

## ***SBCOD Bible Study Notes***

**4-23-25**

### ***Luke 16***

#### **The Story Of The Dishonest Steward – Verses 1-8**

<sup>1</sup> Jesus told his disciples: “There was a rich man whose manager was accused of wasting his possessions. <sup>2</sup> So he called him in and asked him, ‘What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your management, because you cannot be manager any longer.’ <sup>3</sup> “The manager said to himself, ‘What shall I do now? My master is taking away my job. I’m not strong enough to dig, and I’m ashamed to beg— <sup>4</sup> I know what I’ll do so that, when I lose my job here, people will welcome me into their houses.’ <sup>5</sup> “So he called in each one of his master’s debtors. He asked the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ <sup>6</sup> “‘Nine hundred gallons of olive oil,’ he replied. “The manager told him, ‘Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it four hundred and fifty.’ <sup>7</sup> “Then he asked the second, ‘And how much do you owe?’ “‘A thousand bushels of wheat,’ he replied. “He told him, ‘Take your bill and make it eight hundred.’ <sup>8</sup> “The master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly. For the people of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the people of the light.

**16:1-8** Our use of money is a good test of the lordship of Christ. (1) Money belongs to God, not us; let us use our resources wisely. (2) Money can be used for good or evil; let us use ours for good. (3) Money has a lot of power; let us use it carefully and thoughtfully. We must use our material goods in a way that will foster faith and obedience (see 12:33-34).

#### **Using Money Now With An Eye To Eternity – Verse 9**

<sup>9</sup> I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings.

**16:9** We are to make wise use of the financial opportunities we have, not to earn heaven but to help people find Christ. If we use our money to help those in need or to help others find Christ, our earthly investment will bring eternal benefit. When we obey God’s will, the unselfish use of possessions will follow.

#### **Faithfulness In The Little Things – Verses 10-12**

<sup>10</sup> “Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. <sup>11</sup> So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? <sup>12</sup> And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else’s property, who will give you property of your own?

**16:10-12** Our integrity is often put on the line in money matters. God calls us to be honest even in small details we could easily ignore. Heaven’s riches are far more valuable than earthly wealth. But if we are not trustworthy with our money here (no matter how much or little we have), we will be unfit to handle the vast riches of God’s kingdom. See that you maintain your integrity in all matters, whether big or small.

## **No One Can Be Faithful To More Than One Master – Verse 13**

**<sup>13</sup> “No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.”**

**16:13** Money can easily take God’s place in your life. It can become your master. How can you tell if you are a slave to money? Ask yourself: Do I think and worry about it frequently? Do I give up doing what I should do or would like to do in order to make more money? Do I spend a great deal of my time caring for my possessions? Is it hard for me to give money away? Am I in debt?

**6:13** Money is a hard and deceptive master. Wealth promises power and control, but often it cannot deliver. Great fortunes can be made— and lost— overnight, and no amount of money can provide health, happiness, or eternal life. How much better it is to let God be your master. His servants have peace of mind and security, both now and forever.

## **Jesus Responds To The Pharisees’ Derision – Verses 14-15**

**<sup>14</sup> The Pharisees, who loved money, heard all this and were sneering at Jesus. <sup>15</sup> He said to them, “You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of others, but God knows your hearts. What people value highly is detestable in God’s sight.**

**16:14** Because the Pharisees loved money, they took exception to Jesus’ teaching. We live in an age that measures people’s worth by how much money they make. Do you scoff at Jesus’ warnings against serving money? Do you try to explain them away? Do you apply them to someone else? Unless we take Jesus’ statements seriously, we may be acting like Pharisees ourselves.

**16:15** The Pharisees acted piously to get praise from others, but God knew what was in their hearts. They considered their wealth to be a sign of God’s approval. God detested their wealth because it caused them to abandon true spirituality. Though prosperity may earn people’s praise, it must never substitute for devotion and service to God.

## **The Unchanging Nature Of God’s Law – Verses 16-18**

**<sup>16</sup> “The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John. Since that time, the good news of the kingdom of God is being preached, and everyone is forcing their way into it. <sup>17</sup> It is easier for heaven and earth to disappear than for the least stroke of a pen to drop out of the Law. <sup>18</sup> “Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery, and the man who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.**

**16:16-17** John the Baptist’s ministry was the dividing line between the Old and New Testaments (John 1:15-18). With the arrival of Jesus came the realization of all the prophets’ hopes. Jesus emphasized that his kingdom fulfilled the law (the Old Testament); it did not cancel it (Matthew 5:17). His was not a new system but the culmination of the old. The same God who worked through Moses was working through Jesus.

