

He Set Us Free

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September 21, 2025

Luke 16:1-15 He also said to His disciples: "There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and an accusation was brought to him that this man was wasting his goods. 2 "So he called him and said to him, `What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.' 3 "Then the steward said within himself, `What shall I do? For my master is taking the stewardship away from me. I cannot dig; I am ashamed to beg. 4 `I have resolved what to do, that when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.' 5 "So he called every one of his master's debtors to him, and said to the first, `How much do you owe my master?' 6 "And he said, `A hundred measures of oil.' So 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?' So he said, `A hundred measures of wheat.' And he said to him, `Take your bill, and write eighty.' 8 "So the master commended the unjust steward because he had dealt shrewdly. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light.

9 "And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon, that when you fail, they may receive you into an everlasting home. 10 "He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much. 11 "Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? 12 "And if you have not been faithful in what is another man's, who will give you what 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 loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon." 14 Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, also heard all these things, and they derided Him. 15 And He said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God.

A 2023 Ramsey Solutions study of 10,000 millionaires found that the top professions were Engineer, Accountant (CPA), Teacher, Management, and Attorney.

It might be surprising that doctors didn't appear on that list, but teachers did. This suggests that success isn't solely

about how much you make. It's about how responsible you are with what you have. It's not just about your paycheck, but about your ability to make good use of your resources and make wise decisions.

Proverbs 13:11 (ESV) says, "Wealth gained hastily will dwindle, but whoever gathers little by little will increase it."

Jesus praises the man in our parable—not because he cheated or lied, but because he made wise use of what he had been given. Similarly, in the parable of the talents, Jesus commends those who wisely invest and use their resources.

Jesus urges us to fully appreciate and wisely use what he has entrusted to us. He has given us good things in this world, and He wants us neither to waste them nor cling to them. Instead, He calls us to use them wisely. More importantly, He has given us spiritual treasures—heavenly riches—and He desires us to use those treasures responsibly, without waste or arrogance.

His care sets us free from greed; His grace frees us from sin.

Luke 16:8 (ESV) states, "So the master commended the unrighteous steward because he had dealt shrewdly. For

the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light."

Jesus' care liberates us from earthly anxiety, but it also calls us to be wise stewards of what He has given us.

The Bible makes it clear that all we have is from God. They are gifts we should thank Him for and use responsibly.

There are two dangers when it comes to money. One is to believe that accumulating wealth is the ultimate goal of life—"He who dies with the most toys wins." Solomon warns us against this attitude:

Proverbs 11:4 (ESV): "Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death."

The other danger is to think, "I might as well spend my money because tomorrow I could die," or to assume God has promised to provide so why not waste what I have today. Solomon also warns us about this mindset:

Proverbs 21:20 (ESV): "Precious treasure and oil are in the home of the wise, but a foolish man devours it."

The right attitude is found in Hebrews 13:5 (ESV): **"Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.'"**

Because God has promised to be with us and provide, we need not act like squirrels hoarding nuts and hissing at anyone who approaches our stash. Instead, we can be generous, recognizing that all we have is a gift from a generous God.

When we are faithful with what God has entrusted to us, He promises to bless us with more:

Luke 8:18 (ESV): "Take care then how you hear. For to the one who has, more will be given; and from the one who has not, even what he thinks he has will be taken away."

In light of this, Jesus urges us to be wise with our earthly possessions.

Luke 16:11 (ESV): "If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches?"

More significantly, Jesus wants us to apply this principle to the heavenly riches—namely, the forgiveness of sins and eternal life in Christ. Just as we should wisely steward our earthly gifts, we must also faithfully handle the divine gifts we have received from heaven.

Friedrich Nietzsche famously declared, "God is Dead." This wasn't the end point of his philosophy but a starting point for

his worldview. He argued that society had declared God dead but had not grasped what that truly meant—namely, that many were still chained by Christian morality.

Contrary to Nietzsche, Scripture reveals that freedom from Christ is not true freedom but enslavement to sin:

Galatians 5:1 (ESV): "For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery."

The more people attempt to cast off the yoke of Christ, the more they sink into sin. It is actually the Christian, not the atheist, who has been set free. Yet, like Nietzsche's society, we often fail to appreciate or wisely utilize this gift.

The promise in Christ empowers us to resist temptation, live in forgiveness, and daily put away yesterday's sins to live for Him today.

If you give a boy a wooden cross, within fifteen minutes he might be sword fighting with his brother. Rather than rebuking the boy, we should learn from him. The cross and the promise of God through it are a sword—meant to be wielded wisely.

Hebrews 2:14-15 (ESV) says, "Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of

the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery."

When God appeared to Adam and Eve after their sin, they didn't confess or seek forgiveness. Instead, they shifted blame and tried to hide. Why? Because they had become slaves to sin, with no way out of its grip—except for God's promise.

God's promise of a Savior transformed their lives. Despite the curse and exile from the garden, their faith in God's promise gave them hope and confidence.

God warned Cain in Genesis 4:7, "Sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for you, but you must rule over it." Cain might have asked, "How?" The answer lies in God's promise.

The law was given as a tutor, guiding us to Christ, so that through faith, we might be justified (Galatians 3:24).

When we seek to earn God's favor or to control sin through our own strength, we fall short. But Christ's promise makes all things possible:

Matthew 19:26 (ESV): "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

This is the freedom we have through Christ—trusting not in ourselves but in God's mercy. We can release our attempts to prove our worth and instead rely on the grace offered through Jesus.

God's grace and the promise of salvation through Jesus Christ are like a sword—meant to confront and defeat sin and temptation. This gift isn't meant to sit on a shelf; it's a treasure designed to be used wisely and actively.

Let us be wise stewards of all of God's gifts—both earthly and spiritual. When we do, He promises to bless us abundantly. As he has already bless us with all that we need for this life and with forgiveness for all our sins.

Amen.