

The Kingdom of God
Lesson 10: The Parable of the Shrewd Dude
LifeWalk Leader Guide

Open/Icebreakers: This parable tells the story of a man that knew he would be losing his job. Have you ever lost a job? If so, what feelings are associated with this dramatic reversal? How did you react to the news? What action did you take after you received the news? If you are a manager and you've had to dismiss someone, talk about that experience.

Digging In: Luke 16:1-15

1. In the 1st century, wealthy landowners commonly put managers over their estates. What predicament did this manager find himself in? What did he say to himself? Why did he say this? What did he do?
2. The manager reduced large debts that had been incurred. Why did he do this? Do you think his plan worked?
3. How did the landowner respond? Does this surprise you? What does it mean to "act shrewdly?"
4. The NLT translates vs. 8, "The rich man (landowner) had to admire the dishonest rascal for being so shrewd. And it is true that the children of this world are more shrewd in dealing with the world around them than are the children of the light." Discuss the meaning of this verse. What is Jesus saying?
5. The point of this parable seems to be articulated succinctly in verse 9. What is Jesus asking His followers to do? How is he asking Kingdom participants to act? Why?

Reflection: (from whchurch.org)

The reference to "worldly wealth" is one that recognizes that all money is ultimately based on injustice. Greed and exploitation permeates the whole thing. But Jesus doesn't say, "Don't touch it." Instead, He says, "Be shrewd with how you use it." The way we should use it is like the manager. Have clever foresight into what's coming, and act now on that basis.

1. How did the shrewd manager use his master's wealth to strengthen the relationships he had with the master's debtors? What is commendable about this?
2. As a group, how could you use your resources "shrewdly"? What relationships need strengthening? How can you make friends using your resources?
3. In light of the current economic climate, how can kingdom citizens carry out this instruction from Jesus?
4. As "children of the light" we know our worldly wealth will one day go away. It's not a matter of "if" but "when" as Jesus says in vs. 9. How does this truth help us prioritize our lives?

Prayer: Ask God to help you see ways you can use worldly wealth to gain friends so you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings.