

## **Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ The Kingdom of God and Its Stewardship**

Last time...The Parable of the Unjust Steward

A teaching about money and worldly wealth...a matter of stewardship

This time...In His continued response to the Pharisees regarding the Parable of the Unjust Steward, Jesus speaks of the Kingdom of God

We will be in Luke 16 again

v10-15

v16    law...prophets:

Jesus is still addressing the self-righteous and idolatrous Pharisees

The Law...revealing the need for the Messiah promised to Adam/Eve and Abraham (pre-Law), thru whom ALL nations would be blessed

It was their “keeping of the Law” that was the Pharisees’ justification before men (to the sinners) for their wealth

But God sees it differently (v15)

And as this mystery would be “developed”, a Pharisee born again of the Spirit of God would record for them/us that the Law was not given to justify man but to reveal to man his abject need for a Messiah (Apostle Paul in Galatians)

The prophets...foretelling details about the Messiah to come

Yet the Pharisees did not see the picture God presented in the prophets  
Their fathers before them killed the prophets, and they seek to kill Jesus

John the Baptist is identified by Jesus to be the last “OT” prophet...  
and the greatest

Matt 11:11a    **Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist**

The Law and the prophets...the Word of God

Whereby the mysteries of God, the Plan of God, are revealed to man

The Pharisees mishandled the Word of God...unjust stewards

- “keeping” is by the letter of the Law
- the letter of the law was by man’s interpretation
- John 5:39

Since that time the kingdom of God is preached:

Since, after, the Law and the prophets, including John the Baptist,  
the kingdom of God is (present tense) preached

By Whom?

a. The King (Messiah) Himself

Matt 12:28 But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you

notice...the 1<sup>st</sup> order of business by the King:  
kick out the usurpers, Satan and gang who  
seized by force or without legal right what is  
not theirs

b. And those who are His

Matt 11:11b notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

Matt 10:1a And when he had called unto *him* his twelve disciples, he gave them power *against* unclean spirits, to cast them out

Mark 16:17a And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils

Every man presses in to it:

presses = to crowd oneself, to violently force

If you are a usurper,  
you crowd yourself where you have no legal right,  
you try to take by violent force what is not yours...  
it's what you do

Speaking to the Pharisees, Jesus is telling them that they are not heeding/believing His preaching (invitation) of the kingdom of God but are instead violently (they want to kill Him, the King) crashing the gates to force their way in on their terms....

They and those of their ilk who went before them

Matt 11:12-13 And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.

v17 easier for heaven and earth...than one tittle:

The Kingdom of God will be established according to the Word of God

Is 9:6-7

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of *his* government and peace *there shall be* no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this

And no amount of human resistance can stop it

And it will NEVER be established on man's terms

So, it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away

(which no man, nor even all men, can accomplish)

than for the Pharisees (and all other usurpers) to enter the kingdom of God with gate-crashing violence

God cannot fail

The Word of God cannot fail,

it is settled in heaven (Ps 119:89), the throne of the God who changes not  
it is magnified above His name (Ps 138:2)

The Pharisees, boasting of being justified before God by their keeping the Law,  
will fail

They are idolatrous

They are self-righteous

They are self-deceived

They are usurpers, to be cast out (like the demons) rather than to be  
admitted into the Kingdom of God

Then, with one statement, Jesus proves the Pharisees to be violent gate-crashers

v18 put away his wife:

Jesus gives the Pharisees just one example of their Kingdom-disqualifying  
Law-lessness: Divorce

Deut 24:1-4

But, per the letter of the Law, what constituted "uncleanness"?

Rabbis offered commentary...man's interpretation

Many rabbis taught what rabbis taught vs what Word of God taught

In those days, there were two schools of thought, “championed” by  
different leading Rabbis  
On this issue of uncleanness...

1. Shamai

Uncleanness = adultery

Interpretation: only Biblical grounds for divorce is adultery

2. Hallel

Uncleanness = many things...as determined by the man

- A bad meal or she's a bad cook
- The house is dirty
- Not as pretty as another woman who has captured your attention
- Just about any “unfavorable” reason

Note: the woman could only divorce her husband if

- he became a leper
- he raped a virgin

Which do you think was the prevailing school of thought embraced by the  
Pharisees?

Yep, Hallel's

The wealthy Pharisees were flagrant violators of the sanctity of marriage,  
using man's interpretation of the letter of the law to skirt God's meaning  
in the Spirit of the law in order to justify their flesh

As a result, the family structure was under assault and was breaking down  
(the work of the devil)

Yet Jesus, in v18, gives God's meaning of the Law, the Spirit of the Law,  
giving them the “bottom line” of His answer to their “follow up” question  
in Matt 19:1-9

With just one, “foundational”, heart-exposing example, Jesus declared the  
wickedness of the Pharisees...therefore, their need for Him, the Messiah,  
in order to enter the Kingdom of God

Before God, Who knows their hearts, the Pharisees are lawbreakers, sinners...  
not “keepers of the Law”

The Pharisees were unjust stewards of

- money and worldly wealth
- the Word of God

As such, they would be unjust stewards of the Kingdom of God...  
so it would not be given to them unless they repent

Last week we looked at stewardship of riches...money and worldly things to be used  
not for ourselves  
but to be invested in the Kingdom of God, setting ourselves up for eternity

In God's eyes, money is the least  
Its power is a deception and bondage  
It offers no safety against man's enemy – death  
It offers no reward for man's greatest need – forgiveness and redemption

Now, we look at stewardship of true riches...the Kingdom of God,  
wherein lies power over death and redemption/safety in the presence of God

The Kingdom of God (v16) is a mystery:

- a secret
- an eternal truth of God being revealed in time to man
- God's Plan (and since He cannot fail, there is on Plan B!)

