

Study Notes For Luke

(Chapter Sixteen)

Luke 16:1 *“And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods.”*

- Jesus often addressed and/or taught His disciples (**Matthew 5:1**, **Matthew 9:37**, **Matthew 11:1**, **Matthew 13:36**, **Matthew 16:13**, **Matthew 16:21**, **Matthew 19:23**, **Matthew 20:17**, **Matthew 24:1-3**, etc.).
- Even with the public and private teaching, they had more to learn than Jesus would be able to teach them while He was with them (**John 16:12-13**).
- At this point in time, the disciples had already heard some cautionary teaching regarding “a certain rich man” (**Luke 12:13-21**) as well as having been taught that the rich had received their consolation (**Luke 6:24**).
- They had also received, at this point, some teaching regarding being a faithful and wise steward (**Luke 12:35-48**).
- It is expected that a steward will be faithful (**I Corinthians 4:1-2**).
- Think about the Parable of the Talents (**Matthew 25:14-30**).
- Think about “wasted” from the aspect of what we saw in the Parable of the Lost Son (**Luke 15:13**). The difference here is, what was wasted did not belong to the steward.
- When you are trusted with someone else’s goods and you waste them... (**Titus 2:9-10**).
- Think about Gehazi and Judas (**II Kings 5:1-27** and **John 12:1-6**).

Luke 16:2 *“And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward.”*

- The certain rich man had heard something about what his steward was doing (cf. **I Corinthians 1:11**, **I Corinthians 5:1**, and **I Corinthians 11:17-18**).
- He gave him the opportunity to account for his stewardship (**Proverbs 18:13**).
- The man’s job is at risk. Such is expected on various levels (**Proverbs 14:35**).
- One who has expectations feels disappointed by the one who is living up to such. Think about how Paul felt towards the Galatians (**Galatians 4:20**).
- Think about elders [bishop] who are stewards of God (**Titus 1:7**).

Luke 16:3 *“Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed.”*

- The steward examined his situation. Like we talked about two chapters ago, one should always consider costs (**Luke 14:28-32**).
- The steward, for whatever reason, thought himself incapable of digging (cf. **Luke 13:6-9**). Whether lazy or not, he did not feel the capability of manual labor.

- If he is just a lazy man... **Proverbs 19:15, Proverbs 21:25-26, Proverbs 24:30-34, and II Thessalonians 3:10**
- He thought begging to be shameful. That could be for good reasons (**Acts 20:34-35**) or it could be that he considered begging a huge step down from his current position (**Proverbs 14:20**).

Luke 16:4 *“I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.”*

- Facing termination, the steward came up with a plan. He is going to make friends in high places [so to speak; for they are really in lower places; in debt] (**Proverbs 18:16** and **Proverbs 19:6**).

Luke 16:5-7 *“So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord? And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty. Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore.”*

- Think about the love this gains (**Luke 7:41-43**).

Luke 16:8 *“And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.”*

- Remember the goal of the unjust steward (**Luke 16:4**).
- What has he done? He has provided for his well-being wisely (**Proverbs 6:6-11, Proverbs 13:4, Proverbs 19:15, Proverbs 20:4, and I Thessalonians 4:11-12**).
- People of the world deal better with people of the world than those in Christ can/do (**John 15:19**).
- People of this world can “network” in ways saints cannot (**James 4:4**).
- This is not teaching that saints should use worldly wisdom (**I Corinthians 3:18-19**).

Luke 16:9 *“And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.”*

- This is a difficult verse. The verses before and after don't help.
- Jesus is talking to His disciples (**Luke 16:1**).
- Is He telling them to serve earthly wealth? NO, (**Matthew 6:24-34**)!
- Read down a little further (**Luke 16:13**).
- So, what does this mean? What can it mean? Consider it's meaning being the opposite of preparing a pay back system on earth (**Luke 14:12-14**).
- The reward here is everlasting habitations, not earthly homes (**Psalms 41:1, Proverbs 22:9, Proverbs 28:27, Matthew 19:21, and I Timothy 6:17-19**).

Luke 16:10 *“He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.”*

- This is a great statement by Jesus. One can faithfully go many directions with this statement. In context, the least is the unrighteousness mammon (**Luke 16:11**). There is another Parable that illustrates the contextual point made here (**Luke 19:11-27**).
- For the disciples, would it be better for them to give or to receive (**Acts 20:32-35**, **I Corinthians 9:1-18**, and **Galatians 2:9-10**)?
- In other applications, consider how that you can tell a person’s dedication, etc. based on how they carry out carnal things. Looking at how one handles things smaller in comparison to the greater (cf. **I John 4:20**).
- If someone cannot manage something smaller, why would you trust them with greater responsibility (**I Timothy 3:1-7**)? *Specifically, the principle in **I Timothy 3:4-5**
- Think about temperance [self-control] (**Galatians 5:22-23**). If one cannot control themselves in the least, what about the greater?
- Think about laziness (**Proverbs 24:30-34**; cf. **Hebrews 6:12**).

