

# SHREWDNESS IN SPIRITUAL MATTERS

Luke 16:1-14

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## INTRODUCTION

Our message for today contains challenging teachings from the parable of Jesus about wealth, stewardship, and the importance of making wise choices in our lives. Jesus gave the parable of the shrewd manager in Luke 16 that contains profound truths that are not immediately apparent upon a first reading.

These truths are often concealed beneath the surface, much like hidden animals within a complex picture that require careful observation to be seen. This analogy illustrates how biblical teachings frequently demand intentional effort and insight to uncover their full meaning.

At face value, the parable may seem to endorse dishonesty or greed, but this is a misunderstanding of its true message. Jesus does not commend fraudulent behavior; rather, He highlights the contrast between worldly people and believers in terms of shrewdness.

Worldly individuals often display greater cleverness and initiative in

pursuing their self-interest than believers do in managing their spiritual responsibilities. The parable calls for believers to adopt a similar level of wisdom and prudence in stewarding earthly resources for eternal purposes.

I humbly appeal that you give me your undivided attention as we explore these important messages.

## DEFINITION OF WORD

It has become absolutely necessary that we define the keyword of our heading on this topic: "SHREWDNESS".

## DICTIONARY MEANING

Having or showing the insight, intelligence, and understanding to make good judgments about practical matters (as in business or finance) also : CUNNING.

## BIBLICAL MEANING

In biblical terms, 'shrewd' is derived from the Hebrew word 'arum' and Greek 'phronimos,' embodying prudence, wisdom, and astuteness. Scripture delineates between rightful shrewdness and deceitful cunning. Proverbs extols

shrewdness as part of godly wisdom, promoting foresight and preparedness.

Jesus' teachings emphasize blending strategic savvy with moral integrity, advising disciples to be "*wise as serpents and innocent as doves*" (**Matthew 10:16**).

**WELCOME TO OUR MESSAGE  
FOR TODAY  
SHREWDNESS IN SPIRITUAL  
MATTERS**

This message begins with the Parable of the Shrewd Manager presented by Jesus in **Luke 16:1 – 14**, Jesus tells the story of a wealthy man who has a manager accused of wasting his possessions.

The master calls the manager in and says, "*What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your management because you cannot be manager any longer.*" Right from the start, we encounter a moment of accountability. The manager realizes he is in trouble and starts to panic.

He thinks to himself: "What will I do? I'm not strong enough to dig, and I'm too ashamed to beg." Rather than resigning himself to his fate, he devises a clever plan to ensure his future security. He goes to his master's debtors, reducing the amounts they owe. To one who

owes a hundred measures of oil, he instructs him to write fifty.

To another who owes a hundred measures of wheat, he says to write eighty. Here's where it gets interesting: the master finds out what the manager has done and, rather than punishing him, commend his shrewdness. Jesus states, "*For the sons of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than the sons of light.*"

The key to this parable lies in that line. Jesus is illustrating how the people of the world often take savvy, calculated actions for their own benefit, while God's people sometimes overlook this critical awareness regarding their spiritual responsibilities. While the manager acted out of self-interest, Jesus encourages us to apply similar discernment in our own lives.

Following this parable, Jesus shares an essential lesson about faithfulness. He states in verse 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." This principle invites us to reflect on how we manage our resources—our time, finances, and relationships.

Are we trust worthy with small things? If we be faithful with the little, how can we be entrusted with greater responsibilities? In verse 11, Jesus says, *“If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust you with the true riches?”*

This calls us to consider how we handle our possessions and whether we prioritize God’s values over worldly ones. Jesus emphasizes that we cannot serve both God and money. This challenges us to evaluate what truly drives our decisions. Are we allowing material concerns to overshadow our relationship with God?

Addressing the Pharisees in (Verses 14) we see the Pharisees reacting to Jesus’ teachings. The text notes that the Pharisees—who were lovers of money—heard all these things and ridiculed Him. Their reaction illustrates their attachment to wealth and status, rejecting the values Jesus is presenting.

Jesus responded by saying, “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.” This statement exposes their hypocrisy, revealing that while they may seem righteous

outwardly, their hearts are not aligned with God.

Understanding the parable requires looking beyond the obvious and engaging with the text thoughtfully. The deeper lesson emphasizes the importance of shrewdness in using worldly resources wisely, not for selfish gain, but to advance the kingdom of God.

This approach to stewardship challenges believers to be intentional and discerning, recognizing the fact that faithfulness in small matters has eternal significance. The parable ultimately calls for a spiritual insight that sees beyond surface appearances to grasp the profound principles of faithfulness, stewardship, and the wise use of resources entrusted by God.

### **HOW TO APPLY THIS WISDOM TODAY**

- Be shrewd for God’s kingdom – Just as the manager thought ahead, we should live with an eternal mindset. Invest your time, resources, and relationships in what will matter beyond this life.
- Be faithful in the small things – Whether it’s money, work, or ministry, steward well what you’ve been given,

and God will entrust you with more.

- Align your heart with God, not wealth – Money is a tool, not a

master. Make sure your ultimate loyalty and devotion belong to God alone.

### **CONCLUSION**

Spiritual Shrewdness is Wisdom in Action. Jesus wasn't endorsing dishonesty—He was highlighting the wisdom of planning ahead and using resources wisely. If worldly people can be shrewd for their temporary gain, how much more should we be spiritually wise for eternal rewards?

Let's be strategic, faithful, and fully devoted to God, using everything we have for His glory. Because in the end, the greatest treasure isn't found in this world—it's found in Christ.

**MAY GOD BLESS HIS WORD IN JESUS NAME - AMEN**