A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a small pile of blueberries. The hand is positioned over a brown paper bag, which is partially open. The background is a dark, textured fabric, possibly a sweater. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of the hand and the bag.

Parable of the Unjust Steward
(Luke 16:1-17)

USING TEMPORAL THINGS TO
INVEST IN ETERNAL THINGS

USING TEMPORAL THINGS TO INVEST IN ETERNAL THINGS



*Parable of the
Unjust Steward
(Luke 16:1-17)*

- The parable of "The Unjust Steward" is considered by many to be difficult.
- 👁️ "Is Jesus commending the unjust steward for dishonesty?" (Luke 16:8) — NO
- 👁️ "Is Jesus encouraging the 'children of light' to engage in ungodly business dealings?" (Luke 14:9,11) — NO
- 👁️ So WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

USING TEMPORAL THINGS TO INVEST IN ETERNAL THINGS



*Parable of the
Unjust Steward
(Luke 16:1-17)*

- The parable of "The Unjust Steward" is considered by many to be difficult.
- 👁 Any interpretation contradicting the teaching of the Lord in other passages is a misinterpretation!
- 👁 Any interpretation that results in the Lord's approval of, or dismissal of sinful behavior is a misinterpretation.

Parable of the Unjust Steward

(Luke 16:1-17)

The CONTEXT:



- In Luke 15, the Pharisees and scribes complained about Jesus eating with sinners, to which Jesus responds with 3 parables:
 - ▶ "The Lost Sheep" (Luke 15:1-7)
 - ▶ "The Lost Coin" (Luke 15:8-10)
 - ▶ "The Prodigal Son" (Luke 15:11-32)
- In Luke 16 Jesus turns to his disciples in the hearing of the Pharisees and scribes (1,14)

Parable of the Unjust Steward

(Luke 16:1-17)

The CONTEXT:



- He tells the parable of "The Unjust Steward" (16:1-8a)
- He makes the application of the parable (16:8b-13)
- And responds to the derision of the Pharisees who heard Him (16:14-17)

Luke 16:1-17

16 He also said to His disciples: “There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and an accusation was brought to him that this man was ¹wasting his goods. ² So he called him and said to him, ‘What is this I hear about you? Give an ^aaccount of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.’

³ “Then the steward said within himself, ‘What shall I do? For my master is taking the stewardship away from me. I cannot dig; I am ashamed to beg. ⁴ I have resolved what to do, that when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.’

Luke 16:1-17

⁵“So he called every one of his master’s debtors to *him*, and said to the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ ⁶ And he said, ‘A hundred ²measures of oil.’ So he said to him, ‘Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.’ ⁷ Then he said to another, ‘And how much do you owe?’ So he said, ‘A hundred ³measures of wheat.’ And he said to him, ‘Take your bill, and write eighty.’ ⁸ So the master commended the unjust steward because he had dealt shrewdly. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than ^bthe sons of light.

Luke 16:1-17

⁹“And I say to you, ^cmake friends for yourselves by unrighteous ⁴mammon, that when ⁵you fail, they may receive you into an everlasting home. ¹⁰ ^dHe who is faithful in *what is* least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in *what is* least is unjust also in much. ¹¹ Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true *riches*? ¹² And if you have not been faithful in what is another man’s, who will give you what is your ^eown?

¹³ ^f“No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”

Luke 16:1-17

¹⁴ Now the Pharisees, ^gwho were lovers of money, also heard all these things, and they ⁶derided Him. ¹⁵ And He said to them, “**You are those who ^hjustify yourselves ⁱbefore men, but ^jGod knows your hearts. For ^kwhat is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God.**

¹⁶ ^l“The law and the prophets *were* until John. Since that time the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it.

¹⁷ ^mAnd it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one ⁷tittle of the law to fail.