Luke 16:11 *“If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?”*

- What about those that would have respect of persons regarding wealth (**James 2:1-13**)?
- Specifically, regarding the disciples, what about Judas (**John 12:1-8**)?
- What about those who are lazy regarding material things that impact them immediately (**Proverbs 6:6-10**, **Proverbs 10:26**, **Proverbs 12:27**, **Proverbs 15:19**, **Proverbs 18:9**, **Proverbs 21:25**, and **Proverbs 24:30-34**)? Would you trust one who cannot handle those things which immediately impact one with riches that have blessings in heavenly places (cf. **Ephesians 1:3**)?
- So, Jesus is trusting the disciples to carry His true riches (**II Corinthians 4:1-7** and **Ephesians 3:8**) to the whole world (**Mark 16:15-16**). They have this point of examination to consider.

Luke 16:12 *“And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?”*

- Think about the Parable of the Talents here. Therein, men are given that which they have not labored for and are only expected to be stewards (**Matthew 25:14-30**).
- What if you have to handle it all from start to finish? If you cannot be a steward with lesser responsibilities, how can you handle it all on your own? If an employee under oversight fails, how could he start his own business?

Luke 16:13 *“No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”*

- The two masters in this context are God and mammon. Mammon is in reference to wealth (Strong’s # 3126). You cannot serve both God and wealth (**Matthew 6:24**).
- God’s warnings against serving wealth are clear throughout the Scriptures (**Psalms 49:6-10, Proverbs 11:4, Proverbs 11:28, Proverbs 13:7, Proverbs 22:1, Proverbs 23:5, Proverbs 27:24, Ecclesiastes 5:10-16, Matthew 6:19-21, Matthew 19:16-30, Luke 13:16-21, Philippians 4:10-13, and Revelation 3:14-19**).
- See also: **Romans 6:16-22, Romans 8:5-8, and I John 2:15-17**

Luke 16:14 *“And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him.”*

- A Pharisee was part of a strict sect among the Jews (**Acts 26:5**) differing from the Sadducees (**Acts 23:6**).
- Those Pharisees present at this time were covetous [φιλάργυρος]. The meaning of the word here is: “fond of silver (money), that is, avaricious: - covetous” (Strong’s # 5366). Loving money isn’t the answer (**Psalms 37:16, Proverbs 15:16, Luke 12:15-21, and I Timothy 6:6-10**).
- Because they were covetous, they derided [scoffed at] (cf. **Luke 23:35**) Jesus because Jesus had taught one cannot serve God and wealth.

Luke 16:15 *“And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.”*

- Self-justification is terribly wrong (**Psalms 36:1-4, Proverbs 30:12-13, Luke 18:9-14, Romans 10:1-3, and Galatians 6:3-4**).
- Add to that, doing so to be seen as just in the eyes of men (**Matthew 6:1-16, Matthew 23:1-5, and Matthew 23:25-28**) which is foolish (**I Samuel 16:7**).
- God knows the heart (**I Chronicles 28:9, Psalms 7:9, Jeremiah 17:9-10, John 2:24-25, Hebrews 4:13, and Revelation 2:20-23**).
- So, God knows where our actions come from (**Matthew 12:34-37**) and judges accordingly (**Genesis 6:5-7**).
- So, a person thinks “I am good because everyone agrees with me” or “I am good, everyone tells me so.” WRONG! Just because man approves, doesn’t mean that God does (**Psalms 10:2-3, Malachi 3:13-18, John 12:36-43, and Romans 2:28-29**).
- Think about this, God does not approve of what the world promotes as good, popular, etc. (**Psalms 5:4-5, Romans 12:1-2, Ephesians 2:1-10, James 4:4, and I John 2:15-17**).

