

Our goal in studying the Bible is two-fold. One part of the goal as we read is to engage with our **mind**, to grow in our knowledge of who God is as he has revealed himself in his word. The other part of our goal is to engage with our **heart**, by responding to God as we read with our love, praise, gratitude, confession, needs, questions, and desires.

Engaging with our mind *and* heart as we seek the help of the Holy Spirit helps us grow in an intimate relationship with God through Jesus our Savior as we see him more clearly, know him better and love him more.

Day 1- Read Luke 16

- How is God revealed in this chapter? What is he like? Who is Jesus shown to be? What is he like?

Pray: Spend time in adoration and thanksgiving.

- What is human nature shown to be like in this chapter? Is this true of you in your life right now?

Pray: Spend time in confession and repentance.

- What does this passage of Scripture show that you need from God? How does your heart need to move to align with what you see in Scripture? Is there something you need to believe? Is there action you need to take?

Pray: Spend time asking God for what you need to live for him.

Meditation: *Luke 16:10 "One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much."*

Day 2- Luke 16:1-7

The theme of Jesus' teaching in this chapter centers on how followers of Jesus should use material wealth.

1. Describe the problem in the story.

2. What was the dishonest manager's solution?

Scholar's Note: "Reciprocation was an integral part of Jewish society; if someone did a person a favor, that person was obligated to do one for him."¹

3. How is the manager securing his future by reducing their debts?

Day 3- Luke 16:8-13

Scholar's Note: In verse 8, "Phronimōs (shrewdly) means to act wisely and with insight."²

4. In verse 8, Jesus begins a commentary of his parable. The dishonest manager represents the "sons of this world." Jesus is not commending dishonesty, but what are the sons of this world commended for?

-What did he gain for himself by his shrewd action?

Picture and Ponder: "The citizens of the world know how to take care of their needs and make sure they get what they want. The dishonest steward behaves wisely according to the world's standards and the world's values. In an analogous way, Jesus wants his followers to behave wisely according to the standards and values of his kingdom. We are to be kingdom-shrewd with everything at our disposal."³

5. Jesus is telling his disciples (representing the "sons of light") that they should act wisely and with insight in preparing for their eternal future and furthering God's kingdom. How are we to use our earthly wealth (called unrighteous wealth in ESV) in verse 9a?

-Jesus is talking about using your earthly wealth in light of eternity. How could you use your money to make *eternal* friends who will live in eternity with God?

6. If we have not been faithful in the use of our earthly money, what will be the consequences according to verse 11?

Digging Deeper: Read the following verses:

John 3:27 "...a person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven."

Psalm 50:10-12 "For every beast of the forest is mine, the cattle on a thousand hills. I know all the birds of the hills, and all that moves in the field is mine...for the world and its fullness are mine."

Matthew 25:19-21 "Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, 'Master you delivered to me five talents, here I have made five talents more.' 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.'

-Who is the one who owns everything?

- How does viewing yourself as a steward of God's money change your perspective on how you should spend it?

-How do these verses shed light on the phrase in Luke 16:12- "faithful in that which is another's"?

7. In what way is being faithful with our earthly wealth a shrewd investment in our eternal future according to verse 11? (See also Matt. 6:19-21 for help)



Jesus is really getting into the nitty gritty of our everyday lives. Money affects almost every part of life. Of the nearly forty parables told by the Lord Jesus Christ in the Gospels, about one third of them deal in some way with money.⁴ Jesus throws it down in verse 13 basically saying if you love and are devoted to God you will despise money or if you love and are devoted to money you will despise God. He states unequivocally that you can't serve God and money.

- ❖ If you love money what would be the things you truly care about?

- ❖ What would it look like in your daily life to “despise” money and be devoted to God?

- ❖ How would being a lover of money keep you from loving and serving God and people?

Day 4- Luke 16:14-18

8. What were the Pharisees ridiculing Jesus about according to verse 14?

9. How is verse 14 a picture of what Jesus said in verse 13?

10. In verse 15, Jesus accuses the Pharisees of justifying themselves. (Justify means to be absolved from any charge of guilt and to be declared absolutely righteous). What was the difference between what people saw of the Pharisees and what God saw in their hearts?

