

## Parable of the Unjust Steward (Manager) – Luke 16:1-14 NIV Study Guide

These Scriptures can be divided into two parts.

1. Luke 16:1-8 (The Parable)
2. Luke 16:9-14 (The Application of the Parable – Its Lesson for Us)

<p><b>Luke 16:1</b> Jesus told his disciples: “There was a rich man whose manager was accused of wasting his possessions.</p>	<p>Jesus talked with his disciples, and it was for their benefit, but the Pharisees were also listening. This is important to know because the lesson was for both those who were righteous and those who were unrighteous. In Luke 16:15, Jesus condemns the Pharisees for being lovers of money and justifying themselves instead of humbly serving God.</p> <p><i>(Luke 16:14-15 says, “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.”)</i></p>
<p><b>Luke 16:2</b> 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.’</p>	<p>The steward (manager) and his master were both wicked men. As we read the parable, we will see that both were lovers of money and not men of God-pleasing behavior.</p> <p>The manager lost his job because he had not properly managed the money that belonged to the master. (Apparently, <u>he was fired for mismanagement</u>. He was <u>not</u> being accused of fraud, though he certainly was guilty of it. This explains why he could do more business and change the accounts before leaving his job.)</p>

<p><b>Luke 16:3-4</b>  <sup>3</sup>“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— <sup>4</sup> I know what I’ll do so that, when I lose my job here, people will welcome me into their houses.’”</p>	<p>The manager knew he would soon no longer have his job. He decided to make some shrewd deals with the men who owed his master by reducing what they owed his master.</p>
<p><b>Luke 16: 5-7</b>  “‘So he called in each one of his master’s debtors. He asked the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ <sup>6</sup>“‘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.’ <sup>7</sup>“Then he asked the second, ‘And how much do you owe?’ “‘A thousand bushels of wheat,’ he replied. “He told him, ‘Take your bill and make it eight hundred.’”</p>	<p>The unjust or dishonest manager called his master’s debtors and did them a favor. He reduced the amount of their debts, so they would owe him a job or give him some money later to help him survive - after he no longer had the job. <u>This was completely dishonest. It was wicked but it was shrewd!</u></p>
<p><b>Luke 16:8-9</b>  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. <sup>9</sup>I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings.</p>	<p>This is the hard part to understand. The master “commended the dishonest manager” for acting shrewdly.” Perhaps the master could understand what the manager did because he would have done the same thing. (Both men were dishonest.)</p> <p>Jesus continues telling the parable and says the people who don’t know God (“the people of this world”) are shrewd in dealing with others like them. The Lord says they are more shrewd than those who serve God. Then Jesus makes His point, explaining the lesson of the parable. Here</p>

	<p>is my interpretation of Verse 9:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px auto; width: fit-content;"> <p>If you selfishly use “worldly wealth” greedily (making money and using it the way unrighteous unbelievers do), you will gain friends like you. When you die and have no more use for money, your friends will welcome you to join them in hell!</p> </div>
<p>The Application of the Parable  <a href="#">Luke 16:10-14</a>  “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. <sup>11</sup> So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches?</p> <p><sup>12</sup> And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else’s property, who will give you property of your own?</p> <p><sup>13</sup> “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.”</p> <p><sup>14</sup> The Pharisees, who loved money, heard all this and were sneering at Jesus. <sup>15</sup> He said to them, “You are</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The Application of the Parable – Its Lesson for Us</b></p> <p>This parable is about having the faith enough to trust God and not money. Jesus asks the question, “So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches?” He is talking about eternal riches that come from seeing life according to the Scriptures. It’s an unselfish life that we live as givers to others, always doing our best to do what is right – according to the way God sees things.</p> <p>Everything we have belongs to God. When we go to heaven to be with Jesus, we will be judged about how we managed (or stewarded) the Lord’s money. If we expect to be blessed in heaven, we need to be trusted with all that God gives us and use it honestly.</p> <p>You cannot love Jesus and love money. Money is good and God provides it for us, but we should be careful to never make it our master. When you make it your master, you stop trusting Jesus. You will either serve God or you will serve money. It is your choice. You will reap what you sow (Galatians 6:7-9).</p> <p>The Bible says the ungodly Pharisees were listening. They made fun of Jesus. Then Jesus said to them that they were like the dishonest manager and his boss. They tried to please people who were just like them. They should be</p>

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.	more concerned with pleasing God. What they did only had temporary value and God saw what they were doing. When people find value in what is sinful and selfish behavior, God hates it. There will be a day when they reap what they sowed.
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Preaching (or Small Group Teaching) Assignment: After studying the parable, make a fifteen-minute English language sermon or teaching from your study. We will use it to improve your English. You can also use it when you want to in the church as sermon material or small group material. I will work with you to correct any English mistakes you make. You can do this as it fits in your schedule. (I know how busy you are and it is not something we have to do this first time we meet.)

(You may also find it useful when you can, to translate this chart into Chinese.)