Since God inhabits eternity, God's mystery starts...in eternity, before time was created,  
From before Gen 3, from before Gen 1:1

1 Cor 2:7      But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, *even* the hidden  
*wisdom*, which God ordained before the world unto our glory

2 Tim 1:9      Who hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not  
according to our works, but according to his own purpose and  
grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began

Citizens of the Kingdom of God have stewardship of the mystery of the Kingdom of God

1. What is it?
2. What are we to do with it?

What is the mystery of the Kingdom of God?

Rom 16:25-27 (written 2 years after Acts 28)...the Gospel

1 Cor 15:1-4

Acts 28:23-31

Is 6:9

Lest they be converted  
Of what? Unbelief  
By Whom? God  
Until they are converted, they cannot speak the truth (not be allowed to)

As Jesus had previously stated...Matt 13:10-17

As such, blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in (Rom 11:25)

Acts 26:15-21

1 Thes 1:9-10 ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come

Col 1:25-27

Col 2:2

Eph 1:9-10

Eph 3:3-11

1 Tim 3:16

Salvation to the Jew AND the Gentile (Rom 1:16-17)

- all of Adam's race...all nations
- a new people...in Christ and Christ in them – the Church/Bride/Body

The Jews (given the sign of circumcision) believed the Kingdom of God was theirs...

OTL God is the God of AI&J

They were given Scripture...John 5:39a

Therefore, for a Gentile (dirty dog) to enter into the Kingdom of God, he had to convert to Judaism

Yet it was prophesied of the infant Jesus at His dedication in the Temple that He would be “a light to the Gentiles and the glory of Your people Israel.” (Luke 2:32)

And Jesus said

- Salvation is of the Jews i.e. the Savior was promised thru AIJJD (John 4:22)
- The Pharisees search the whole world to make one proselyte, and then make him twice the child of hell they are (Matt 23:15)
- John 5:39b

Even as Jesus continued the new work of God, the Pharisees persisted in their thinking and violently resisted the Kingdom of God

1 Thes 2:14-16

Within the Church, Judaizers persisted in their Jewish thinking of salvation and the Kingdom of God

Acts 15:1

Peter: Acts 15:10-11

Paul and Barnabas: Acts 15:12, 26

James: Acts 15:18-19, 28-29

God's Plan of Redemption of Man... 1 Peter 1:18-21

(Peter to the Jews)

The work of His Son

So, since John 1:4, how does God go about this Plan

1 Tim 2:4 will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth

2 Peter 3:9 not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance

Titus 1:2 In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began

Matt 28:18-20 Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen

Acts 1:8 ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth

Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me

Titus 1:3 hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour

Those of John 1:12 are "speakers" (Cor 1:27) for the Kingdom of God being preached where they have been placed

The Kingdom of God is God's to establish, not man's

But, the Plan of God is to use man in His work

Our hand is on the hand of our Father doing the work (His delight is our wanting to put our hand on His!)

Eph 2:8-10 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them

2 Tim 1:9 Who hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began

In Matt 19:25-26,

Jesus' disciples cried out, Who then can be saved (enter the Kingdom of God)?

Jesus answered, With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible

Regarding faith...

If we even had faith the size of a mustard seed, we could move mountains and

“nothing shall be impossible” to us (Matt 17:20)

But. I don't see that happening and Jesus said salvation was impossible for man

Jesus Christ is the Author and Finisher of faith...

begins with Him, ends with Him...and every point in between

Therefore we are saved by the faith **of** Christ (laying His will down for His Father's will), not by “our” faith in Christ

In the English translations of the *Textus Receptus*: (reading our Bible carefully)

Gal 2:16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified

Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me

Phil 3:9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith

Rom 3:22 the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe

Acts 26:18 the saving faith is in “Me”

If I enter into the Kingdom of God by “my” faith in Christ, I and my faith get credit neither deserve!

The measure of faith given to us is not to bring about the Kingdom of God but to receive God’s invitation to enter into His Kingdom, to surrender our will to His, to lay down our life for His

The Kingdom of God is about the King Jesus Christ

His nature

His life

His faith

His righteousness

His work

His power

2 Cor 4:3-7

What are we to do with true riches, the mystery of the Kingdom of God?

It is vital that we understand our role in God’s Plan of Redemption!

We are not called to convert anyone...for we cannot, only God can

But we get to...are given opportunities to...

- Evangelize – sow the Word, preach the Gospel
- Make disciples – teach the Word
- Be a “speaker” of the Spirit of Christ indwelling us
  - Be it in Honduras or Egypt
  - Be it in your own home and neighborhood or at Kiwanis Park
  - Be it...wherever you are (2 Tim 1:9)

Why does it matter?

Come back next week...for the rest of Ch 16