build wealth, you need to be on the active lookout for needs and for opportunities. What is a need? A need is what we refer to in Ephesians 4:28. Work hard so you can have something to share with someone in need, someone who is in, in want and lacking, can't pay the bills, needs food on the table.

Also look though for opportunity, that's a whole ‘nother level. If you go back to Ephesians 4, you were there earlier, just go back to, so you got to get there very quick, it's still warm. Go back to Ephesians not 4, but 5, Ephesians 5, and we're thinking about not just addressing needs with our generosity, but also addressing opportunities with our generosity.

Ephesians 5 and verse 15. Paul says there, "Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time." That expression there, it's redeeming the time *exagorazo, agor*, *agora* refers to the marketplace. So this is a commercial term. So he's talking about redeeming the time, that he, that means to buy back the time, buy back, so buy back time, "Because the days are evil." So think about your opportunities. The days are evil, the time is short,

you have opportunities in front of you for the kingdom. Use the opportunities you have.

How do we do that? Go back to the end of 1 Timothy, you were just in 1 Timothy again, that spots warm too, so just go right back there. End of 1 Timothy, Paul is telling Timothy at the end of that wonderful letter. He's talking about how to instruct the wealthy in the use of their wealth. In what Jesus calls unrighteous *mammon*, money, we've all learned from Jesus in Luke and here, you're going to hear some very familiar language in what Paul says to Timothy in 1 Timothy 6:17. Timothy, tell them this "As for the rich in this present age," notice the word there, "Charge them not to be haughty."

Young Pastor Timothy, probably in his 30s, walk up to that wealthiest dude in the church. The guy who's built everything up from the ground up. He's invested for longer than Timothy has been alive as a pastor, walk up to him, Timothy, charge him not to be haughty. He has a proud nerve in his body, that will test it, won't it? Young little pastor coming up to him, charging him, charge him not to be haughty. Charge him not to set his hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. What are the rich to do? They are to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good

foundation for the future. So that they may take hold of that which is truly life.

This is exactly what Jesus is saying about stewardship in Luke 16. Don't waste money, don't squander stewardship. Look to Jesus, look to the one who is the son, faithful over his father's house. Follow him, obey him, do good, be rich in good works. Be generous, be ready to share, if you're going to be generous and ready to share that means you have to take care of your household first, you have to see that your own needs are attended to, that you're not a burden to anybody else and you're earning enough to make a little more and save and put away and then you're ready to share.

You're ready to be generous to those in need and you're ready to take advantage of opportunities for the gospel, for the kingdom, when they come, pounce on them. You can take hold like he says here, "Take hold of that which is truly life." We will be faithful and we will be generous, when we're mindful and here's the third and final point. You can go back to Luke 16; we'll be faithful and generous when we are mindful. Third point, mindful of the master of our stewardship. Number three, the master of our stewardship. So the manner of our stewardship is going to be worked out in direct proportion to our love for, talks about ability, "No servant is able to serve two masters."

Jesus is denying there, the possibility that, that can be done, in spite of the clear word of instruction there, that it's impossible, you can't do it. I saw, I read commentators that said, "Well, we all know that you can serve two masters." Like, What? Are you reading the same Bible I am? Maybe this is like a New World Translation you're reading or Book of Mormon or something. But that's not the Bible because Jesus just said, you can't. Commentator, just because it's in print, just because it's published, it doesn't mean it's all good. Read with discernment folks, okay that was for free, it's your little commercial, go back to the main event here.

So "No servant is able to serve two masters for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he'll be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot," There's that verb again, unable to "Serve God and money." The measure of faithfulness is in your stewardship and it's in direct proportion to your master to the one you serve as Lord. If you serve money, literally the verb there is *douleuo*, so it's enslaved to money. If you are enslaved to money *douleuo* is used twice in this verse means just simply to serve as a slave, to be owned by something. So if you're in, owned by money and your heart is owned by money, whether through greed and covetousness, or whether it's through worry or whether it's through a miserly, stingily, stingy heart.

If you're owned by money, you're unfaithful in your stewardship, but if God is your master, if you're owned by him, you're going to be devoted to him in love. You're going to be faithful in your stewardship, you're gonna be righteously motivated, the man of your stewardship is going to be faithful and generous. That's the issue. Who do we line up under? What do we line up under? Who's our Lord?

Notice there are several contrast there in verse 13. First notice the contrast between two kinds of disciples, the true and the false. You can't see it so much in the English translation, but the word for servant there is, *oiketes*. So it contrasts with *oikonomos*, in the parable. The steward, the unjust steward was an unjust *oikonomos*. But here, Jesus talks about *oiketes*. So the words are related, but Jesus distinguishing the servant here, as one who is truly a member of the household.

