

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

If you suddenly received a large sum of money, what would be your first impulse: save it, spend it, or give it away? Why?

What the Text Says:

Why is it surprising how the rich man in the parable responds to the manager's actions?

How does the cultural context of this passage challenge what you might have read at face value?

Understanding:

How does this parable challenge common perceptions about wealth and its purpose?

Why do you think Jesus uses the phrase "unrighteous wealth" (v.9)? What might He be implying about money?

Application:

In what areas of your life do you struggle most with being a faithful steward (e.g. time, physical health, money, relationships, talents)?

How might your perspective on giving change if you truly viewed all your possessions as belonging to God?

Next Steps:

What's one practical step you can take this week to use your resources more intentionally for God's Kingdom?

Missional Living:

How might a counter-cultural approach to money and possessions open doors for sharing the Gospel?

Finally, what did this parable leave you to think about?

NOVEMBER 10, 2024

PARABLES

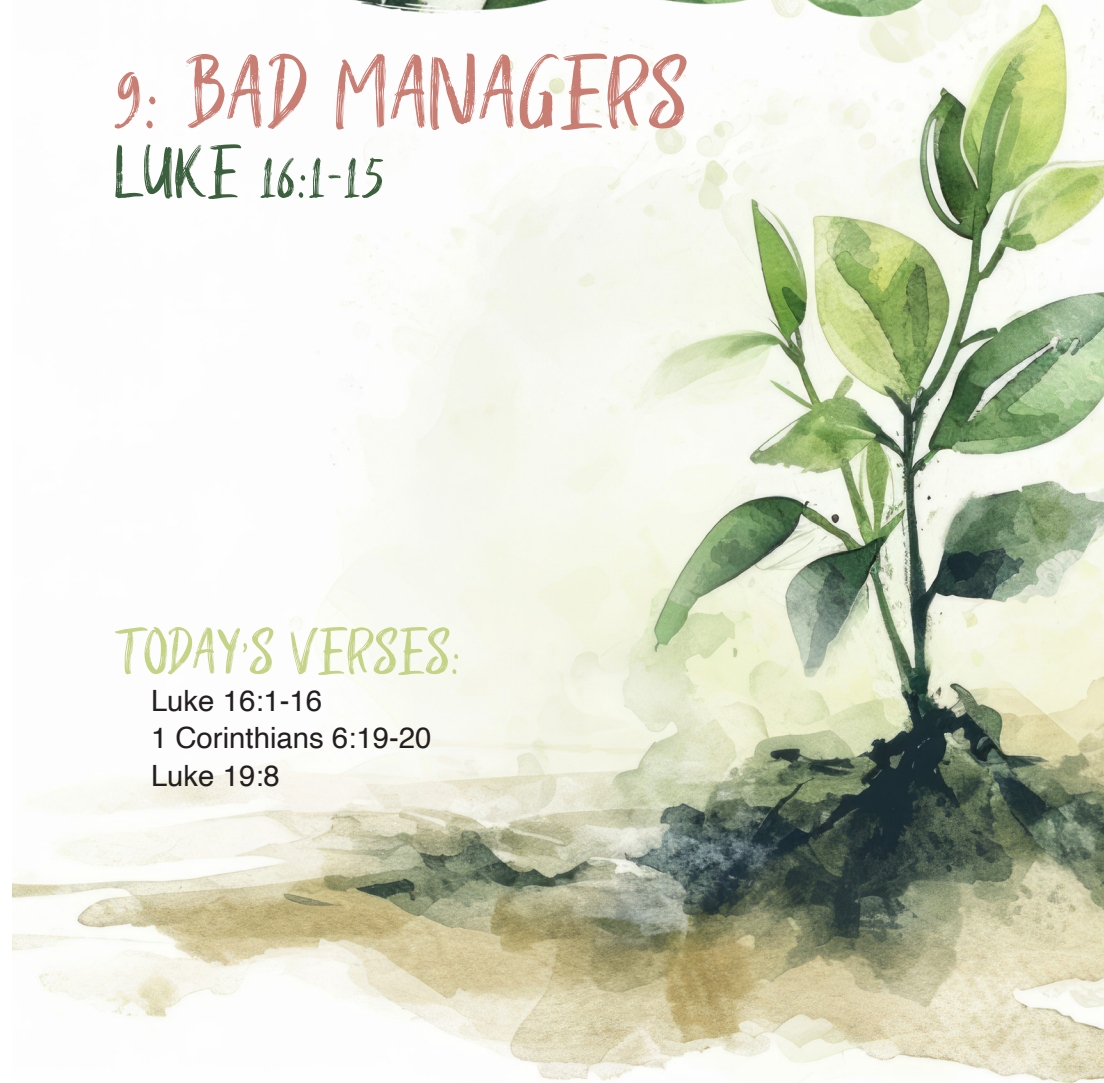
9: BAD MANAGERS LUKE 16:1-15

TODAY'S VERSES:

Luke 16:1-16

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Luke 19:8



9: BAD MANAGERS LUKE 16:1-15

Today's parable throws many people off track. We tend to think that Jesus is saying one thing when He is really saying something else entirely. The important part of the parable of the "shrewd manager" can be easily misunderstood without the cultural context of who Jesus is talking to.

This manager was a person who was entrusted with the rich master's stuff. Just like us, he didn't take care of it rightly; it may be that he simply treated it as his own and not God's. The manager hatches a plan, but the plan is still based on the master's wealth, not his own. There is a trajectory to the parable that goes: Master→Steward→Problem→Idea→Solution→Master→Steward→Master, which leads us back to where the parable started (beginning, middle, beginning).

Understanding the context – We have to see who Jesus is talking to and who else might be listening, as those two things will often play into His wording and delivery. The two groups listening are His disciples and the Pharisees (who were lovers of money). When the rich master "commended the dishonest manager," it doesn't mean he was condoning the manager's scheming; rather, he recognized the manager's urgency and the shrewdness of the plan—betting on the rich man's character.

What is the lesson? – The parable doesn't end with the master's words in verse 8; it continues as Jesus explains that those outside of "the light" are more shrewd at life. The Scriptures define true wealth as knowing and living in the Kingdom of God. When Jesus says to use wealth to "make friends," He doesn't mean to buy off friends, but to have (with your money) a generous spirit that people are drawn to. This was a Jewish way of reminding them about reality. It is about a joyful welcome in the "next life;" He is talking about living in the present with eternity in mind.

Understanding the Full Parable – If you are a bad manager, it doesn't matter what you have to manage—you'll manage it poorly. Whatever you do with a little, you will do with much. The parable is about a man who became aware of his future and planned for that day of reckoning. We must ask ourselves, "what have we been entrusted with?" According to the Scriptures, there will be a day where the facade and the shadows disappear in the brilliance of His coming, and we will stand bare before Him and give an account. This is not a parable about losing salvation, but about seeing what we all could have done to God's glory by being better stewards.