

“I AM RESOLVED”

Lk.16:1-9

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. A short time ago we concluded an “old” year and have begun the “new” year. The old one is over. We can’t re-live it.
2. However, we can, and hopefully we have, examined our hearts and searched our souls in the light of God’s inspired revelation, and have resolved to conduct ourselves in the faith of Christ during this year with perhaps an even greater determination in what we hope to accomplish in our stewardship in service to the Lord in view of our ultimate goal of reaching heaven in the future.
3. Hopefully we have the attitude of the Apostle Paul as he expressed himself in Phil.3:13-16, as well as the resolve of the steward of the rich man of our text who said, “I am resolved what to do...,” V.4.
4. Let us be mindful of the truths taught in Mt.4:4; Jas.1:17; 4:13-17; Eccl.12:13,14.
5. In view of these truths, in this lesson we shall mention several things to do for which we should with all sincerity of purpose say “I am resolved” as the steward in this parable said “I am resolved what to do,” V.4.

II. DISCUSSION

A. BUT FIRST, WE BRIEFLY CONSIDER THE FACTS AND THE LESSON TAUGHT IN OUR TEXT CONCERNING THE UNJUST STEWARD.

1. First, the facts.
 - a. The subject of our text was the steward of a certain rich man, V.1
 - b. He was accused of wasting his master’s goods, or of being unfaithful in his stewardship, V.1.
 - c. He was called to give an account of his stewardship, V.2.
 - d. He was threatened with the possibility of losing his stewardship.

- e. The steward's first reaction was to ask himself a question in view of the possibility of losing his position: "What shall I do?" He said, "I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed," V.3.
- f. Vv.4-7 reveal his plan to protect and to provide for himself if and when he is "put out of the stewardship," wherein he said to himself: "I am resolved what to do..."
- g. In V.8 the Lord branded him as an unjust (unrighteous) steward, a child of the world, but commended him "because he had done wisely" with reference to making provisions for his future after the loss of his stewardship.
- h. In V.8 the Lord cites him as an example of the fact that "the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light."
- i. The Lord's application of the parable is found in V.9.

2. Secondly, the lesson taught in the parable.

- a. In V.8 the Lord himself gives the key to the parable, which is that the children of light in the conduct of their affairs should emulate (strive to equal or excel) the wisdom and prudence of the children of this world in the conduct of their affairs.
- b. The difficulty of the parable at first glance is more apparent than real.
 - (1) The whole parabolic or allegorical machinery is borrowed from worldly and irreligious life, where dishonest cunning and rascality are freely tolerated.
 - (2) In that mode of thinking, the unjust steward used wisdom (worldly wisdom) to protect and provide for himself after he was to be put out of his stewardship.
 - (3) The child of light is to be equally shrewd and wise in the management of his affairs: using, however, only those means and methods that are permissible, i.e., just and right, in his sphere of action.
 - (4) For God's word nowhere teaches the absurdity that sinful methods are permitted or justified or acceptable to God.
 - (5) While the unjust steward's conduct is used to teach a valuable lesson, he himself in his actions is condemned as an "unrighteous" steward in V.8.
- c. The lesson taught in this parable is that the unjust steward, a worldly-minded rascal, used greater wisdom in dealing with a worldly-minded master above him and dishonest tenants beneath

him, that the children of light often use in dealing with the Lord and Master over them and their needy brethren about them.

- d. The parable contrasts the children of two households; the children of the worldly household often exercise more forethought and wisdom in gaining among their brethren friends for the day of need, and in expending money to that end, than do the children of light.
- e. The “devil’s martyrs,” in their skilled prudence, often shame the saints.
- f. In V.9 in the Lord’s application, worldly possessions are pictured as the stewardship of the children of light.
 - (1) If children of light have been wasting them in selfishness and self-indulgence, they must take warning from the parable and so employ them in deeds of usefulness and mercy that, when the stewardship is taken from them, they may have obtained for themselves a refuge for the future or “that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.”
 - (2) But how can **THEY** receive you into heaven? Only in a secondary and subordinate sense suggested by Mt.25:34-40, where the Lord altogether identifies himself with his poor and unfortunate disciples, and returns on their behalf a heavenly recompense for kindnesses shown them on the earth. Cf. 1Tim.6:17-19; Mt.16:19-21.

B. SERIOUSLY REFLECTING ON THE UNCERTAINTY, BREVITY, PURPOSE AND DUTIES OF THIS EARTHLY LIFE AND THE HOPE OF HEAVEN, LET EACH OF US RESOLVE WITHIN OUR HEART AND WISELY SAY:

- 1. I am resolved to become more spiritual!
 - a. Let us do this in recognition of the fact:
 - (1) That we, “as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house... to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ,” 1Pet.2:5.
 - (2) That we are to present our “bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your (our) spiritual service,” Rom.12:1.

- (3) That we are to “offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name,” according to Heb.13:15.
 - (4) That those “who are spiritual” are to seek to restore those who are “overtaken in a fault,” according to Gal.6:1.
 - b. The need to be “spiritually minded” becomes ever so evident when we realize the truth that “to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace,” Rom.8:6.
 - (1) To be carnally minded is to mind the things of the flesh, to give attention to the things of the flesh, or to sinful desires; to walk after the flesh. Cf. 1Cor.3:1-3; Cf. Gal.5:16-19f.
 - (2) To be spiritually minded is to mind the things of the spirit, to set one’s affections on and to seek those things above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.
- 2. I am resolved to study the scriptures more!
 - a. According to 2Tim.2:15 we must “give diligence” in our study of the scriptures.
 - b. When we do this we will not be “unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is,” Eph.5:17; and will have the knowledge of the mystery of Christ the Apostle Paul had, Eph.3:1-4.
 - c. The absolute importance of such things is evident from various other passages; such as: Psa.119:104,105,130; Psa.19:7,8,11; 119:9,11; 17:4; Heb.5:11-14.
- 3. I am resolved to have a stronger faith much like the strong faith of Abraham spoken of in Rom.4:18-21.
 - a. We need a strong faith in order “to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves,” Rom.15:1.
 - b. True faith is the victory. For by faith we overcome the world, 1Jno.5:4.
 - c. A study of the following passages leaves no doubt that we need a strong faith in God, in his Son, Jesus Christ, and in the word of God, Heb.11:6; Jno.8:24; 20:30,31; Rom.5:1,2; 1Cor.16:13; Gal.5:6; 2:20.
- 4. I am resolved to fear the Lord and keep his commandments which are so urgently required of us, Eccl.12:13,14; Mt.10:28; Mt.7:21; Lk.6:46; Heb.5:8,9.

5. I am resolved to lay up treasures in heaven and lay hold on eternal life as the scriptures teach in Mt.16:19-21; 1Tim.6:12,17-19.

III. CONCLUSION

1. Even though the unjust steward was just that – unjust, unrighteous, unacceptable to God – he exercised worldly wisdom to protect and provide for his **future** in the event of losing or being “put out of” his stewardship to the rich man.
2. How wise are we in the use of and making friends of our earthly possessions? How wise are we in our earthly stewardship?
3. Are we spiritually wise in our earthly stewardship in using it to protect and provide for our **future** as the Lord urges us so “that, when ye fail, **they** may receive you into everlasting habitations”?