Luke 16:16 *“The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.”*

- See also: **Matthew 11:10-14** (different audience, same point).
- This is a huge statement for Jesus considering the Pharisees, the most strict sect of the Jews (**Acts 26:5**), are being addressed (**Luke 16:14-15**).
- Many Jews, even who eventually obeyed the Gospel, did not want to walk away from the Law of Moses (**John 8:30-47**, **Acts 15:1-5**, **Galatians 2:1-5**, **Galatians 5:4**, etc.).
- The Law of Moses had its purposes (**Ephesians 2:11-17**, **Galatians 3:19**, and **I Timothy 1:3-10**).
- It was not intended to stay in place (**Jeremiah 31:31-34**, **Galatians 3:11-4:7**, and **Hebrews 7:19**).
- Moses wrote that the law was not to be added to (**Deuteronomy 4:2** and **Deuteronomy 12:32**). Yet, Jesus clearly started making changes (**Matthew 5:21-48**). There was more than just doctrinal differences (**John 1:16-17** and **Acts 13:38-39**).
- Consider how we can reason beyond what we have already discussed as to the changes under way since the days of John. What Old Testament Law was fulfilled when John the baptizer taught repentance and baptism (**Matthew 3:1-12**)? What Old Testament Law did Jesus obey when He was baptized (**Matthew 3:13-16**)? Remember, His baptism was pleasing to the Father (**Matthew 3:17**), though it was not Old Testament teaching! Those who rejected the teaching of John transgressed the will of God (**Matthew 21:25-32**). In fact, those who rejected the teaching of John were said to have been rejecting the counsel of God against themselves (**Luke 7:29-30**). John was teaching baptism (of which the Law of Moses said nothing about). Clearly, from John the baptizer forward, a new covenant was being put in place.
- We are under a new law [covenant; testament] (**Romans 7:1-6**, **Colossians 2:6-15**, **Hebrews 7:11-12**, and **Hebrews 8:1-13**), the law of liberty from which we shall be judged (**James 1:25** and **James 2:12**). A.K.A. the law of Christ (**Galatians 6:1-2**).
- Jesus’ authority and His words are what we are to obey and He began those instructions before He died, before His law came into effect (**Matthew 28:18-20**, **John 12:48**, and **John 14:21-26**).

Luke 16:17 *“And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.”*

- The Law of Moses was in effect until after Jesus died (**Hebrews 9:11-17**).
- All had to be fulfilled and until that was accomplished the law was in effect (**Matthew 5:17-20**).

Luke 16:18 *“Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery.”*

- After Jesus taught the Law of Moses was coming to an end, He taught this. Consider why (**Matthew 19:3-12** and **Mark 10:1-12**).
- Moses’ teaching (**Deuteronomy 24:1-4**) of which has passed (**Luke 16:16**). *See notes there.
- Understanding God’s allowance of Moses’ teaching (**Psalms 81:11-12** and **Acts 14:8-18** [VS. 16]). NO MORE (**Acts 17:30-31**).
- NOW - Don’t depart, yet if you err and do so... (**I Corinthians 7:10-11**).
- The only cause (**Matthew 5:31-32**). Fornication is: “1) illicit sexual intercourse; 1a) adultery, fornication, homosexuality, lesbianism, intercourse with animals etc.; 1b) sexual intercourse with close relatives; Lev. 18; 1c) sexual intercourse with a divorced man or woman; Mar 10:11-12; 2) metaphorically the worship of idols; 2a) of the defilement of idolatry, as incurred by eating the sacrifices offered to idols” (THAYER; Strong’s # 4202). CF. **I Corinthians 6:18** and **I Thessalonians 4:1-5**

Luke 16:19 *“There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:”*

- It should not be assumed that one’s “good fortune” is from God (**Psalms 73:1-28** and **Matthew 5:45**).
- The Lord has long instructed His people to be cautious in regard to material wealth (**Psalms 39:6**, **Psalms 62:10**, **Proverbs 23:5**, etc.).
- Purple was considered of value along the lines of precious metals, pearls, etc. (**Revelation 18:12**).
- The fact that he fared [rejoice; merry] sumptuously [luxuriously] shows us he has a material “good life.” We know that a man’s life is not about abundance (**Luke 12:13-21**).

Luke 16:20 *“And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,”*

- The term translated “beggar” [πτωχός] is most often translated “poor” (Strong’s # 4434).
- Being poor is not an indictment spiritually (**Matthew 5:3**, **Luke 6:20**, and **James 2:5**) though men look down on the poor most often (**Ecclesiastes 9:13-18** and **James 2:6**).
- Israel had a history that was terrible in regard caring for the poor (**Jeremiah 5:26-29**, **Amos 8:4-8**, and **Micah 6:9-12**) contrary to the law (**Leviticus 19:10**, **Deuteronomy 15:7**, and **Proverbs 14:21**).
- This poor man was afflicted with sores [ulcerous].

