
“The Dishonest Manager”

Children’s Sermon on Luke 16:1-15



Main Objective: The parable of the shrewd manager is not an easy one to understand, even for adults. It can be even more challenging to communicate to children the main principles of what Jesus communicated in this dialogue. It is helpful to focus on the most “digestible” take-away elements: stewardship and priorities. Even kids less familiar with money matters can comprehend how important it is to put God first.

Law/Gospel Theme: God gives us every blessing we have, whether monetary or spiritual. He wants us to be wise in how we interact with one another, and to use our gifts to give back to Him and to one another. We have the choice to deny and reject, but God wants nothing to interfere with our love for Him.

Optional Materials: Bags or boxes; small items or trinkets; word cards with “time,” “talent”, “love” written on them; dollar or coin.

Bible Passage: Luke 16:1-15

Bonus Ideas: More free resources to help teach this lesson.

- Watch our [video teaching example](#) for this message on YouTube
- Browse all our [Bible Object Lesson for kids](#)
- We shared some [craft ideas about giving and stewardship](#)
- See the [Dishonest Manager](#) on Sermons 4 Kids
- Download our Bible verse coloring page [“No One Can Serve Two Masters”](#)



Children's Message (The Dishonest Manager) Object Lesson

(As always, feel free to alter items to suit your purposes and needs of your group. There are several effective methods to communicate stewardship principles.)

Greet students, with a few boxes or bags, labeled with price tags ahead of time.

Hello, children of God!

How are you today? Look what I have here (*Hold up a dollar or coin*). Today we are going to talk a little about money. Say, do any of you have jobs? Do you make money or an allowance for anything? Well, in this day and age, it seems everything comes with a price tag of some sort. Take a look at what I have here (*Show the bags with price labels*).

So I have some items in these bags. I wonder if they are worth the price on the outside. Let's see. Which one should I open first? (*Allow a child to select a bag, and open it to see what's inside*)

Hmm...that's an okay item, I guess...but I really don't think it's worth that price! I should lower the price or swap it out or something. Maybe I'll just look at another bag (*continue opening items and arguing over the price. When you come to the cards with "time/talent/etc", react differently*).

What? Time? How can I fit that in a bag? What does that even mean? Am I supposed to have a clock in here or something? I don't even get it. Huh? And talent? What? I don't pay for that, surely...

(*Continue after opening the bags*) So, whether we like it or not, we have to pay for things in this life. And you know, even when Jesus was on earth, people had to pay for things. In fact, Jesus talked about money in some of His parables. He told one story about a man who was going to lose his job. So he went and changed around



some price tags, essentially, telling people to pay less than what they were supposed to. That might seem kind of strange...but we can learn a couple of things from it. For one thing, Jesus didn't want people to be too concerned or caught up with finances.

He reminded people that everything we have is a gift from God, and that nothing at all should ever come between us and Him. Money fades away. It's just paper after all.

We also want to make sure that we use our things wisely, whether money or other things. This is called "stewardship", and it's kind of like sharing or being in charge of something we are given. That means that sometimes we can use our money to help one another, like giving it to someone who is hurt or hungry or needy. Or we can donate money to church. That helps God's work continue!

But you know what else is neat? Stewardship is not only about money. We can use other things God gives us, like our abilities or time! You can volunteer for a group. You can sing or write or do special things that give back to God and His people. When we make sure we are sharing and being stewards of things, it keeps our eyes on the most important thing.

After all, it's God who gives us everything to begin with. We're really just borrowing it, so we want to make sure we take care of it well!

Why don't we take a moment to pray and thank God for those gifts? We can ask for His help in using them wisely. 😊



Suggested Group Prayer for the Children

(Have kids repeat each line, if desired)

Dear God,
Thank you for all of your blessings
We praise you for your world
And for our time, talents, and treasures
Please help us to use them wisely
And to glorify you with all we have
Let nothing come between us and you
Thank you for your love
We love you, God!
Thank you for Jesus
In His name, Amen!



The Parable of the Dishonest Manager:

Luke 16:1-15 NIV

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. 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.

¹⁰ “One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. ¹¹ If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? ¹² And if you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own? ¹³ No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.” ¹⁴ The Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard all these things, and they ridiculed him. ¹⁵ And he said to them, “You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God. [-Luke 16:1-15](#)



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