Parable of the Unjust Steward

(Luke 16:1-17)

THE PARABLE



- **“There was a certain rich man”** (Luke 16:1)
- ▶ A man who had a large estate capable of providing for others (1,6,7)
- ▶ He had a steward whom he placed in charge of his possessions and business dealings (cf. Gen. 39:6)

Parable of the Unjust Steward

(Luke 16:1-17)

THE PARABLE



- A “steward” / “manager” (Gk oikonomos).
 - ▶ An “οἰκονόμος” in the ancient world was a trusted servant or employee who managed the household and affairs of another.
 - ▶ “Comparable to a modern-day financial planner or trustee who controls the finances of an estate for the purpose of making more money for that estate.” (BKC)

Parable of the Unjust Steward

(Luke 16:1-17)

THE PARABLE



- The steward is accused of “wasting his masters goods.”
 - ▶ “he called him and said to him, ‘What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.’” (2)
 - ▶ He is required to turn over all of his accounts - he’s fired!

Parable of the Unjust Steward

(Luke 16:1-17)

THE PARABLE



- **The steward decides his next move**
“*What can I do?*”
 - ▶ “I cannot dig” — he was either physically unable or too lazy to engage in manual labor. (3)
 - ▶ “I am ashamed to beg” — His pride would not allow him to seek charity. (3)
 - ▶ He decides he will try to win the favor of those who owed large amounts to his master (4)

Parable of the Unjust Steward

(Luke 16:1-17)

THE PARABLE



- **The steward decides his next move**
“*What can I do?*”
- ▶ The unjust-manager charged two of the rich man’s debtors less than what they actually owed—400 instead of 800 gallons of olive oil, and 800 instead of 1,000 bushels of wheat. (5-7)
- ▶ Did he further cheat his master or did he simply remove his unjust portion from their bill? Probably the latter!

Parable of the Unjust Steward

(Luke 16:1-17)

THE PARABLE



- **The master commends the unjust steward for his shrewdness (8a)**
 - ▶ He approved of the stewards shrewdness in procuring his future, not any unjust action on his part (4,8)
 - ▶ The steward was unjust for wasting his masters goods (1), not for lowering the amount owed by debtors (vv. 5–7).

Parable of the Unjust Steward

(Luke 16:1-17)

THE PARABLE

Jeremiah 4:22 (NKJV)

²² “For My people *are* foolish,
They have not known Me.
They *are* silly children, And
they have no understanding.
They *are* wise to do evil, But
to do good they have no
knowledge.”

- “For the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light.” (8b)
- ▶ **Shrewd:** “keen awareness, sharp intelligence ...”
- ▶ Worldly people are generally very resourceful in securing their material well being — God’s people are often not as equally resourceful in doing what is good to secure their eternal well being ...

Parable of the Unjust Steward

(Luke 16:1-17)

APPLICATION OF THE PARABLE



Luke 16:9–10 (NKJV)

⁹ “And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon, that when you fail, they may receive you into an everlasting home. ¹⁰ He who *is* faithful in *what is* least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in *what is* least is unjust also in much.

Parable of the Unjust Steward

(Luke 16:1-17)

APPLICATION OF THE PARABLE



- **“make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon.”** (9a)
 - ▶ “Mammon” — Aramaic for “riches.”
 - ▶ “Unrighteous” — it is often used for evil purposes / it is uncertain, undependable, (1 Tim 6:17).
 - ▶ One is to use wealth for good, not store it up, or be a servant of it. Wealth should be a disciple’s servant, not vice versa.

Parable of the Unjust Steward

(Luke 16:1-17)

APPLICATION OF THE PARABLE



- “that when you fail, they may receive you into an everlasting home.” (9b)
- ▶ “when you fail” (NU: “when IT fails”) — when you have none to use.
- ▶ “they may receive you” — refers to spiritual relationships made by wise and proper use of what we have been granted to use (Acts 2:44,45; 1 Tim. 6:17–19; etc.)
- ▶ “everlasting home” (Matt. 6:19)

Parable of the Unjust Steward

(Luke 16:1-17)

APPLICATION OF THE PARABLE



Matthew 6:19–21 (NKJV)

¹⁹ “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; ²⁰ but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Parable of the Unjust Steward

(Luke 16:1-17)

APPLICATION OF THE PARABLE



"During life our means must be so used as to please God and to lay up eternal treasure. If we use it as a trust of the Lord we will secure such a friend. Instead of hoarding we must make heavenly friends."