For Discussion: Why is trying to justify ourselves so detestable to God?

11. In verses 16-17 Jesus is talking about two eras. The first he mentions is the Law and the Prophets, representing the Old Testament, the era of promise. The second is the era of the New Testament, where the good news of the kingdom was preached. It began when Jesus came as the fulfillment of the promise. Though Jesus was launching the new era, what did he say about the law in verse 17?

Picture and Ponder: “Let us settle it in our minds that “the law is good if man uses it lawfully.” (1 Tim. 1:8.) It is intended to show us God's holiness and our sinfulness--to convince us of sin and

to lead us to Christ--to show us how to live after we have come to Christ, and to teach us what to follow and what to avoid. He that so uses the law will find it a true friend to his soul.”⁵

12. How did their love of money and self, show that they really did not love God’s law like they claimed to?

Scholar’s Note: In verse 18, Jesus challenges the Pharisees supposed devotion to the law by holding them to a higher standard—one more in keeping with God’s intent for marriage—than the Mosaic law that they were actually abusing. (The Pharisees had twisted the law to match their own sinful desires by divorcing their wives if “they were a bad cook, didn’t produce a son, were disrespectful to their mother-in-law, were not as attractive as another woman. The Pharisees had turned [the law] on its head to give the freedom to divorce their wives for any reason.”⁶)

The paraphrase of this portion of scripture from *the Message* helps us get an understanding of what Jesus was accusing the Pharisees of. “*Using the legalities of divorce as a cover for lust is adultery; Using the legalities of marriage as a cover for lust is adultery.*” Luke 16:18 MSG



The Pharisees felt good about themselves and made themselves appear righteous to others by strictly following all their external man made rules and regulations, but they had no heart at all for living God’s way. They loved money, the praise of men and their own self-righteous ways and they despised Jesus for pointing it out.

Because Jesus fulfilled the law perfectly as our substitute we are no longer condemned by it. But that doesn’t mean it has become void. Paul says we “serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code.” (Rom. 7:6) God still cares about our holiness, but now we have the Spirit of God living inside us, empowering us to love God and his commands and carry them out.

- ❖ 1 John 5:3 says, “*For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome.*” Why are God’s commandments not burdensome to us?
- ❖ Mike McKinley explains, “The arrival of the kingdom does not nullify the law, but transforms the hearts of its citizens so that they will long to obey God’s will.”⁷ We all battle with sin in our lives, but if the Holy Spirit has transformed our hearts we long to obey God. If you are not fighting the sin in your life and desiring to obey God, how might that be a warning to you?

Day 5- Luke 16:19-31

This parable connects with the rest of the chapter in its themes of money and God's law (Moses and the prophets-referring to the Old Testament). "The parable of the dishonest manager (vv.1-15) addresses the proper *use* of money. This parable confronts the *abuse* of money, especially by the rich. It is a solemn warning."⁸

13. How did the rich man in Jesus' parable use his money, according to verse 19, what kind of lifestyle did he live?

Digging Deeper: Read the following verses:

Deuteronomy 15:7-8 "If among you, one of your brothers should become poor, in any of your towns within your land that the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart or shut your hand against your poor brother, but you shall open your hand to him and lend him sufficient for his need, whatever it may be."

- How was the rich man disregarding God's command?

1 John 3:17 "But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?"

- What are the implications of disregarding God's commands about the needy?

Scholar's Note: "Hades represents the Hebrew Sheol, [meaning] the realm of the dead. In the New Testament it is never used of the destiny of the believer."⁹

14. How are the fortunes of the rich man and Lazarus reversed when they die?

15. What does verse 26 teach us about the consequences of the decisions we make on earth regarding our eternal future?

16. If people don't believe God's word (Moses and the prophets) what will also be true according to verse 31?

Picture and Ponder: “As with the rich man, our use of our wealth in relation to the needs of our neighbors reveals our spiritual state.”¹⁰



The rich man clothed in himself in purple. Purple was a very costly dye and because of its extreme costliness, it became a mark of distinction to wear a purple robe.¹¹ The rich man feasted sumptuously every day. His life was marked by luxury, extravagance, and opulence. Yet it would seem he didn't even give Lazarus crumbs from his lavish spread. He used what God had given him only for himself.

