

CAN WE USE WORLDLY WEALTH?

The Parable of the Unjust Steward: Man and Money, [Luke 16:1-13](#)

In this parable and His application of it, the Lord redirects our attitudes and establishes His will for believers concerning wealth.

1. **The unjust steward (v.1-7).**
2. **The worldly are more wise in their material pursuits than God's people are in their spiritual pursuits (v.8).**
3. **The Christian is to use material wealth for good (v.9).**
4. **The Christian is to be faithful in handling possessions: how he handles his possessions will determine what he will be trusted with eternally (v.10-12).**
5. **The Christian cannot serve two masters: he must choose God or riches (v.13).**

Thought 1. Death will take us away from all our earthly goods. If our accounting justifies us, then we shall be given a much greater responsibility, an eternal responsibility, for the Lord.

Matthew 18:23 (NASB)

²³“For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves.”

Matthew 21:34 (NASB)

³⁴“When the harvest time approached, he sent his slaves to the vine-growers to receive his produce.”

Matthew 25:19 (NASB)

¹⁹“Now after a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them.”

Luke 19:15 (NASB)

¹⁵“When he returned, after receiving the kingdom, he ordered that these slaves, to whom he had given the money, be called to him so that he might know what business they had done.”

Romans 14:12 (NASB)

¹²“So then each one of us will give an account of himself to God.”

Hebrews 9:27 (NASB)

²⁷“And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment.”

1 Peter 4:4 (NASB)

⁴“In *all* this, they are surprised that you do not run with *them* into the same excesses of dissipation, and they malign *you*.”

3. The steward knew he was guilty and was unwilling to change or ask for mercy.
Note **two things**.

- a. The words “**What shall I do...?**” The steward knew he was guilty and that the Lord was going to dismiss him.
- b. The steward thought over what he should do. He reasoned out **two courses** of action.
 - ⇒ He could dig. However, he was not willing to dig, not willing to be demoted to a field laborer and to serve in such a low capacity.
 - ⇒ He could beg. However, he was ***too proud*** to leave the Lord and openly beg. He would be ashamed.

Now note something not mentioned. He was too proud to beg forgiveness of the Lord, too proud to be known as a repentant embezzler (sinner). This is the dominant point, although not mentioned. Begging for forgiveness was the steward’s only hope. He considered every course of action but this one.

Proverbs 28:13 (NASB)

¹³ “**He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, But he who confesses and forsakes *them* will find compassion.**”

Isaiah 29:15 (NASB)

¹⁵ “**Woe to those who deeply hide their plans from the LORD, And whose deeds are *done* in a dark place, And they say, “Who sees us?” or “Who knows us?”**”

Isaiah 30:1 (NASB)

¹ “**Woe to the rebellious children,” declares the LORD, “Who execute a plan, but not Mine, And make an alliance, but not of My Spirit, In order to add sin to sin.”**”

4. The steward decided what to do: he would forget the Lord, and court the favor and returns of men. He did what he could to secure the acceptance and favor of men.

- a. He led them to be dishonest, to dismiss and lower their debts to the Lord. They were led to ***embezzle and hold back*** some of their goods. **Note:** the steward was in a responsible position (a religionist) and misled others.

Thought 1. How many religionists mislead others through false teaching, causing so many not to use their lives and gifts for God.

- b. This act ***stole*** from the Lord; it stole the goods (life and gifts) of others from the Lord.
- c. The steward misled others to benefit himself, to secure his position and livelihood. And he did it in a most shrewd way, a way that was pleasing and profitable to the debtors. Anyone of them would gladly help the steward when he needed their support. (See below **Deeper Study # 2—Luke 16:6-7.**)

Living Word Christian Center, 6520 Arizona Ave., Los Angeles, Ca 90045

Email: Pastoreddie@wlawcc.org

Web Page: www.wlawcc.org Office 310-645-2522

Malachi 2:8 (NASB)

⁸“But as for you, you have turned aside from the way; you have caused many to stumble by the instruction; you have corrupted the covenant of Levi,” says the LORD of hosts.”

Romans 14:13 (NASB)

¹³“Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather determine this—not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother’s way.”

DEEPER STUDY # 2

Luke 16:6-7 (NASB)

⁶ And he said, ‘A hundred measures of oil.’ And 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?’ And he said, ‘A hundred measures of wheat.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, and write eighty.’

([Luke 16:6-7](#)) Measure— Oil— Wealth: a measure of oil (*batous*) was about 8-3/4 gallons. Therefore, the payment was a sizeable 800 gallons. The measure of wheat (*korous*) was about 10 bushels. This too was sizeable, about 1,000 bushels.

2. ([Luke 16:8](#)) Dedication— Worldly— Materialism: the worldly are wiser in their material pursuits than God’s people are in their spiritual pursuits.

Luke 16:8 (NASB)

⁸“And his master praised the unrighteous manager because he had acted shrewdly; for the sons of this age are more shrewd in relation to their own kind than the sons of light.”

Note two points.

1. Jesus said the unjust steward acted “shrewdly.”

- ⇒ He looked out for himself, his personal welfare. In this he was very wise.
- ⇒ He was dedicated and sold out to taking care of his future.

Jesus was not commending the steward for his cunning deceit. He commended him for his concern about the future and his dedication and energy. The steward was *sold out* to pursuing a goal, and that part of his life was commendable. His mistake was being sold out to pursuing material wealth and comfort instead of Christ.

2. Jesus said the worldly are wiser “to their own kind” than believers. Why? Because they dedicate so much energy and effort to caring for their earthly welfare.

The point is clear. Every disciple should be just as dedicated and sold out in spiritual pursuits as the worldly are in their material pursuits. The disciple is not to be outdone in the exertion of energy and dedication.

Thought 1. Note how much more initiative and energy this man of the world exerted in his pursuits than many Christians exert in theirs.

Matthew 13:23 (NASB)

²³“And the one on whom seed was sown on the good soil, this is the man who hears the word and understands it; who indeed bears fruit and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty.”

Luke 9:23-24 (NASB)

²³“And He was saying to *them* all, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.”

²⁴“For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it.”

Romans 12:1 (NASB)

¹“Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, *which is* your spiritual service of worship.”

Proverbs 3:5 (NASB)

⁵“Trust in the LORD with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding.”

Proverbs 23:26 (NASB)

²⁶“Give me your heart, my son, And let your eyes delight in my ways.”