

“The Clever Scoundrel”

Luke 16:1-13 Sunday AM, April 12, 2026

Prelude: Scripture: Luke 16:1-13 (NASB95) Now He was also saying to the disciples, “There was a rich man who had a manager, and this manager was reported to him as squandering his possessions. 2 “And he called him and said to him, ‘What is this I hear about you? Give an accounting of your management, for you can no longer be manager.’ 3 “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; I am ashamed to beg. 4 ‘I know what I shall do, so that when I am removed from the management people will welcome me into their homes.’ 5 “And he summoned each one of his master’s debtors, and he began saying to the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ 6 “And he said, ‘A hundred measures of oil.’ And 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?’ And he said, ‘A hundred measures of wheat.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, and write eighty.’ 8 “And his master praised the unrighteous manager because he had acted shrewdly; for the sons of this age are more shrewd in relation to their own kind than the sons of light. 9 “And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by means of the wealth of unrighteousness, so that when it fails, they will receive you into the eternal dwellings. 10 “He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much. 11 “Therefore if you have not been faithful in the use of unrighteous wealth, who will entrust the true riches to you? 12 “And if you have not been faithful in the use of 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 else he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.”

Jesus’ spoke, and the tax collectors and “sinners” were among those who listened to Jesus. 2 Both the Pharisees and the scribes began to grumble, saying, “This man receives sinners and eats with them.” What SHOULD we do with the sinners? For whom do you care? Who has value? To those who understood the value of a sheep or coin, He asked, to what extent would you go for ONE sheep, for one coin? Or how far will you go for a son? What if he is selfish, wasteful—dishonoring not only by his thoughtless living but by demanding more to live the way he wants? Is there anything in your heart that responds when this son recognizes his miserable position and attitude and in desperation, turns back toward you as the only one who might care again? This father responded before he even knew his son was repentant. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion for him, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. The son immediately wants to set things right, but the Father is already in motion showering honor on the undeserving. Why? 24 for this son of mine was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.’ But what about the father’s care for the self-righteous son—the one who worked hard, did all he was told, but demanded to be rewarded for his efforts and had no room and way back for those who squandered opportunities and used people? Failing to see himself properly, this son spurned his father’s plea to join in the celebration for a brother who had come home repentant. ‘Son, you have always been with me, and all that is mine is yours. 32 ‘But we had to celebrate and rejoice, for this brother of yours was dead and has begun to live, and was lost and has been found.’ ” Two questions—which son do you represent? And what holds your attention about the father? Sing the Father’s Love.

*Hymn (Powerpoint): My Savior’s Love (What Tongue Can Tell)

Today, we are told another story to focus on a different question. One who squandered his position was made to give account and was found unworthy of his job. He immediately cuts deals with those who owed his master to make sure he had friends and provision when he was fired. Jesus concludes, 9 “And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by means of the wealth of unrighteousness, so that when it fails, they will receive you into the eternal dwellings. You too be shrewd, use what you’ve been given to make friends for your future—not your lifetime, but eternal dwellings. How prepared are you to be received eternally, and how do you use what is here in preparation for THERE? I was asked to sing this at a wedding. After being incredulous, actually looked at words, and I’ve never sung this the same again. You think she is beautiful, you think HE is one to trust, follow? Look farther, higher.

*Hymn #509 (Red): The Sands of Time are Sinking *Pastoral Prayer: Pastor Jahn Choir: Coming Home Scripture: 1

Thessalonians 5:1-28

(NASB95) Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. 2 For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. 3 While they are saying, “Peace and safety!” then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape. 4 But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief; 5 for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; 6 so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. 7 For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. 8 But since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. 9 For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him. 11 Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing. 12 But we request of you, brethren, that you appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction, 13 and that you esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Live in peace with one another. 14 We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone. 15 See that no one repays another with evil for evil, but always seek after that which is good for one another and for all people. 16 Rejoice always; 17 pray without ceasing; 18 in everything give thanks; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus. 19 Do not quench the Spirit; 20 do not despise prophetic utterances. 21 But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good; 22 abstain from every form of evil. 23 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24 Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass. 25 Brethren, pray for us. 26 Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss. 27 I adjure you by the Lord to have this letter read to all the brethren. 28 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Offering: *Doxology:

Eternal dwellings. Focus THERE. Don’t waste your life looking here or you will end up like the broken person described by the choir song. Do you know where that song focused? Not on them or their amazing choice, but where their eyes focused, where they were heading. They were coming home! Look to the One who can bring you home eternally. He is a rock, the God who delivers.

*Hymn (Powerpoint): Anchored

You may be seated. Our passage ends with faithfulness. 10 “He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much. 11 “Therefore if you have not been faithful in the use of unrighteous wealth, who will entrust the true riches to you? 12 “And if you have not been faithful in the use of that which is another’s, who will give you that which is your own? Are you faithful when it comes to God’s kingdom? How do you judge that? Do you look at family, those around, your Christian experiences good and bad? **What stuck out from I Thess. 5?** Sons of light, sons of day, be sober, what does that look like? Armor—faith/love/hope of salvation. How does that live? Who cares for souls with the complete care mentioned in v. 14? **admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone.** Who prays without ceasing, who does not quench the Spirit? Remember more? Check it out b/c the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. You’d better be ready. This passage calls for a communion with God, a taste for godliness, eyes held by the glory of God, and a love for God foreign to many professing Christians. You will have little of this kind of faithfulness without a growing love for God. Why? Because 13 “No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.” Therefore, stop merely living for God and saying you believe the gospel and start looking at/beholding/loving God as you grow to apprehend His love. Then watch what happens to His words, His commands, His kingdom and your growing love for His appearing. Think on this as Pastor prepares to preach on the clever scoundrel.

*Hymn #466: Jesus, Lover of My Soul

Message: “The Clever Scoundrel” Luke 16:1-13

*Hymn #368 (Red): Have I Done My Best for Jesus *Prayer