

Advertising companies are always thinking up new ways of how to encourage us to spend our money. Banks are always thinking up new ways of how to encourage us to invest and save our money. In Luke chapter 16, Jesus teaches the Christian how to spend wisely in the present, and the key is to keep an eternal perspective.

#1 - Thinking about life in the future leads to wise (and generous) spending in the present

The first parable in verses 1-9 requires careful reading, for the dishonest manager is not commended for his dishonesty, but for his shrewdness. He is commended because in light of his certain future (being dismissed), he acts shrewdly... wisely... in the time he has left.

So Jesus is not encouraging his disciples to be dishonest, but to be wise in how they spend their money in the present.

This will mean using the money and resources that God gives in the present, in such a way that has eternal consequences, so that when we enter heaven, people who have benefitted from our generosity will be there to welcome us.

Jesus is urging his followers to spend money wisely, to use it as a blessing to others, to be generous with our money, not because money is how we **gain** a relationship with God, but because how we spend it **reveals** our relationship with God.

In v14 we learn that the Pharisees were also listening to Jesus, but because they loved money, they ridicule what Jesus teaches about how to spend it. In response, Jesus gives them a strong warning about just how dangerous a position they are in....

#2 - Living only for yourself in the present, leads to failure in the future

In the second parable (vv19-31) Jesus warns the Pharisees that a love for money in the present is a very dangerous thing, because it deafens us to the commands of God. Jesus tells the story of a very wealthy Jewish man. But there is a problem, because all the time that he is enjoying his wealth, he is also ignoring God's commands (Deuteronomy 15vv7-10) and failing to care for the poor man at his gate, Lazarus.

God is not bothered about people having money, but he is bothered by what they do with it. And tragically this rich man is too busy loving money, rather than loving God, and so is cut off from God for eternity.

God has told us what to do with the money He gives us, and whether we believe Him or not, is shown by what we do.

God has told us about the realities of the future, and whether we believe Him or not, is shown by what we do.

Do we love God, or money?

... Jesus tells us we can't love both.