



SERMON GROUP LINK

JOEY WHITE | "PARABLE OF THE SHREWD MANAGER"

Harris Creek Baptist Church

June 29, 2014

LIFE GROUP LEADER INSTRUCTIONS

In preparation for group discussion, take a few minutes to read through the instructions to the right.

PASSAGES TO STUDY

SERMON TEXT:

Luke 16:1-15

BEFORE LIFE GROUP

1. Spend time in prayer and studying the passage.
2. Listen to the sermon and take notes. Write down questions you had while listening to the sermon.
3. Read through all of the material.
4. Write down two or three ways to apply the passage to your daily life.

DURING LIFE GROUP

1. Summarize the sermon in your own words. Ask other group members to do the same.
2. Ask someone to read the text for the group.
3. Lead your group through the discussion questions, asking the ones that are relevant to your group. Supplement some of the discussion with your own thoughts and follow-up questions.
4. Share how you might be able to apply the sermon to your everyday life.
5. Close with a time of prayer, asking God to increase the depth of our relationship with Him and our obedience to what we learned.

SERMON RECAP

Many biblical scholars have suggested that the parable found in Luke 16:1-15 is one of the more confusing and difficult parables to interpret for us today. We are obviously not the original hearers of this parable; we are quite removed from the context Jesus spoke this parable to. On top of that, this parable is long, choppy, and has some demanding questions for what it means to be people of the Kingdom of God. But, no matter how you interpret the characters in "The Parable of the Shrewd Manager," one thing that is clear is we are called to steward our wealth with a Kingdom mindset. A Kingdom mindset means the believer possesses a certain urgency to do the right things for the right reasons. In saying that, this urgency isn't predicated on anxiety; rather, our urgency is built on hope. The timeliness of our actions is born out of the knowledge that we have a short time to make a difference. So, we are to leverage our wealth, of all forms, for Kingdom advancement because we know that, in the end, these assets are fleeting. Our money, relationships, and influence are all resources that can be leveraged powerfully and creatively for the Kingdom in the "here and now." As we consider our position in life and account for what God has entrusted us with, we know that our subsequent choices will ultimately be an acknowledgment of our salvation.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. It was said that this parable is particularly difficult to interpret in comparison to Jesus' other parables. Why do you think that is the case? What cultural barriers do we have to overcome to better understand this parable?
2. Why would it have been shocking for the disciples to hear how the rich man commended his manager? Was this shocking for you to hear as a listener today? Why or why not?
3. What does it mean to be "shrewd"? Why do you think this term sometimes carries a negative connotation with it? Why do you think Jesus chose to say that the rich man commended the manager's "shrewdness"?
4. What does it mean to act urgently with what we are wealthy in? How does urgency ultimately reveal our eternal perspective? What is the difference between urgency built on anxiety versus urgency built on hope?
5. What does it practically look like for you to act shrewdly (think "cleverly" or "astutely") for the sake of the Kingdom of God in your daily life? What could this look like for you individually? What might this look like for us corporately as a church?
6. Often our stewardship takes the path of least resistance. Where can Harris Creek sacrifice more for Kingdom advancement?
7. What do you need to do individually or as a family to demonstrate a more commendable approach to stewardship in light of this parable? How can the manager's repentance (change in direction) give us hope that change is possible when it comes to this area of our lives?
8. If your "wealth" can be a determiner of your heart's placement, then what could you do immediately to better position your heart for desired impact?
9. What did you take away from this weekend's message? How do you feel led to respond?