



STORIES OF LIFE!

The Gospel of Luke

A Story of Riches!

Luke 16:1-18

Message #47 of 50 – S830

Sermon given on February 10, 2019



Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

A Story of Riches!

Luke 16:1-18

Opening Comments

- Turn to **Luke 16**
- We continue a study through the Gospel of Luke – **The Stories of Life**
- Today, we come to a topic that almost everyone thinks is important, but very few want to talk about, especially at church
- Jesus is going to speak directly to His disciples about something that can affect just how effective you can be as a disciple of Christ
- Let's pray and then get into the text for today
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **A Story of Riches!**
- Jesus never condemned the rich, nor the having of wealth
- But it is fascinating how often He used the rich as examples of things to watch out for
- Money, riches, or wealth come with temptations that can impact our ability to glorify God, bless others, and grow faith
- Those same things also provide opportunities to grow the kingdom of God
- Ultimately, it comes down to your relationship to money, wealth, or riches that matters
- And that is what Jesus addresses in this text
- **Luke 16:1-2**
- A steward was manager – usually over the affairs of the household
- But they could also manage the business affairs of the master – CEO
- The rich man discovers that his steward is squandering his goods
- Calls him to give an accounting and then clear out his desk – You're fired!
- The steward does a little self-reflecting and then acts
- **Luke 16:3-7**
- As the steward, he has the authority to do this – but it is not right

- At the very least it is unfair to his employer
 - He knows he is going to be out on the street soon, and he wants to make sure he has some friends he can turn to
 - Then Jesus says something that might be confusing
 - **Luke 16:8**
 - Jesus is not approving of the actions of the steward
 - Jesus is describing how the world views the handling of money
 - The steward used his position and access to wealth to influence people
 - Now, he did it corruptly and selfishly
 - Jesus then tells His disciples, and us, how they should handle money
 - In these next few verses I see three instructions regarding how we use the resources God entrusts into our care
 - The first way we are to use money – **Be Wise!**
 - **Luke 16:9**
 - There is an interesting term there we need to define – ‘unrighteous mammon’
 - Mammon was the name given to an idol used by ancient people to seek blessings on wealth and prosperity
 - The word became synonymous with wealth = abundance
 - Everything we have or get is from the hand of the Lord – a gift
 - And He calls us to be content – be satisfied with what we have
 - But He might give us more than we need to be content
 - Though, He might not do that until you are content with what you have
 - Jesus is telling us to be wise with what we have if God has given us an abundance, more than we need
 - To use that abundance to ‘make friends’ – to use your abundance to bless others – not yourself **John 15:15**
- No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.**
- One of the radical truths of Christianity is that Jesus, God the Son is a friend to all true believers
 - Jesus is telling them to be wise about how they use their abundance to win people to Christ

- Ask yourself – if you have more than you need – is it bringing you closer to God? Is it helping others get closer to God?
- Be wise with the money God gives you – use it to make friends you will see in eternity
- There is nothing wrong with being comfortable – as long as being comfortable doesn't make you lazy, selfish, and uncaring toward the needs of others
- The second instruction – **Be Faithful!**
- **Luke 16:10-12**
- Let's be real! Money is important to us!
- We are depressed when we don't have enough of it, and we are tempted to sin if we have too much of it.
- Here Jesus makes a direct connection between your attitude toward money and your spiritual state
- The 'what is least' in verse 10 is referring to 'unrighteous mammon' in verse 11
- As important as money is to us, it is of little importance to God
- But how you handle it, determines if God is going to trust you with really important things – the things of God and His kingdom
- To be faithful to God with our money means we know God and His Word well enough to know what He wants us to do with it, and then we do it
- Be wise – Be faithful – Third instruction – **Be Whole-hearted!**
- **Luke 16:13**
- Jesus isn't pulling any punches – Either Almighty Creator of heaven and earth is your God or money is
- You can't serve both of them, but you will serve one of them
- If God is your Master, then money will serve you and be used for His kingdom
- If God is not your Master, then you will serve money **Matthew 6:21**
For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
- We have to be clear, just because someone says God is their Master, doesn't mean they are being wise, faithful, and whole-hearted in their worship **Mark 7:6**

He answered and said to them, “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: ‘This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me....’”

- But Jesus says our behavior toward money will make it evident to everyone
- If you love God and are loyal to Him, you will prove it with how you use your money
- I imagine someone hearing or watching this message will not accept that – that’s the response Jesus got too
- **Luke 16:14**
- Money can be a useful tool or a dangerous temptation **1 Timothy 6:10**
For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.
- These ‘lovers of money’ ridiculed Jesus – self-confident that their religion made their greedy attitude regarding money okay
- **Luke 16:15**
- God knows your heart – outwardly you may look pious, religious, maybe even righteous, but it is all a sham **Matthew 23:27**
Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead *men’s* bones and all uncleanness.
- Then Jesus tells them that this is not new information
- **Luke 16:16-17**
- God doesn’t change His mind – when He declares something is right or wrong – it will be right or wrong forever
- A ‘tittle’ is the smallest mark on a Hebrew letter
- Mankind doesn’t have the right to change God’s laws
- Jesus concludes this section with an example of how the Pharisees were changing God’s laws
- **Luke 16:18**
- God’s plan for marriage is ancient – goes back to the creation of man and woman **Genesis 2:24**
Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.
- And Jesus commented on that said **Mark 10:9**
Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate.

- From the beginning God said marriage is between one man and one woman for one lifetime
- He didn't change His mind once we got more 'civilized'
- We live in a culture that is redefining God's laws and commands to fit the desires of people
- When you redefine God's laws, the fruit is other kinds of sin
- You may have heard about New York's Reproductive Health Act
- It disgusts me even to say what that bill allows
- In New York, it is now legal to abort a baby at any point in a pregnancy, even during active labor
- And if a baby survives an attempted abortion, it can be abandoned and neglected until it dies - **God help us!**
- God looks upon every human life as precious
- Pro-choice proponents argue when life begins
- Your life didn't begin when you were born – it was not when you were first viable in the womb – it was not at your first heart-beat – it was not when you were conceived
- Life began the moment God decided to create you **Psalm 139:15-16**
My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret, and skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, the days fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them.
- All life is precious to God and mankind has no right to say otherwise
- All we have, whether it is our life, or our money is a gift from God
- And we should be wise, faithful, and whole-hearted in how we use the gifts of God
- Whether it is your choices, your money, your abilities and talents, your time, your body, everything you have is a gift from God and He would call you to use it for His glory, the blessing of others and the growing of faith, both yours and others
- Everything we have is from God – the most precious thing we have is Christ
- We will partake of Communion – remind yourself of what God has given you
- Are you being wise, faithful, and whole-hearted with how you use it?
- **Pray!**