24) Parables of Unjust Steward, Rich Man & Lazarus (Lk. 16:1-31)

1. The parable from chapter fifteen gives way to additional parables (Lk. 16:1-18) and a true illustration (Lk. 16:19-31).
   a. “Squandering” gives us our text link between the chapters (Lk. 15:13 cf. 16:1).
   b. Heavenly rejoicing parallels (Lk. 15) heavenly reward (Lk. 16).

2. The unrighteous steward teaches a spiritual truth (Lk. 16:1-9).
   a. The steward manages another’s household. οἰκόνομος oikonomos #3623 10x.
      2) Stewardship demands faithfulness (1st Cor. 4:2).
   b. The rich lord gives the steward a deadline for dismissal and accountability (Lk. 16:2), which caused the steward to consider his post-stewardship circumstances (Lk. 16:3-4).
   c. The steward negotiated shrewd business deals ahead of his accountability deadline (Lk. 16:5-7).
      1) The lord praised the steward for his shrewdness (Lk. 16:8a). φρονήμος phronimos #5430 10x & φρόνιμος phronimos #5430 3x.
      2) Jesus explained that the unrighteous (unbelievers) are more suited to the unrighteous business dealings of this unrighteous world than believers (Lk. 16:8b). Our use of this world is limited (1st Cor. 7:31).
      3) The Lord used the unrighteous steward’s example for our righteous application (Lk. 16:9).
         a) The unrighteous steward financially benefitted those with whom he intended to enjoy post-stewardship hospitality and fellowship.
         b) Our temporal friendship spending should likewise benefit those with whom we will enjoy post-stewardship eternal hospitality and fellowship.

3. Fundamental principles of stewardship are then detailed (Lk. 16:10-13).
   a. Stewardship is a contrast between faithfulness and unrighteousness in proportionate terms (Lk. 16:10).
   b. Stewardship is a contrast in temporal/eternal terms (Lk. 16:11).
   c. Stewardship is a contrast between that which others own and that which we own (Lk. 16:12).
   d. God and Mammon are mutually exclusive objects of (Lk. 16:13).

4. The Pharisees scoffed at His teaching, but Jesus dismissed them with four short points (Lk. 16:14-18).
   a. Self-justification is the evil substitution of human viewpoint for divine viewpoint (Lk. 16:15).
   b. The Gospel of the Kingdom of God is a matter for grace invitation, not forceful entry (Lk. 16:16).
   c. The Gospel of the Kingdom of God does not nullify the Law (Lk. 16:17).
   d. Kingdom Law is even more impossible than Mosaic Law (Lk. 16:18).

5. The rich man and Lazarus illustrate the realities of life and death (Lk. 16:19-31).
   a. Paradise (Abraham’s Bosom) & Torments were two compartments within Sheol/Hades. A great chasm was fixed between them and no crossing was possible. γέων sh’owl #7385 3x. θανάτος hades #86 3x.
   b. Both compartments feature conscious awareness of post-mortem conditions. Both compartments feature capacity for observations and communication.
   c. In Hades, the rich man was in torment (βάσανος basanos #931 3x) & agony (δύναμις odunao #5000 4x Lk. 2:48; 16:24,25; Acts 20:38). The agony is caused by flames (φλόξ phlox #3957 7x).
   d. Personal soul-recognition and life stories were immediately known between Abraham & the rich man.
   e. Lazarus had no desire to speak even one word to the rich man, but Abraham indicated there were others on the paradise side with a sacrificial love and desire to minister to those on the torment side of Sheol/Hades.
   f. Though not yet in resurrection bodies, Abraham had a bosom, Lazarus had a finger and the rich man had eyes and a tongue. The soul either takes a shape for itself or an “interim body” is crafted by God.
   g. The Word of God is sufficient message for eternal life (Lk. 16:29), and people negative to Truth will not be persuaded by miracles (Lk. 16:31).