We all struggle with over indulgence in one way or another. How much is too much? How many shoes is it ok to own, how many vacations should we take, how much can we spend on gourmet food, fine wine, nail salons, day spas, hair products, hobbies, entertainment, the latest toys and gadgets for the kids...the list goes on. God doesn't give us many specific guidelines— in a way it would be easier if he did— but then it would be about rules instead of relationship. God does talk specifically about contentment and giving to those in need. Because of the richness of our relationship with God, contentment and generosity should mark our lives.

If either of those two things is missing in your life, through prayer and meditating on God's word look to the extravagance of God, dig deeper into *the riches of his grace, which he lavished on us (Eph. 1:8)*. Charles Spurgeon counsels, “Communion with Christ is a certain cure for every ill. Whether it be the woodworm of sadness or the smothering impact of earthly treasure, close fellowship with the Lord Jesus will take bitterness from the one and excess from the other.” (Some of us might relate more closely with Lazarus, we are not begging in the street, but we are having a hard time making ends meet and we are more on the side of need than excess. As Spurgeon says, Jesus is the answer to both.)

Remember the words of the old hymn Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus..., “the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of his glory and grace.” The more we are consumed with Jesus the less we will be consumed with the excess of this world and it will be our joy to be generous to the needs of others around us.

- ❖ What situations and things tempt you to discontentment?

- ❖ How do you struggle with over indulgence or excess in your life?

- ❖ What hinders generosity in your life? (Generally and specifically)

- ❖ What steps will you take to make giving to the needy a regular part of your life if it isn't already?

- ❖ R. Kent Hughes offers a few words of qualification: “We all go through times when a material focus is required— the purchase of a home, remodeling, redecorating, buying a car, the management of investments, etc. We live in a material world, which requires attention. Also the possession of wealth, even great wealth, does not make one a materialist, though it dramatically increases the danger.” How can we enjoy the good

things God has blessed us with, without becoming over indulgent to ourselves or stingy toward others?

One Thing: Look back over this week's study. Pick one thing that God impressed on you, convicted you about, or something new that you learned and write it here.

How will knowing this impact the way you think and act?

¹ MacArthur, John F. (2011-02-21). Luke 1-24 MacArthur New Testament Commentary Set (MacArthur New Testament Commentary Series) (Kindle Locations 20685-20686). Moody Publishers. Kindle Edition.

² Ibid.

³ McKinley, Mike (2017-05-01). Luke 12-24 For You: For reading, for feeding, for leading (God's Word For You Book 14) (pp. 76-77). The Good Book Company. Kindle Edition.

⁴ MacArthur, John F. (2011-02-21). Luke 1-24 MacArthur New Testament Commentary Set (MacArthur New Testament Commentary Series) (Kindle Locations 20685-20686). Moody Publishers. Kindle Edition.

⁵ Ryle, J. C. (2012-07-17). The Gospel of Luke by J. C. Ryle (J. C. Ryle Collection Book 8) (Kindle Locations 4828-4830). Priscilla Publishing. Kindle Edition.

⁶ MacArthur, John F. (2011-02-21). Luke 1-24 MacArthur New Testament Commentary Set (MacArthur New Testament Commentary Series) (Kindle Locations 20685-20686). Moody Publishers. Kindle Edition.

⁷ McKinley, Mike (2017-05-01). Luke 12-24 For You: For reading, for feeding, for leading (God's Word For You Book 14) (pp. 76-77). The Good Book Company. Kindle Edition.

⁸ Hughes, R. Kent. *Luke, That You May Know the Truth, Preaching the Word series*, (Crossway, Wheaton Ill. 2015), p. 589

⁹ Expositor's Commentary

¹⁰ Hughes, R. Kent. *Luke, That You May Know the Truth, Preaching the Word series*, (Crossway, Wheaton Ill. 2015), p.595

¹¹ Douglas, J.D revising editor, Tenney, Merrill C. general editor, New International Bible Dictionary, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Mi. 1987

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