It's different from the *oikonomos* in the parable. The *oikonomos* in the parable was not a member of the household. Remember, he was a free man. He wasn't owned, he was a man for hire, *oiketes* belongs to his master as a slave. That means he is a member of the household, he's under the master's care, provision, protection, he's dearly loved. The *oikonomos* by contrast, was a free man. He's hired himself

out to the master, it's his services that are contracted for, so the relationship is contractual. The connection between them is the thin connection of money. What is it that marks the difference between them? Second contrast, between the two affections in the heart. Notice the hatred versus the love, the devotion versus the despising. When it comes to affections, when it comes to the heart's devotion, there is no middle ground whatsoever.

You can't love God and money. You can't be devoted to God and money. You can't serve God and money. They're mutually exclusive. And you say, well, I've been pretty well straddling a fence all my life. I tell you what, put a little pressure on your life. And when push comes to shove, it will force the decision. Who do you trust? What do you love? What do you, what do you devoted to? What do you actually despise?

Thirdly, notice the contrast between two masters, God versus money. More literally the contrast is between God and *mammonah*, the, the living and true God and the, and money which is nothing more than a dumb idol. Turn over for a moment to Isaiah 44, this is just a very quick look at this.

Such a fantastic, humorous passage, I, but it makes a very serious point, we really can't pass it up when we think about the contrast between the true and living God and money, a dumb idle. It says in Isaiah 44 verse 9, "All who fashion idols are nothing and the things that they delight in, do not profit." So that's, this whole section, I think is really informing Jesus concern here. We realize in verse 14 of our texts that the Pharisees react very poorly to Jesus teaching on money because they are lovers of money. The Pharisees, they no longer bowed to statues like their forefathers, but they were still idolaters. Still committed idolatry because they love money and Jesus does not want his disciples to be led astray by the same lie. He doesn't want his disciples to be led astray by religious leaders who say, no, it's okay to love money. No, it's okay. Money in your life and, shows big success in your life and big success in your life shows all of God's blessing. So love away.

Jesus does not want them to be led astray by that at all. So look at Isaiah 44. Let's start in verse 12. "The ironsmith," he's talking about those who make idols. So he says "The ironsmith takes a cutting tool and he works it over the coals and he fashions it with hammers and works it with his strong arm. He becomes hungry, his strength fails, he drinks no water and is faint. Carpenter stretches a line; he marks it out with a pencil. Shapes it with planes, marks with a compass, he shapes it into the figure of a man, with the beauty of a

man, to dwell in a house. He cuts down cedars or he chooses a cypress tree or an oak and lets it grow strong among the trees of the forest. He plants a cedar and the rain nourishes it and," it, "then it becomes fuel for a man, takes part of it, warms himself, kindles a fire, bakes bread. He also makes a god and worships it; he makes it an idol and falls down before it. Half of it, he burns in the fire. And over the half he eats meat; he roasts it and is satisfied.

"Also he warms himself and says, 'Aha, I'm warm, I've seen the fire!' And the rest of it to make sense of a god, his idol, falls down and worships it. He prays to it and says, 'Deliver me, for you are my god!'" The other half of you I burned, but deliver me for you are my god. What does it say there? "They know not, nor do they discern, for he shut their eyes, so they can't see and their hearts so they can't understand. No one considers nor is there any knowledge or discernment to say, half of it I burned in the fire; I also baked bread on its coals; I roasted meat, I've eaten and shall I make the rest of it an abomination? Shall I fall down before a block of wood? Feeds on ashes; a deluded heart has led him astray, he cannot deliver himself or say Is there not a lie in my right hand?

If we put that into today's language, we all recognize the same trees that we use to produce paper for money, we also used to make

toilet paper. It's all paper. That people love money, steal money, hoard money, gather money, stingy about money, points to a very serious distortion in the heart called greed. Covetous desire is such a warped, spiritual longing, because nothing in this life, nothing in the created Earth can satisfy the longing of our hearts which is eternal. Only the eternal can satisfy what God has put us, put within us, which is an eternal longing. Only God can satisfy.

You try to satisfy with anything else on this earth whatever money can buy, can't be done. This brings us, go back to Luke 16. That brings us to a final contrast here. Luke 16:13, Jesus contrasts two disciples, two affections, two masters and then finally, Luke 16:13, notice the contrast between two enslavements. Serving God versus serving money, true disciples with true affections who serve the true Master. They are those who in this 1 Thessalonians 1:9 describes, have "Turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God." If that's you, it's me. So let's use the we, first person plural we, have been set free from the futility, and the enslavement and the misery of all idolatry in Christ.

