

## Weekly Sermon Discussion Guide

March 17, 2019

### *The Shrewd Manager*

#### LUKE

Luke 16:1-13

#### EXPLORING THE SERMON

- What did you hear?
- What did you think or feel about what you heard?
- What is one thing you can take away from the sermon this week?

#### KEY VERSES

<sup>8</sup> And his master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly; for the children of this age are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light. <sup>9</sup> And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of dishonest wealth so that when it is gone, they may welcome you into the eternal homes. <sup>13</sup> No slave can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth. **Luke 16:8-9, 13**

#### DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION

This parable of the shrewd manager has never been considered one of the most popular in the gospels, nor the easiest to apply to our own lives. It is the story of a wealthy master whose estate was overseen by another, the “manager.” The manager has been accused of squandering his master’s property, and is therefore facing dismissal.

In a hasty decision, the manager puts together a daring plan to go around to his master’s debtors, collecting only a partial amount of the total debt owed. ***Why do you think this strategy might allow the manager to be welcomed into peoples’ homes after his eminent dismissal, as he suggests in verse four? What plan of action might you have taken if you were faced with being fired because of dishonesty?***

Some parts of this parable do not seem very clear. Interpreting verses 8 and 9 correctly can help us see the main point that Jesus is trying to teach us. ***Why do you think the master commends the manager for acting shrewdly? Who are the “children of this age?” Why do you think Jesus would encourage us to “make friends for ourselves by means of dishonest wealth?”***

As followers of Christ, it is easy to think we can only learn good habits and practices from those within the body of Christ. ***How can this parable help us to see that everyone has something to teach us – even “children of the secular age?” How might this help you change your viewpoint and learn more from others in the places where you live, work, and play?***

Jesus obviously cares a lot about money because he talks about it throughout the New Testament. It is easy to forget that everything we have belongs to God, and we are stewards of money that is not our own. Psalm 24 tell us, *The earth is the LORD’s and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it; for he has founded it on the seas, and established it on the rivers.* When money becomes our master, we engage in idolatry. Lent is a good time to consider what counterfeit gods might be creeping into your life. ***Meditate on and discuss the practice of investing our worldly wealth in what lasts, such as people and relationships.***

***Dear Heavenly Father, we so often need the reminder that though money fails, people and relationships last. Help us to extend grace to all those we encounter, and open our minds to new ways to steward the gifts you have so generously given us. Create in us a clean heart, O Lord, as we examine our lives this Lent to that which pleases and glorifies You. Amen.***