

# LUKE I The Dishonest Steward Lk 16:1–18 Bill Turner

*What possible good can be taught from such a bad example?*

1. **Years ago I worked for a company who went through accountants regularly**
  - a. The Accountants Didn't Seem to Stay Long... and the quality seemed to be declining.
2. **I'm not trying to be Judgmental—OK!**
  - a. but when the accountant looks like he is living in his car you have to wonder a bit!
  - b. When your accountant looks like he works for the mob—it's a red flag ok!
3. **I remember thinking—why would any company hire such odd accountants?**
  - a. Unless they didn't want one Completely Honest / but not completely Dishonest either
  - b. Someone in-between that can turn a blind eye / but not steal either
4. **Well I found out later—when they hired another accountant...**
  - a. That the one who looked like he was living out of his car Embezzled \$10K from company!
  - b. But He Was Shrewd—\$10k was enough to keep hidden—but not enough for them to sue
  - c. It would cost 10k to go to court to get it back / And he could spill the beans on books!

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## I. THE PARABLE (v.1–9)

### A. A DISHONEST MANAGER (v.1–3)

1. **This man appears to be dishonest—and it has caught up to him...**
  - a) If He Was Innocent—He Would' be able to Prove it!
  - b) But Instead He Goes into Overdrive to Salvage His Reputation
2. **He knows he has been cooking the books for himself and the gig is up**
  - a) He knows his reputation is ruined and he has no place to land
  - b) His 'golden parachute' has failed and he is falling fast!
  - c) But He's too Weak or Lazy to Dig / Too Proud to Beg / But NOT too Proud to Steal!

### B. SO HE HATCHES A PLAN TO SAVE HIMSELF (v.4–7)

1. **First he has been cooking the books for himself and was caught**
2. **But Now He is going to cook the books for the debtors...**

**This has several advantages...**

- a) **FIRST:** The Debtors Will Be Grateful To Him...  
Which allows him Keep His Reputation relatively intact...
- b) **SECOND:** He Helps these Debtors—so he can finally feel good about himself for helping them instead of just helping himself...
- c) **THIRD:** He had no friends—so now by he can be received by those he 'helped' and if it comes to push or shove—they will side with Him!
- d) **FOURTH:** He has involved the Debtors in this scheme—But in a way that actually make his boss Look Good!

### C. WHAT POSSIBLE GOOD CAN BE TAUGHT FROM SUCH A BAD EXAMPLE? (v.8–9)

## 1. Why would the Master Command This Dishonest Manager who had stolen? He did not commend him for stealing—but for being shrewd

- a) Not Wise [b/c True wisdom is pure and moral], —but Shrewd! theres a difference
- b) He was about to loose everything—but he landed on his feet by helping others!

## 2. There is a Contrast Here (v.9)

- a) "Christians devote less pains to win heaven than the children of this world devote to win earth; that they prepare less for their future in heavenly things than those of the world do in earthly things, — that the world is better served by it's servants than God is by His."<sup>1</sup> —N.T. Scholar RC Trench (1807-1866) adapted.

## 3. The people of this world are Shrewd & know how to get what they want

- a) It's NOT Part Time for them / It's ALL THE TIME
- b) They Study it / Dream About it / Obsess on it! / THEY LIVE THERE!

## 4. This is what bothers me about Politics...

- a) God-fearing people are trying to raise their families right / treat their spouse right  
Working an honest job / and going to church...
- b) They aren't ACTIVISTS laying awake at night scheming ways to gain power...
- c) corrupt public school curriculum / destroy political enemies / get rich off government
- d) But That is a Full-time obsession with some people / who can compete w/ that?

## 5. An Example of how people go to DC and rewrite the rules in their favor...

- a) I heard in the News How the EPA set up rules w/ FED and the SEC and they would fine corporations and banks huge federal fines
- b) They could either pay a huge fine to the FED... OR, a lesser fine to an Environmental Advocacy Group Run By Their Political Friends!
- c) They Fund Their Friends w/ Millions \$—and it's not even their Money!  
a gift that keeps on giving!
- d) Then when the next Administration tried to Cancel this—they were attacked by the very people making money from it!
- e) And When they Left Washington—they have a Cushy Position to Land in!

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## II. THE PHARISEES (v.14–18)

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### A. A PICTURE OF THE PHARISEES & SADDUCEES...

- 1. Pharisees & Sadducees Rose to Power as the Religious Rulers of Israel  
But over time they 're-wrote the rules' for themselves
- 2. They used their power to maintain their power
- 3. They twisted scripture to Make Loop-holes for their own personal gain  
and they were SHREWD About It...

### B. THEY 'COOKED THE BOOKS' For Themselves & Their Friends

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<sup>1</sup> R.C. Trench, Notes on the Parables of our Lord, p.444; first published in 1841

## 1. Loopholes in the Law to MAKE Money...

—These were the money changers / and scammers in the temple

## 2. Loopholes in the Law to PROTECT Their Money ...

—Corbin: Give your \$ to us and then tell your parents that you gave the \$ to God and can't care for them— you help us / we help you

## 3. Loopholes in the Law to AMASS WEALTH by Devouring Widows Houses...

—Widows who probably thought they were donating property & homes to God... but in fact it was all being taken by these guys!