And being set free. Our eyes are now opened. We're not like those blinded, dull hearted people in, in Isaiah 44, who are bowing down to blocks of wood, bowing down to toilet paper. We're not led astray, our

eyes have been open and our hearts have been freed. And we're now rejoicing in the true and the living God. Only God, we realize now, is worthy of our devotion. God and God alone causes us to wonder. God and God alone is the one who evokes all of our praise. God and God alone draws our hearts upward to worship, draws out our affection, demands our love and we're happy to repay with love and gratitude and praise, serving God and God alone. That is freedom.

Serving money, that's slavery. Again, Jesus says, "You cannot love God and money." You cannot be devoted to God and money. You cannot serve God and money. They are mutually exclusive. You are enslaved to one or you're enslaved to the other, but not both. You belong to one or you belong to the other. Not both. And yet as J.C. Ryle says, "Thousands of people are constantly trying to do the things which Christ says are impossible." He goes on to say "They try to be friends with the world and friends of God at the same time. Their consciences are enlightened to the extent that they want to have some religion. But their affections are chained down to earthly things that they never show that they are true Christians. This results in their living in a state of unhappiness, they have too much religion to be happy in this world, and they have too much of the world in their hearts, to be happy with religion." So true.

Those enslaved to money or any created thing, but, for that matter, anything, those enslaved to family, those enslaved to reputation, those enslaved to opinion, those enslaved to the fear of man, those enslaved to worry, those enslaved to money, fill it all in. Above all people, they are the most miserable people in the world. Only God is worthy of our service and our love and our devotion and discipleship. He commands our consciences. He holds us accountable for how we use what's in our wallets and beloved, his only beloved son, his begotten son, he's come to teach us, to exercise stewardship following his perfect, faithful example. He, the king of heaven, with all the treasury of heaven at his back, he pours it all out.

"Fear not little flock, it's Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." So Jesus teaches us to exercise stewardship. Following his perfect example, his faithful example, his generosity. That I should be quick to add here, that when we're less faithful than we should be, that's all of us. Less faithful than we should be, when we fail, when we sin, I mean none of us is going to render a perfect account for our stewardship like Jesus did, so what does that mean? It means, we have another opportunity to sit back and glory in the gospel, to rest in his perfect redemption, because of his obedience, because of his perfect faithfulness, because of his magnanimous generosity to us, by the grace of God, his perfect stewardship has been imputed to us and we're covered in it.

So when God looks at us do you know whose stewardship he sees? Not my failing, faltering one, he sees Christ's stewardship. I'm covered in him, I'm covered in his righteousness, which means I'm covered in his faithfulness, which means I'm covered in his perfection, which means I'm covered in his stewardship. Charles Spurgeon encouraged us to live now in such a way as to render a good account of our stewardship to God.

He says, "We need to rest in Christ more confidently. Love God more earnestly, serve your generation more intensely, live while you live, play not at living, but live real, in real earnest and let it never be said of you that you trod so lightly on the sands of time, that you left no impress there. Make your mark upon your age, and fill your appointed place as God shall help you that when you're gathered to your fathers, you may not be forgotten, but the church may remember you because in her midst, there are children born to God through your means."

Man, that is a good word. Be encouraged Christian, there is still time, even if you look back at a past life of squandering. So to the prodigal, all he had was squandering in his past, all he had was wastefulness. I mean, if you're at that very bottom of the barrel,

look, there's time to turn around, there's time to repent. This life is a test of our stewardship and the reward of our earthly stewardship is going to be meted out in spades in the life to come. So, serve, give, be generous, be faithful, live life to the fullest. Live while you really live. Embrace the privilege of your stewardship. Let's pray.

Our Father, we're so grateful to you because you have sent us the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. He is the one who is God in the flesh. And so in him, we see you Father, this is your heart. This is your encouragement to us, that we can be your stewards, being your stewards, from the smallest of us to the greatest of us. That means we have a, a place in this world that is greater than the mightiest ruler, the most powerful warrior than the most wise philosopher. We are children of the living God and stewards of the resources of heaven.

Father, please remind us of our stewardship day, after day, after day and let us be like Jesus. Thinking daily, moment by moment about rendering unto you a good account of our stewardship. Let us rejoice in it. Let us count everything that you've given as a gift. Let us enjoy and then bring others into the enjoyment as well, that you may

be praised for your goodness, your generosity, and your grace. All in the name of Jesus Christ we pray, amen.