Luke 16:21 *“And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.”*

- Think about being so hungry you are coveting crumbs off of someone else's table for food (**Matthew 15:27**; cf. **Lamentations 4:9**).
- Also, think about those like the rich man in this context that are full (**Luke 6:21**).
- Dogs eating his sores. What is fit for dogs (**Exodus 22:31** and **Matthew 7:6**)? Why did they lick sores (**I Kings 22:38**)?

Luke 16:22 *“And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;”*

- Death is a reality (**Psalms 89:48** and **Hebrews 9:27**).
- Wealth will not prevent one from dying (**Psalms 49:6-12**).
- Hades [which we will talk more about in the next verse], particularly Paradise cf. (**II Corinthians 12:1-4**), is here called Abraham's bosom.
- Burial is not the end for the rich man (vs. 23).

Luke 16:23 *“And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.”*

- The term translated “hell” is the Greek word “ᾗδης” (Strong's # 86). This is the place where those die in the flesh go for the present time (**Acts 2:27-31**).
- As noted in verse 22, there is a place called Paradise there (**Luke 23:39-43** and **Revelation 2:7**).
- We are also presented with the fact that there is torment there too.
- Peter referenced hades, not by name, when he wrote about what Jesus did after he died (**I Peter 3:18-4:6**).

Luke 16:24 *“And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.”*

- This rich man thought he could appeal to Abraham. This was part of Jewish thinking (**John 8:30-33**). Think about what John preached (**Luke 3:2-9**).
- The agony of being in torment is clear here. Whether eternal fire (**Matthew 25:41**) or the fires in hades, let's remember that this is why we try to teach the Gospel to the lost (**Mark 16:15-16** and **Romans 1:16**). We try to prevent them from suffering the fire of vengeance (**Jude 1:7**).

Luke 16:25 *“But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.”*

- See: **Luke 6:20-24**

- This does not mean all rich people will be sent to torment (**I Timothy 6:17-19**). You can have “this world’s good” and use it aright (**I John 3:14-18**).
- The problem with wealth is that people trust in it, sin to pursue it, etc. (**Psalms 62:10, Micah 2:1-2, Micah 6:12, I Timothy 6:6-10, and Revelation 3:14-19**).
- Wealth makes salvation difficult (**Mark 10:23-25**).
- Being poor doesn’t always mean someone will seek God either. There are temptations that face the poor (**Proverbs 30:8-9**). Being poor doesn’t mean they’ll do the right things (**Proverbs 28:3**).

Luke 16:26 *“And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.”*

- Herein we learn that once in Hades, there is no crossing over from torment to Paradise.
- This should cause a great emphasis in our minds of the importance that the finish line, if Christ does not return first, is death. Thus, be thou faithful unto death (**Revelation 2:10**; cf. **II Timothy 4:6-8**).
- The only change after death, in our dwelling place, will be in the resurrection and judgment (**John 5:28-29** and **I Thessalonians 4:13-18**).

Luke 16:27 *“Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father’s house.”*

- Having no hope for himself, the rich man shows concern for his family who are still living in the flesh. This reveals that those in torment have their memories. Think about the torture of being on fire and unable to warn others you care about. We are reminded here of the urgency of communicating the truth to those that are lost. Today needs to be emphasized (**Hebrews 3:13-15**).

Luke 16:28 *“For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.”*

- What he desired to communicate was to his brothers not to come to torment. It is too late (**Ecclesiastes 9:5-6** and **Ecclesiastes 9:10**).
- Here is one thing though, we get to read this message from torment. We know, from a rich man, that such is not a place we want to be.

Luke 16:29 *“Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.”*

- Whether of old or now, the word of God is what converts (**Psalms 19:7-11, Mark 16:15-16, Romans 1:16-17, Romans 10:14-17, Colossians 1:3-6, II Timothy 4:2, I Peter 1:23-25, etc.**).

Luke 16:30-31 *“And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.”*

- The rich man now understands the necessity of repentance (**Ezekiel 14:6**, **Ezekiel 18:30**, **Matthew 4:17**, **Matthew 21:28-32**, **Luke 5:32**, **Luke 13:1-5**, **Acts 3:19**, **Acts 8:12-24**, **Acts 17:30**, **II Timothy 2:24-26**, and **II Peter 3:9**).
- What he does not understand is that one rising from the dead to communicate the Gospel is not going to persuade those whom were not persuaded by the word (**John 11:38-12:43**).
- Even if some were to believe because of some miracle, such miracles do not provide lasting faith (**John 6:1-72**).