

# Crossway Life Group, Week of January 6

See sermon notes on [CMC's webpage](#) for background information

## Community

Take time to share and pray for each other's concerns and joys.

**Scripture: Luke 16:1-13**      **Sermon: "Currency Exchange"**

### Reading & Discussing the passage

- Some "valuables" have only temporary value. What are examples of these? What is a smart thing to do with temporary valuables? What are wise ways to have, view, and use our valuables?
- Background: Before and after **Luke 16:1-13** Jesus specifically taught the *religious leaders*, who criticized Jesus' behavior and teaching. In this passage Jesus teaches *his disciples* and warns them about an error of the wealthy religious leaders. Jesus teaches his disciples through a parable, which is a made up story that generally teaches one spiritual truth. The truth is obvious in one setting, and then applied to the kingdom of God. This parable is about a clever manager who learns that he will lose his job, then seeks to ingratiate his master's debtors so that they would owe him favors in the future. **Read Luke 16:1-13.**
- How does the manager use his last days in his job to provide for his needs after the job is over?
- Why does the owner praise this dishonest manager, and why does Jesus present him as a model to his disciples? To answer these questions, consider...what does it mean to be 'shrewd'? In what ways are we as Christians like the manager who knows his employment is temporary?
- Luke 16:13 reveals Jesus' big idea. How would you put the big idea in your own words? The table below illustrates Jesus' main point by contrasting earthly wealth and heavenly wealth. What other comparisons could be added in light of Luke 16, or other passages in the Bible?

This world's wealth	Heavenly wealth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is surprisingly little</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Abundant (magnified)</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Always spoils and decays</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• True/lasting/pure</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Always goes away</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Can be ours forever</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li></ul>

### The Big Idea

**The wise give up what they are guaranteed to lose  
in order to gain far better  
that is theirs to keep and to use forever**

### Reflection Questions

We can apply Jesus' teaching to our lives by....

1. Seeing the limitations of this world's wealth:
  - Which categories of this world's wealth are most tempting to you?
  - What helps you see the limitations of this world's wealth?
  - Where have you seen or experienced it?
2. Seeing the beauty of heavenly wealth offered to us:
  - What helps you see the beauty of heavenly wealth? What excites you about heavenly wealth?
  - Who are role models for you in viewing and using earthly valuables in heavenly ways?
3. Converting this world's wealth into heavenly wealth:

- What are ways we can 'convert' this world's wealth into we can into heavenly wealth?
- What is a specific step you can take?
- What makes that step challenging for you?

### Growing in Cultural Understandings

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Through this parable, Jesus commends being 'shrewd' = smart, creative, effective action to meet a critical need. *How is being shrewd influenced by culture?* In Jesus parable, the manager used practices and values in his culture in a clever way. It was common for farmers in his day to rent fields and then own the landowner a fee/tax at the time of harvest. In his culture, reciprocating generosity was highly honored. To not reciprocate generosity would be highly shameful. Thus, reducing farmers debts would assure his own future well-being.

- What are practices and values in your home culture about money and wealth?
- How might a Christian uses these practices and values in clever ways to convert this world's wealth into heavenly wealth?

### Serving beyond ourselves

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What are ways that your group can be for the benefit of people beyond yourselves? One specific strategy may be to pray for another group of people. And perhaps you could reach out to people in that group and ask them how you might pray.

### Luke 16:1-13 - New International Version

#### Parable of the Shrewd Manager

Jesus told his disciples: "There was a rich man whose manager was accused of wasting his possessions. <sup>2</sup> So he called him in and asked him, 'What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your management, because you cannot be manager any longer.'<sup>3</sup> The manager said to himself, 'What shall I do now? My master is taking away my job. I'm not strong enough to dig, and I'm ashamed to beg— <sup>4</sup> I know what I'll do so that, when I lose my job here, people will welcome me into their houses.'<sup>5</sup> So he called in each one of his master's debtors. He asked the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' <sup>6</sup> 'Nine hundred gallons of olive oil,' he replied. The manager told him, 'Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it four hundred and fifty.'<sup>7</sup> Then he asked the second, 'And how much do you owe?' 'A thousand bushels<sup>[b]</sup> of wheat,' he replied. He told him, 'Take your bill and make it eight hundred.'<sup>8</sup> 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.

<sup>9</sup> "I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings. <sup>10</sup> Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. <sup>11</sup> So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? <sup>12</sup> And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own? <sup>13</sup> No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money."