

CONTRARY TO POPULAR BELIEF

THE PARABLES OF JESUS

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Pastor Steve Luxa

Shrewdness is a Virtue

Introduction

(For more details about Kyle MacDonald and his red paperclip, visit redpaperclip.com where there are links to his book, *One Red Paperclip*, as well as a link to his TED talk.)

1. The Parable

“¹ He also said to the disciples, “There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was wasting his possessions. ² And he called him and said to him, ‘What is this that I hear about you? Turn in the account of your management, for you can no longer be manager.’ ³ And the manager said to himself, ‘What shall I do, since my master is taking the management away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. ⁴ I have decided what to do, so that when I am removed from management, people may receive me into their houses.’ ⁵ So, summoning his master’s debtors one by one, he said to the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ ⁶ He said, ‘A hundred measures of oil.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.’ ⁷ Then he said to another, ‘And how much do you owe?’ He said, ‘A hundred measures of wheat.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, and write eighty.’ ⁸ The master commended the dishonest manager for his shrewdness.”
(Luke 16:1-8a, ESV)

2. The Principle

“⁸ ... For the sons of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than the sons of light. ⁹ And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth, so that when it fails they may receive you into the eternal dwellings.” (Luke 16:8b-9, ESV)

3. Shrewdness for the Rest of Us

Questions:

- 1) Am I haphazard in my giving?

- 2) Am I giving where and what I would, even if Jesus weren't in my life?

- 3) Do I have an updated plan for giving?

Digging Deeper

This week's passages:

Monday: Luke 16:1-13

Tuesday: 2 Corinthians 8

Wednesday: 2 Corinthians 9

Thursday: Psalm 49

Friday: Luke 19:11-27

Weekend: Review the most meaningful passages of the week.

Each day this week you are invited to read the day's passage and then respond to the following questions. Take special note of what God is saying to you. You might find it beneficial to use a journal or notebook to record insights.

1. Read the passage prayerfully, listening for the voice of God and asking him to speak to you.
2. Record or write down the word, phrase, or verse that God impresses upon you.
3. Reflect and write down what it is about this word, phrase or verse that is meaningful to you.
4. Respond by writing a prayer or recording what it is that you think the Lord wants you to do in response to his word (“*Be doers of the word and not hearers only*” James 1:22).