**16:18** Most religious leaders of Jesus’ day permitted a man to divorce his wife for nearly any reason. Jesus’ teaching about divorce went beyond Moses’ (Deuteronomy 24:1-4). Stricter than any of the then-current schools of thought, Jesus’ teachings shocked his hearers (see Matthew 19:10) just as they shake today’s readers. Jesus says in no uncertain terms that marriage is a lifetime commitment. To leave your spouse for another person may be legal, but it is adultery in God’s eyes. As you think about marriage, remember that God intends it to be a permanent commitment.

## **The Rich Man and Lazarus – Verses 19-21**

<sup>19</sup> “There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. <sup>20</sup> At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores <sup>21</sup> and longing to eat what fell from the rich man’s table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores.

**16:19-21** This Lazarus is merely a character in a story and should not be confused with the Lazarus whom Jesus raised from the dead in John 11. The Pharisees considered wealth to be a proof of a person’s righteousness. Jesus startled them with this story, in which a diseased beggar is rewarded and a rich man is punished. The rich man did not go to hell because of his wealth but because he was selfish, refusing to feed Lazarus, take him in, or care for him. The rich man was hard-hearted in spite of his great blessings. The amount of money we have is not as important as the way we use it. What is your attitude toward your money and possessions? Do you hoard them selfishly, or do you use them to help others?

## **Lazarus And The Rich Man In Hades – Verses 22-23**

<sup>22</sup> “The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried. <sup>23</sup> In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side.

**16:22-23** So it was that the beggar died...The rich man also died and was buried: Both men eventually died. Lazarus did not even have the honor of a burial in this life, yet heaven honored him, being carried by the angels to Abraham’s bosom. The rich man had the honor of a burial, but no angelic escort or pleasant destination. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom: The rich man was not far from Lazarus; yet he was a world apart. His place was full of torment and pain, while Lazarus enjoyed the comfort and care of Abraham.

**16:23** Hades is something of a waiting place until the day of final judgment (Revelation 20:11-13). Yet since Jesus’ finished work on the cross, there is no waiting for believers who die; they go directly to heaven, to the presence of the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:6-8). It is reasonable to think that when Jesus visited Hades as part of His redemptive work (Acts 2:24-27, Acts 2:31) and when Jesus preached in Hades (1 Peter 3:18-19), that Jesus set the captives in Hades free (Ephesians 4:8-9, Isaiah 61:1). Jesus’ work and preaching offered salvation for those like Lazarus, who in faith awaited it (Hebrews 11:39-40), and it also sealed the condemnation of the wicked and unbelieving.

## **The Rich Man’s Plea – Verses 24-26**

<sup>24</sup> So he called to him, ‘Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.’ <sup>25</sup> “But Abraham replied, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. <sup>26</sup> And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been set in place, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.’

**16:24** Father Abraham, have mercy on me: The rich man was definitely a descendant of Abraham, and the great father of faith did not disown him. Yet having Abraham as father was not enough to escape his torment in the life to come. Now the rich man was the beggar, pleading with Abraham. Again, the rich man was not in torment because he was rich; but because he lived a life apart from love and trust in God, and this was demonstrated by his life. Lazarus himself was richer than the man in this story of Jesus.

**16:24** Send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue: Even in the afterlife the rich man thought of himself as superior and as Lazarus as his servant. This shows that death did not take away his sense of entitlement and station in life. Death also did not take away the rich man's sense of desire, only the fulfillment of that desire. This was true torment, and he was desperate for even a drop of relief.

**16:26** Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot: Though the rich man could see and speak with Abraham, he wasn't close to him at all. There was a great gulf fixed between them, and their destinies were fixed for all time.

### **The Rich Man Thinks Of His Brothers – Verses 27-31**

<sup>27</sup> “He answered, ‘Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my family, <sup>28</sup> for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.’ <sup>29</sup> “Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.’ <sup>30</sup> “‘No, father Abraham,’ he said, ‘but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.’ <sup>31</sup> “He said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’”

**16:27-31** The rich man thought that his five brothers would surely believe a messenger who had been raised from the dead. But Jesus said that if they did not believe Moses and the prophets, who spoke constantly of caring for the poor, not even a resurrection would convince them. Notice the irony in Jesus' statement; on his way to Jerusalem to die, he was fully aware that even when he had risen from the dead, most of the religious leaders would not accept him. They were set in their ways, and neither Scripture nor God's Son himself would shake them loose.