

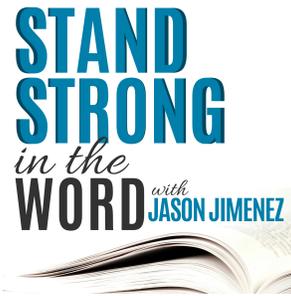
#79 “Well Done Good and Faithful Servant!”
LUKE 16:1-31

As Jesus went off to Perea (Jn. 10:40-42), He taught several lessons on the kingdom of heaven (Lk. 14) and told a parable with three stories about a lost sheep, coin and son (Lk. 15).

THE PARABLE OF THE DISHONEST STEWARD
16:1-13

1. ***He also said to the disciples, “There was a rich man who had a manager (steward of the estate), and charges were brought to him that this man was wasting (squandering) his possessions.*** This parable is a continuation from the story about the prodigal son. In Luke 15, Jesus spoke directly to the Pharisees; but now, He turns to address the disciples (with the religious leaders still listening). His lesson to them is simple: use what is given to you for kingdom purposes. ***Wasting his possessions***—The dishonest manager was squandering his master’s money just like the prodigal son did.
2. ***² And he called him and said to him, ‘What is this that I hear about you? Turn in the account of your management, for you can no longer be manager.’*** The master had hired this manager to oversee his properties and manage the finances. Instead, the manager was spending his master’s money, and making poor investment decisions. Jeopardizing the master’s whole operations.
 - A. “This particular steward *forgot* that he was a steward and began to act as if he were the owner. He became a “prodigal steward” who wasted his master’s wealth. His master heard about it and immediately asked for an inventory of his goods and an audit of his books. He also fired his steward.”¹
3. ***³ And the manager said to himself, ‘What shall I do, since my master is taking the management away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg.*** Once the steward’s mishandlings were found out, he scrambled to recover his name and future status. Realizing the shame that awaits him.
 - A. ***⁴ I have decided what to do, so that when I am removed from management, people may receive me into their houses.’⁵ So, summoning his master’s debtors one by one, he said to the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’⁶ He said, ‘A hundred measures of oil.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, and sit down***

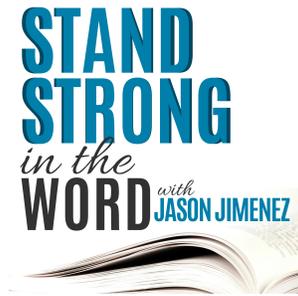
¹ Warren W. Wiersbe, [*The Bible Exposition Commentary*](#), vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 238.



quickly and write fifty.’⁷ Then he said to another, ‘And how much do you owe?’ He said, ‘A hundred measures of wheat.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, and write eighty.’ The steward’s actions were shrewd. He leveraged his position one last time to gain him respect for future prospects. He didn’t get the approval of his master. He simply sought the approval of his master’s debtors.

4. ⁸ ***The master commended*** (to speak praise over someone) ***the dishonest manager for his shrewdness*** (prudence; wisdom). ***For the sons of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than the sons of light.*** Although the master didn’t approve of the actions of his fired steward; he, nonetheless, commended him on his shrewdness to get the debtors to pay. A strategy not condoned by Jesus. Jesus shares this parable to His disciples to show them how the ***sons of this world*** are more effective in their handlings of the world than the ***sons of light*** are in advancing the kingdom of God.
 - A. “Landowners sometimes forgave or reduced debts in times of famine or other crises; those forgiven normally praised the creditor as benevolent in return. The landowner now recognizes his manager’s shrewdness: if the owner protests that the manager acted on his own, the debtors will be angry with the owner and generous toward the manager. For the sake of his honor, the owner is not likely to try to exact more from the debtors than what his manager promised. As far as the account books, the apparent lower income (v. 1) will now be attributed to generosity rather than to the manager’s mismanagement, honoring the owner.”²
5. 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.*** The parable is a great lesson on stewardship. We don’t own what we have. Everything we have has been given on loan from God. Thus, we are to wisely steward our possessions in a way that honors God (see Lk. 11:33-36; 12:4-7; Jn. 12:36).
6. ¹⁰ ***“One who is faithful*** (dependable) ***in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest*** (violator of the law; unjust) ***in a very little is also dishonest in much.*** This is a simple, yet profound truth/proverb. God expects faithfulness in both big and small things.
 - A. Luke 19:17, “Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in a very little, you shall have authority over ten cities.”

² Zondervan, NIV, Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible, eBook: Bringing to Life the Ancient World of Scripture (Kindle Locations 233902-233906). Zondervan. Kindle Edition.

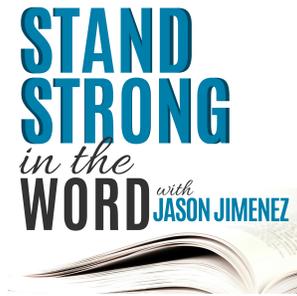


- B. Matthew 25:21, His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.'
7. ¹¹ ***If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches?*** ¹² ***And if you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own?*** Spiritual and material wealth are inseparable. If a person is faithful with money, then he/she can be trusted with greater responsibility.
8. ¹³ ***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.***" This statement summarizes everything Jesus said from verses 1 thru 12. It was impossible for a slave to be under two masters at the same time. He must choose a master. This was a rebuke to the false teachings (from the Pharisees) that rich people were favored by God (see Matt. 6:24; 19:24).