— (B.W. Johnson) —

Parable of the Unjust Steward

(Luke 16:1-17)

APPLICATION OF THE PARABLE



Matthew 25:34–40 (NKJV)

34 Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: **35** for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; **36** I *was* naked and you clothed Me;

Parable of the Unjust Steward

(Luke 16:1-17)

APPLICATION OF THE PARABLE



Matthew 25:34–40 (NKJV)

I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’³⁷ “Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed *You*, or thirsty and give *You* drink?³⁸ When did we see You a stranger and take *You* in, or naked and clothe *You*?’

Parable of the Unjust Steward

(Luke 16:1-17)

APPLICATION OF THE PARABLE



Matthew 25:34–40 (NKJV)

39 Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ **40** And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did *it* to one of the least of these My brethren, you did *it* to Me.’

Parable of the Unjust Steward

(Luke 16:1-17)

APPLICATION OF THE PARABLE



1 Timothy 6:17–19 (NKJV)

¹⁷ Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. ¹⁸ *Let them* do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, ¹⁹ storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

Parable of the Unjust Steward

(Luke 16:1-17)

APPLICATION OF THE PARABLE



- **Be aware of the danger of riches!**
(1 Tim. 6:9,10)
- **Recognize we are stewards of the material things God has blessed us with** (1 Tim 6:17)
- **Use them with a view to eternity!**
(1 Tim 6:18-19)

Parable of the Unjust Steward

(Luke 16:1-17)

APPLICATION OF THE PARABLE



Luke 16:10–12 (NKJV)

¹⁰ He who *is* faithful in *what is* least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in *what is* least is unjust also in much. ¹¹ Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true *riches*? ¹² And if you have not been faithful in what is another man's, who will give you what is your own?

Parable of the Unjust Steward

(Luke 16:1-17)

APPLICATION OF THE PARABLE



- **JESUS' ADMONITION TO FAITHFULNESS**
 - (Luke 16:10-12)
 - ▶ He starts by stating two maxims, arguing from the lesser to the greater (vs. 10; Mt. 25:21)
 - ▶ If we are unfaithful in material things, how can we expect to be entrusted with true spiritual riches? (vs. 11; 1 Ti 1:12,13)

Parable of the Unjust Steward

(Luke 16:1-17)

APPLICATION OF THE PARABLE



- **JESUS' ADMONITION TO FAITHFULNESS**
 - (Luke 16:10-12)
 - ▶ If we are not faithful with what the Lord puts us in charge of in this life, How can we expect to enjoy the eternal spiritual rewards to be given to the faithful? (vs. 12; Mat. 25:34; 1 Pet. 1:3, 4)

Parable of the Unjust Steward

(Luke 16:1-17)

APPLICATION OF THE PARABLE



Luke 16:13 (NKJV)

13 “No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”