## 4. Loopholes in the Law for POWER...

—Annas was HP—he set up each of his sons > Then son-in-law as HP!

—They loved the Chief Seats and to be called Rabbi in the Streets

## 5. Loopholes in the Law to DIVORCE their Wives...

—Why do you think Jesus said this here? (v.18)

—They Were Putting their wives out to pasture...

—and trading them in for new models.

## 6. Isn't Dumping Your Wife—to Take Someone Else's wife authorized ...

—in Every '*Cult Leader 101*' Handbook ever written?

—in Every '*False Prophet for Dummies*' Book Ever Written?

a) The Bagwan Rashnish, Charles Manson, David Koresh, Joseph Smith!

b) Joseph Smith went up to other Men and said: '*God told me your wife is my wife now*'

c) This is Just Classic Textbook for False Teachers (2 Timothy 3:6)

## 7. They Were Just as Materialistic THEN as people are NOW

Going All the way back to the 10 commandments! (Exodus 20:13-17a)

**Your 'Soul-Mate is NOT Someone Else's Spouse!**

They Were Cooking the Books for themselves and their Friends...

## C. JESUS CALLS THEM OUT TO GIVE ACCOUNT of their stewardship

### 1. Their Stewardship of God's Word, God's People, God's Plan

a) *And Their Response? Who Are You? How Dare You Question Us...*

b) *Where do you get your authority? (not from us!)*

*"People of the lie attack others rather than face their own failures" —M. Scott Peck*

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## III. THE PRINCIPLES (v.10–13)

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### A. THOSE WHO ARE FAITHFUL IN LITTLE ARE FAITHFUL IN MUCH (10-12)

#### 1. Those Who Are HONEST in Little Things Will Be HONEST in Big things

**Those DISHONEST in little things will be DISHONEST in Big things**

*"God does not judge by the magnitude of an act, but by the spiritual principles and motives which lie back of the act. A small action may discover and lay bare these principles quite as well as a large one. In the administration of small properties entrusted to us on the earth we reveal our disposition and temper as stewards quite as well as if we owned half the universe." —JW McGarvey*

**2. Whether it is a widow who gave her last penny...**

- a) Or Mary who broke open the expensive perfume and anointed Jesus feet
- b) or Judas who criticized her waste saying it should've been sold to give to the poor

**3. This is a HEART ISSUE—You are the Same Person whether You Have  
Very Little or Very Much...**

- a) **If Your Not FAITHFUL NOW**—with what God has blessed you with...  
Then You'll Never Be Faithful Even if You Owned Half the Universe!
- b) **If Your Not THANKFUL NOW**—with What God has given you...  
—then you'll Never be Thankful Even If You Owned Half the Universe!
- c) **If Your Not KIND or GENEROUS NOW**—with What God has blessed you with...  
You'll NEVER Be KIND or GENEROUS Even if You Owned 1/2 universe!

**4. Not Unless You Change Within Yourself...**

**B. NO ONE CAN SERVE TWO MASTERS (v.13)**

**1. Imagine if you had to work two jobs simultaneously...**

- a) for 2 different companies, in two different locations—but at the same time. [mental!]

**2. This is what it is like to live with a split-conscious—**

- a) In time the cognitive dissonance creates so much stress...
- b) and the guilt of the conscious will cause so much anxiety
- c) that we will be forced to gravitate to one or the other—or go mental!

**3. Who then is a wise and faithful servant? (Luke 12:42–46; 48b)**

**C. WE MUST ALL GIVE AN ACCOUNT TO GOD**

**1. Eventually we will all give an account to God (Rom. 14:12; Matt 12:35)**

- a) for the stewardship of our LIFE and our TIME, our FAMILY,
- b) our GIFTS, our ABILITIES and TALENTS, our SELF and our ACTIONS

**EX: John D. Rockefeller—was a shrewd businessman—Made his million \$ by 33...**

At age 43, he controlled the biggest company in the world. At age 53, he was the richest man on earth and the world's only billionaire. But then he developed a sickness that caused his hair to fall out, his eyelashes and eyebrows disappeared, and he was shrunken like a mummy. A journalist called him the 'living mummy'.

His weekly income was one million dollars, but he digested only milk and crackers. He was so hated in Pennsylvania that he had to have bodyguards day and night. He could not sleep, stopped smiling long since, and enjoyed nothing in life. The doctors predicted he would not live over one year...He had lived for \$ but now realized he couldn't take dime w/ him...

He decided that night to start giving his money away—he gave to churches, hospitals, medical research discovering penicillin. He began to sleep well, eat and enjoy life. He wasn't suppose to live past 55—but he lived until 98 and gave almost 1 Trillion \$ away, more than any man in history.

**2. God desires that We Trust in Him—not in money (1 Timothy 6:17–19)**

**CONCLUSION:**

1. **All that we have is from God—He asks us to be good stewards**
2. **To use the gifts and blessings to help one another (1 Peter 4:9-11)**
3. **Even the richest man in world cannot save himself—only God can save**