

**“No one can serve  
two masters.”**

**Luke 16:1-15**

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**Luke 16:1-2**

**1** Jesus told his disciples: “There was a rich man whose manager was accused of wasting his possessions. **2** 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.’”

**“No one can serve two masters.”**

**“Like the younger son in [Chapter 15] the earlier parable, this manager was guilty of wasting the resources available to him. Unlike the prodigal, however, he had enough sense to make sure that his wastefulness did not leave him friendless and unprovided for the future.”**

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**“No one can serve two masters.”**

**Luke 16:3-4**

**3** “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 — **4** I  
know what I’ll do so that, when  
I lose my job here, people will  
welcome me into their houses.’

**“No one can serve two masters.”**

**“The dishonest manager had no scruples against using his position for his own benefit, even if it meant cheating his master. Knowing he would lose his job, the manager planned for his own future by discounting the debts owed to his master in order to obligate the debtors to himself.”**

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**Luke 16:5-7**

**5** “So he called in each one of his master’s debtors. He asked the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ **6** “ ‘Eight hundred gallons of olive oil,’ he replied. “The manager told him, ‘Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it four hundred and.’”

**7** “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.’

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**“Interpreters disagree as to whether his procedure of discounting was in itself dishonest. Was he giving away what really belonged to his master, or was he forgoing interest payments his master did not have a right to charge?”**



**“Originally the manager may have overcharged the debtors, a common way of circumventing the Mosaic law that prohibited taking interest from fellow Jews. So to reduce the debts, he may have returned to the figures to their initial amounts, which would both satisfy his master and gain the good favor of the debtors.”**

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**Luke 16:8-9**

**8** “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. **9** I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings.

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**“Outwitted, he applauded the man’s cunning. His admiration for the evil steward’s criminal genius shows that he too, was a wicked man. It is the natural tendency of fallen hearts to to admire a villain’s craftiness. Note that all the characters in this parable are unjust, unscrupulous, and corrupt.”**

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**“Since the owner is now in good graces with his clients (who assume the manager’s actions were at the owner’s command), he will not reverse the transactions, which would bring shame on himself and accusations of miserliness. Instead, he accepts the loss and wryly commends the manager’s cleverness.”**

**Zondervan Illustrated Bible Background  
Commentary**

**“No one can serve two masters.”**

**John 12:35-36**

**35** Then Jesus told them, “You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. Whoever walks in the dark does not know where they are going.

**36** Believe in the light while you have the light, so that you may become children of light.” When he had finished speaking, Jesus left and hid himself from them.

**“No one can serve two masters.”**

**“God’s people should be alert to make use of what God has given them. By helping those in need, who in the future will show their gratitude when they welcome their benefactors into heaven. In this way worldly wealth may be wisely used to gain eternal benefit.”**

**NIV 2011 Study Bible**

**“No one can serve two masters.”**

**Luke 16:10-13**

**10** “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. **11** So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches?”



**12** And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own? **13** "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."

**“No one can serve two masters.”**

**“Faithfulness is not determined by the amount entrusted but by the character of the person who uses it... [True riches are] “The things that belong to God’s Kingdom in contrast to “worldly wealth.”**

**NIV 2011 Study Bible**

**“No one can serve two masters.”**

**“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 not 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, now and forever.”**

**NIV 1984 Life Application Study Bible**

**“No one can serve two masters.”**

**Luke 16:14-15**

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

**“No one can serve two masters.”**

**“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.”**

**NIV 1984 Life Application Study Bible**

# Applications

- **Money can be used for good and evil**
- **Money has a lot of power**
- **Money belongs to God**

# Final Thoughts

**“Some day God will evaluate our use of resources, whether we have handled them in a way that anticipates His desires and values; if we have, his commendation will follow. Just as the unrighteous manager was prudent in considering what the future required, so we must be prudent in considering how God desires us to handle His resources.”**

**Darrell Bock**

# Final Thoughts

## Proverbs 23:4-5

**4** Do not wear yourself out to get rich; do not trust your own cleverness. **5** Cast but a glance at riches, and they are gone, for they will surely sprout wings and fly off to the sky like an eagle.



# Final Thoughts

## 1 Timothy 6:6-10

**6** But godliness with contentment is great gain. **7** For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. **8** But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that.

**9** Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. **10** For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

# Final Thoughts

## Matthew 6:19-21

**19** “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. **20** But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. **21** For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

# Final Thoughts

## Matthew 6:31-34

- 31** So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’
- 32** For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.

**33** But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. **34** Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.