JESUS CONFRONTS COVETING WEALTH

16:14-18

1. ¹⁴ ***The Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard all these things, and they ridiculed*** (to despise/deride; to turn up the nose) ***him***. The Pharisees mocked Jesus for fellowshiping with sinners (15:2), and now they ridicule Him for His teachings about money. Clearly, they were indignant over the fact that a poor man (like Jesus) was scolding them about their use of money.
2. ¹⁵ ***And he said to them, "You are those who justify*** (right relation; to make proper) ***yourself before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is exalted*** (valued above another) ***among men is an abomination in the sight of God.*** The religious leaders cared more about their status, wealth and approval of man than they did of God. They may have fooled others, but God knows their heart—and He will judge them accordingly. This open rebuke of Jesus clearly points to His rejection of the Pharisee's values and traditions.
- A. ¹⁶ ***"The Law and the Prophets were until John; since then the good news of the kingdom of God is preached, and everyone forces his way into it. ¹⁷ But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one dot*** (tittle—smallest part of a letter of the alphabet—serif) ***of the Law to become void.*** If the Pharisees truly abided in the Jewish Scriptures, they would have accepted the teachings of John the Baptist—and therefore, believed Jesus to be the Messiah. Instead, they applied their own standards to the Law, and forced others to do the same.
- B. ¹⁸ ***"Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery, and he who marries a woman divorced from her husband commits adultery.*** This



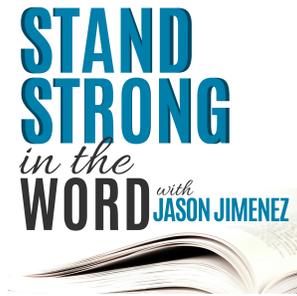
statement about divorce seems out of place. But it isn't. Jesus uses divorce to prove His point about how the Pharisees have twisted the Law for their own pleasure.

RICH MAN AND LAZARUS

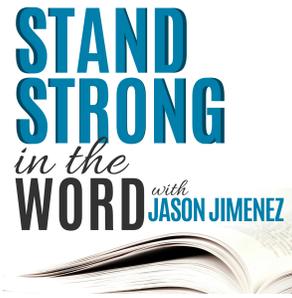
16:19-31

1. ¹⁹ ***“There was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day*** (indications of opulence/flamboyant). Jesus transitions into telling a true story about a rich man who was unrighteous. He used the parable of the dishonest steward to expose the shrewdness of the Pharisees, and now uses this rich man to mark their coming damnation for all eternity.
2. ²⁰ ***And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus*** (Eleazar, “God helps”), ***covered with sores*** (ulcers all over the body), ²¹ ***who desired*** (to long for) ***to be fed with what fell from the rich man’s table. Moreover, even the dogs*** (unclean) ***came and licked his sores.*** On the one hand you have a rich man, and on the other—a poor sick man (Lazarus) outside his gate begging for food and comfort. Lazarus’ situation was so bad that his oozing wounds became food for the dogs. It is clear that the rich man did nothing to alleviate Lazarus’ bad condition.
 - A. It would have come as a surprise that Jesus mentions the name of the poor man and not the rich man.
3. ²² ***The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried,*** ²³ ***and in Hades*** (a temporal place of torment until judgment), ***being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side.*** Notice the role reversal of the rich man and Lazarus. The rich man was buried and his life honored, but ends up in a place of torment (not hell). The poor man (Lazarus) has no burial, but is ushered into heaven to Abraham’s bosom (paradise—state of blessedness).
 - A. *“Hadēs, the Greek word often translated “hell,” is used 11 times in the New Testament. The Septuagint used hadēs to translate the Hebrew še’ōl (the place of the dead) on 61 occasions. Here hadēs refers to the abode of the unsaved dead prior to the great white throne judgment (Rev. 20:11–15). “Abraham’s side” apparently refers to a place of paradise for Old Testament believers at the time of death (cf. Luke 23:43; 2 Cor. 12:3).”*³

³ John A. Martin, [“Luke,”](#) in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 247.



- B. Hades is the first death. In Revelation 20:13-15, John receives a revelation of the second death, and final judgment of the wicked: “And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.” Thus, the bodies of the unbelievers will be resurrected from Hades and will appear before the Great White Throne judgment to be sentenced to the lake of fire (permanent place of suffering for all eternity).
- C. Proverbs 22:2, “The rich and the poor meet together; the Lord is the Maker of them all.”
4. ²⁴ ***And he called out, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy*** (show kindness to someone in serious need) ***on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish*** (suffer greatly) ***in this flame.*** Notice, the rich man is fully conscious and aware after death and able to communicate with Abraham in OT times. People who pass into heaven or hell do not enter soul sleep. They are fully responsive and have remembrance of their earthly life. ***Dip the end of his finger***—The condemned man asks to be comforted by the one person he refused to comfort on earth. It’s not clear whether his request is sincere or that it came from a spirit of entitlement.
- A. ²⁵ ***But Abraham said, ‘Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish.*** Abraham reminds the condemned man that he had everything on earth; and yet, he squandered it and neglected to comfort those in need on earth. He lived to feed his greed.
- B. ²⁶ ***And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.*** This description reveals the eternalness of the afterlife.
- C. ²⁷ ***And he said, ‘Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father’s house—*** ²⁸ ***for I have five brothers—so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.*** He shows such regret in Hades and pleads for someone to help his family see the truth. During his life on earth, the condemned man showed no compassion for the poor, and no concern for the eternal state of his family. However, now that his eternal state has been actualized—his “eyes” have been opened to what awaits his brothers once they die if they don’t repent.
- D. ²⁹ ***But Abraham said, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.’*** ³⁰ ***And he said, ‘No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the***



dead, they will repent.’³¹ He said to him, ‘If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.’” However, the condemned man is reminded that everyone on earth has been given enough proof to believe. You can’t force or coerce someone against their will. If they refuse to believe—that is their prerogative. This always points to the