

# WISDOM IN ACTION

AN EXEGESIS AND APPLICATION OF LUKE 16:8

Adeoye, Emmanuel (Evangr.)

## OVERVIEW

Wisdom in action is the practical application of knowledge, experience, and insight to make sound decisions and take effective action, transforming abstract understanding into tangible results.

It goes beyond knowing right from wrong; it is the active,, often, daily, implementation of knowledge with, discernment and purpose, often linked to, moral, judgement, and ethical behavior,

**Knowledge vs. Action:** Knowledge is understanding that a traffic light is red, while wisdom in action is applying the brakes, this source says.

**Decision Making:** Choosing to save money now rather than spending it on a whim, knowing it will provide security or better value later.

**Conflict Management:** Knowing when to speak assertively in a difficult conversation and when to listen to others.

**IT IS ACTIVE:** Wisdom is not just a state of mind or a noun; it is a verb that manifests in how you respond to circumstances.

**LONG-TERM FOCUS:** It involves doing now what you will be satisfied with later, rather than acting on immediate feelings or desires.

**EMOTIONAL CONTROL:** It requires managing emotions—such as anger or fear—so that reason and sound judgment prevail in decisions. A manager, facing termination for wasting his master's assets, acts quickly to reduce the debts of his master's clients, ensuring they will welcome him into their homes once he loses his job.

The Commendation (v. 8a): **THE "LORD"** (the master in the parable, not Jesus) praises the dishonest manager for his cleverness and foresight. The verse Discusses the Parable of the Unjust Steward, where a manager, facing termination, reduces his master's debtors' bills to secure their favor for his future. **The "Commendation":** The master (and Jesus) does not praise the dishonesty itself, but the shrewdness (foresight) the manager showed in preparing for his future.

Jesus explains that the "sons of this world" (MIS-BELIEVERS) are more shrewd in dealing with their own

generation than the "sons of light" (believers) are in managing their spiritual lives. A steward, facing unemployment, used his remaining time and authority to alter debts owed to his master, securing future favor from the debtors. His master—not Jesus—commends his "shrewdness" (**GREEK: PHRONIMOS—PRUDENT, WISE, ENTERPRISING**).

**Jesus does not praise the steward's dishonesty (which He labels "unjust") but rather his prudence—his foresight in USING AVAILABLE RESOURCES TO SECURE A FUTURE HOME.**

#### **THE CONTRAST:**

"Sons of this world" (worldly people) often plan ahead more cleverly for **their temporal retirement than "sons of light"** (believers) do for their eternity.

**IMPLICATION:** Worldly people use their resources (money/mammon) to secure their future. **Believers should use their "unrighteous mammon"** (earthly wealth/time) to make "friends" (by blessing others) so that they are welcomed into eternal dwellings.

**LUKE 16:8** is the climax of the Parable of the Unjust Steward where Jesus observes that **"The Sons Of This World Are More Shrewd In Dealing With Their Own Generation Than The Sons Of Light."** The verse teaches **"WISDOM IN ACTION"** by calling

believers ("sons of light") to apply the same foresight, energy, and strategic planning to eternal, spiritual goals that worldly people use for temporary, material gains.

**SHREWDNESS (PHRONIMOS):** The Greek word implies practical wisdom, foresight, or sagacity. Jesus is not endorsing fraud; he is highlighting the manager's urgent, strategic thinking. "Sons of Light" vs. "Sons of This World": **BELIEVERS OFTEN LACK THE SAME PASSION AND DEDICATION To Eternal, kingdom-focused goals that secular people display for temporary, selfish, or worldly goals.**

**STEWARDSHIP OF "MAMMON":** The passage, followed by v. 9, encourages believers to use "unrighteous mammon" (worldly wealth) to make friends for eternity (e.g., helping the poor), rather than hoarding it.

**CHRISTIANS ARE CALLED TO BE PROACTIVE, USING THE BRIEF TIME ON EARTH TO INVEST IN LASTING, SPIRITUAL OUTCOMES (LUKE 16:9).** This passage often surprises readers but serves **As a stern call for Christians to prioritize kingdom investments over complacency.**

Jesus points out that worldly, secular-minded people ("sons of this age") often plan more effectively for their temporary futures than believers do for their eternal ones.

Believers are encouraged to use "unrighteous wealth" (worldly

resources) to make friends for eternity (e.g., using money to help others or further the Gospel), rather than merely hoarding it.

**"CHILDREN OF LIGHT":** This term refers to Christians or believers, whom Jesus suggests should be more proactive stewards of their time, talent, and treasure.

**THE PHRASE "CHILDREN OF THIS WORLD ARE WISER IN THEIR GENERATION THAN THE CHILDREN OF LIGHT"** comes from **Luke 16:8** in the Bible, part of Jesus' parable of the unjust steward, meaning worldly people are often more shrewd and strategic in achieving their earthly goals (wealth, status) than believers are in pursuing spiritual ones, prompting a call for Christians to use their resources wisely for eternal purposes.

