

## AF A9 BIBLE STUDY: "Wise Stewardship" Luke 16

Scripture of Lesson: Luke's Gospel 16: 1-13

### 1. *What is our stewardship?*

- A. God, the creator of heaven and earth, has given the humans the responsibility of governing His creation on the earth.

*So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth." [Genesis 1: 27-28]*

- B. **Accountability of stewardship to the Master:** God's command to "multiply and fill the earth, subdue and have dominion over His creation" comes with the responsibility of caring them as God would care for them because we have been created in His image. The steward in this first parable in Luke 16 had wasted the Master's goods. In other words, he has neglected doing his job of properly managing the resources which have been put under his responsibilities. And the Master wanted "an account of his stewardship" [v. 3]. Fortunately, the steward had some time to correct his mistakes and to prepare for the consequence of being fired from his job.

We are indeed fortunate if God reminds us that we have been wasting our life, which has been entrusted to us while here on the earth. But, because of God's grace we may have some time to make amends. Lord Jesus said this parable to teach people to come to correct realization of where they stand before the true Master, God, and to wisely prepare for the time when death will take everything away from us and our souls have no place to spend the eternity in blessing.

### 2. *The privilege of stewardship of life*

- A. **"Forgive our debts as we forgive our debtors":** Through this parable Lord Jesus teaches us to forgive others, who are like our debtors. In this parable, the debtors owe varying amounts to the Master, but the steward took advantage of his position and forgave significant portions of their debts to the Master as if the debts were to him. This steward's actions seem so wrong, so unjust to the Master. But, this is God's mercy and grace that makes his actions justified in the end. God's justice wins through the mercy, compassion, forgiveness and love shown by us humans, who are seemingly 'unjust' stewards. But, because we have been created in the image of God, who is full of mercy, compassion and love, it would be totally acceptable to Him for us to manifest His marvelous characters to our neighbors. And we will receive honor and praise for such actions.

- B. **"Be faithful with unrighteous wealth" [v. 10-11]** This parable teaches us a very important lesson on how to manage and use the material blessings God gives us. A few lessons are included in this parable:

- i. **Be faithful with little things [v. 10]:** We may not have much wealth. But the Lord wants us to be faithful with what has been granted to us. If we show faithfulness with small blessings, God will grant bigger blessings to us in His time and plan.

What are the little things Lord Jesus is referring here?

- God heeded the cry of the 'children of Israel' and delivered them from slavery [Exodus 3:9].
- Jesus loved 'little children' come to Him [Matt 18:3].
- He also called His disciples 'little children' [John 13:33]
- Apostle John called the Christians as "my little children" [1 John 2: 1].

God places His little children in the care of His servants. It is their responsibility to feed, nourish, care and strengthen the congregation using what God has blessed them.

- ii. Buy friends with material things [v. 9]:** Spend money and material things to win friends for God and to secure His favor. Show kindness with what you have so that God will approve of you when you stand before Him.

*He who has a generous eye will be blessed, for he gives of his bread to the poor. [Prov. 22: 9]*

*He has dispersed abroad, He has given to the poor; His righteousness endures forever;  
His horn will be exalted with honor. [Psalm 112: 9]*

- iii. You cannot serve God and mammon together [v. 13]:** Your heart must be wholly dedicated to God and not to the material wealth. Seeking to gain wealth is not evil, but 'love of money' is the root of all evil [1 Timothy 6: 10]. Let us stay away from seeking wealth in place of God.

*Topics of Discussion:*

- 1. What can we do to 'gain friends with material?'*
- 2. What are the little things God has placed into our charge? How can we be more faithful in caring for them?*