

## Service for Week 15<sup>th</sup> -21<sup>st</sup> Sept 2025

By Chaplain Andy

### **Our Opening Prayer.**

Living God, we surround ourselves with all kinds of belongings and we are constantly seeking more. They can so easily keep us from you, closing our eyes to what is ultimately important in life.

Forgive our selfishness and the wasted opportunities to think of others. Help us to recognize where true fulfilment lies, and so our service to those around us and our relationship with you is enriched.

**Amen**

### *The Lord's Prayer*

Our Father who art in heaven.....

**Amen**

### *Bible Reading Luke 16:1-13*

The Parable of the Shrewd Manager  
Jesus told his disciples: "There was a rich man whose manager was accused of wasting his possessions. 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.'

"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—I know what I'll do so that, when I lose my job here, people will welcome me into their houses.' "So he called in each one of his master's debtors. He asked the first, 'How much do you owe

my master?' " 'Eight hundred gallons of olive oil,' he replied. "The manager told him, 'Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it four hundred.'

"Then he asked the second, 'And how much do you owe?' 'A thousand bushels of wheat,' he replied. "He told him, 'Take your bill and make it eight hundred.' "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. I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings.

"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. So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own? "No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money."

Holy words, Holy wisdom,

***Thanks be to God.***

### **Reflection**

On the face of it this story that Jesus told about a manager presents us with



a problem. The Shrewd Manager in his story acts in a way that we could consider dishonest. He reduces the debts that was owed to his master in an effort to win friends. He knows that he has not been a good manager in the past and because of that he is going to lose his job. He knows that he will need friends in order to survive while out of work and will also need help to get another job. So, he decides to reduce the debts that are owed to his master.

Later in the story the master praises the manager for acting in this way and we would be justified in thinking – hang on a minute- why is his master praising him for being so dishonest. But it is suggested that the manager had been adding a commission for himself on top of the actual debts that were owed to his master. So, by reducing the debts he was merely reducing or cancelling completely what he was due to make himself on the transactions. In this way his master would receive what was rightfully his, so what he was doing was not dishonest.

The master is therefore not praising the manager for dishonesty but instead praising him for acting in a shrewd way to ensure that he would have friends and help when he left the masters employment. It is a story that we could take the wrong way but we know that Jesus would never commend

dishonesty. What the story does teach us is that we should not be naïve about money or our resources.

We know from the gospels that some of the disciples were fishermen and gave that job up to follow Jesus, but their business was carried on by their father and hired men. We know that Paul was a tent maker, paid work which supported his travels and ministry. Lydia was also successful in her business in dyeing and selling purple cloth and offered her home and hospitality to Paul and his companions to stay. Jesus does not condemn working to accumulate money it is what we do with our resources that is important.

Jesus' message for us in his story is that those who follow Christ 'people of the light' should be careful about how they use their money and resources. They should be wise and as shrewd in their affairs as other -'people of this world' as Jesus said. Jesus tells us to love, forgive and care for others but this does not mean we should not do what we can to ensure that ourselves, our families and those around us are looked after and best served. **Amen**

### ***Closing Prayer***

Loving God, however richly you have blessed me, teach me to thirst always for a deepening of my faith and a strengthening of my service to others, through Jesus Christ my Lord. **Amen.**

Prayers inspired by 'Prayerfully Yours' by Nick Fawcett.