**LUKE 16:8 MARKS THE PARABLE OF THE UNJUST STEWARD, WHERE THE MASTER COMMENDS** The Dishonest Manager Not For His Immorality, But For His Shrewdness In Securing His Future. Jesus Uses This To Teach **THAT FOLLOWERS SHOULD BE AS "SHREWD" OR PROACTIVE WITH EARTHLY RESOURCES (MONEY/MATERIALISM) To Secure "ETERNAL DWELLINGS"** As People Of The World Are With Temporary Affairs.

**THE WORLDLY (CHILDREN OF THIS WORLD):** Represented by the dishonest manager, they are diligent,

calculating, and use available means (even dishonest ones like manipulating accounts) to secure their future security and relationships.

**THE SPIRITUAL (CHILDREN OF LIGHT):** Believers are challenged to be as forward-thinking and strategic in their spiritual lives as the worldly are in theirs, using "unrighteous mammon" (worldly wealth/resources) to make friends and prepare for eternal dwelling.

Jesus isn't condoning dishonesty but commending the worldly person's shrewdness in planning for the future, urging believers to apply that same foresight and intentionality to their faith, using earthly things to gain eternal rewards.

**WORLDLY DILIGENCE:** People focused on earthly success often work harder, plan better, and are more persistent in their pursuits than many spiritual followers are in theirs.

**STEWARDSHIP:** Believers should manage temporal resources (money, talents) with wisdom, faithfulness, and a focus on eternal goals, not just immediate gratification.

**WISDOM FOR THE KINGDOM:** The call is to be "wise as serpents, and harmless as doves," blending earthly prudence with spiritual integrity to advance God's kingdom.

" The master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly. For the people of this world are more shrewd in dealing with

their own kind than are the people of the light." Jesus uses this to highlight that believers ("children of light") should be as proactive in using earthly resources for eternal, spiritual purposes as worldly people are in securing their own future.

#### **APPLICATION IN A TIME LIKE THIS**

**LUKE 16:8 INVOLVES KINGDOM-FOCUSED BUDGETING:** Using financial resources to support the LORD'S Church, missions, and the poor, rather than purely for self-indulgence.

**USING PROFESSIONAL SKILLS FOR GOD:** Applying the same diligence, networking, and efficiency used in secular careers to ministry or helping others.

**DIGITAL SHREWDNESS:** Using technology and social media for spreading truth rather than engaging in conflict, as "shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves".

**ETHICAL INTEGRITY:** While the steward was dishonest, the "sons of light" must show the same shrewdness while maintaining total integrity, using money to serve God, not serving money.

**STEWARDSHIP:** Believers are challenged to be better stewards of their time, money, and resources for the sake of the Kingdom.

**PROACTIVE PLANNING:** The lesson emphasizes using present, temporary

resources to secure a future, eternal outcome.

**INTENTIONALITY:** The world often acts with more strategic planning for its future than Christians do for theirs.

**NOT COMMENDING DISHONESTY:** The parable does not condone the dishonest actions themselves but highlights the *wisdom* of foresight.

**THE PHRASE HIGHLIGHTS A, SAD IRONY:** those dedicated to a passing world are often more diligent than those dedicated to an eternal kingdom. It serves as a rebuke against spiritual apathy, urging **BELIEVERS TO USE THEIR RESOURCES** ("unrighteous mammon") with the same "shrewdness" to build heavenly treasures. Jesus tells the parable of the Dishonest Steward, noting that "the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light" (Luke 16:8). The, "children of this world" (worldly people) are often more cunning, intentional, and resourceful in securing their future and managing earthly affairs than believers ("children of light") are in managing spiritual matters.

**IT IS A CALL TO BE AS SHREWD IN SPIRITUAL INVESTING AS THE WORLD IS IN MATERIAL PURSUING.**

**WISDOM IN ACTION: CORE PRINCIPLES**

**1. FORESIGHT: LOOKING AHEAD TO THE "EVENING OF LIFE" AND**

**ETERNITY**, rather than just immediate comfort.

**2. STRATEGIC USE OF RESOURCES:**

Recognizing that time, money, and talents are tools given by God to produce spiritual interest.

**3. DECISIVE ACTION:** The steward acted quickly when he saw his time was limited. Wisdom in action requires immediate dedication to spiritual goals, not procrastination.

**4. GENEROSITY AS INVESTMENT:** Using money not for selfish hoarding,

but to aid others, build relationships, and advance the Kingdom.

The parable follows the unjust steward who, upon losing his job, reduces his master's debtors' bills to gain favor for his future (v. 4-7). The master commends him not for his dishonesty, but for his foresight and ingenuity in ensuring his future. "**CHILDREN OF THIS WORLD**": Refers to those who live only for this age, focusing on earthly security, wealth, and power.

"**CHILDREN OF LIGHT/KINGDOM**": Refers to believers who should have an eternal perspective but often lack the diligence they apply to earthly things.

"Wiser in their Generation": Worldly people are more focused, intentional, and persistent in achieving their goals than believers are in pursuing the Kingdom.

"Mammon of Unrighteousness": Jesus advises using worldly resources (which can often be corrupting or gained unjustly) to make "friends" for eternity—likely through generosity, charity, and supporting the Gospel—so that they are welcomed into eternal homes.