Matt. 6:24; Jam 4:4; 1 Jn 2:15

Parable of the Unjust Steward

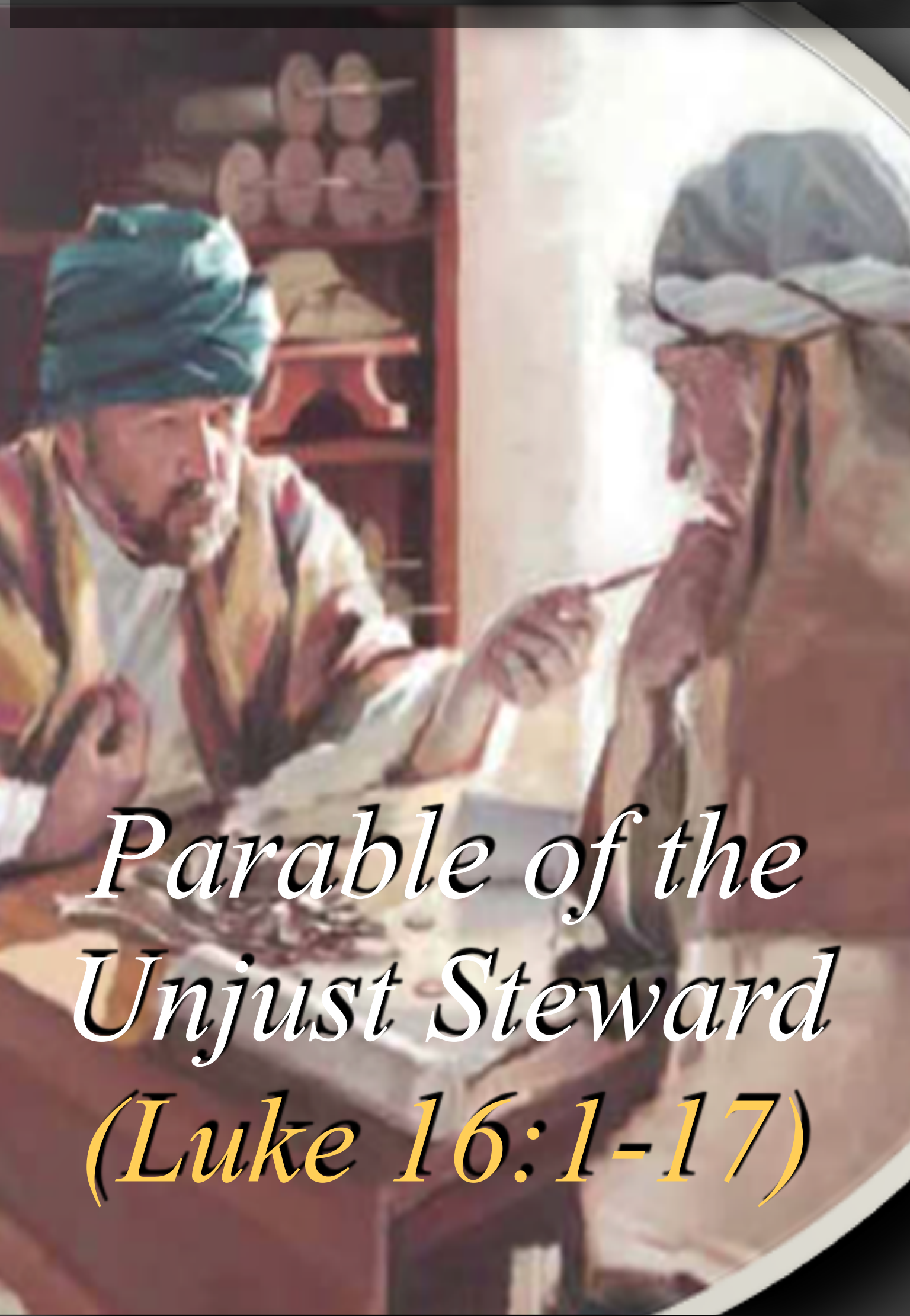
(Luke 16:1-17)

PHARISEES REBUTTAL / JESUS'S RESPONSE

¹⁴ Now the Pharisees, ^gwho were lovers of money, also heard all these things, and they ⁶derided Him. ¹⁵ And He said to them, “**You are those who ^hjustify yourselves ⁱbefore men, but ^jGod knows your hearts. For ^kwhat is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God.**

¹⁶ ^l“The law and the prophets *were* until John. Since that time the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it. ¹⁷ ^mAnd it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one ⁷tittle of the law to fail.

USING TEMPORAL THINGS TO INVEST IN ETERNAL THINGS



Parable of the Unjust Steward
(Luke 16:1-17)

- Stewards must be faithful! (1 Cor 4:2)
- We as Christians are stewards of
 - ▶ Money (1 Tim. 6:17-19)
 - ▶ Property (Heb. 13:1,2)
 - ▶ Time (Eph 5:15-17),
 - ▶ Gifts and abilities (1 Pe 4:10),
 - ▶ The gospel (1 Thes. 2:4).
- Christians must be more eager and careful about spiritual things than the unsaved are about material things!

Parable of the Unjust Steward
(Luke 16:1-17)

USING TEMPORAL THINGS TO
INVEST IN ETERNAL THINGS



Parable of the Unjust Steward
(Luke 16:1-17)

USING TEMPORAL THINGS TO
INVEST IN ETERNAL THINGS

**ARE YOU A
CHRISTIAN?**

Gal 3:26,27

**ARE YOU
FAITHFUL?**

1 Cor. 15:58

**ARE YOU LAYING
UP TREASURE IN
HEAVEN?**

Mat. 6:19-24

¹³ “No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.” Luke 16:13 (NKJV) —

Parable of the Unjust Steward
(Luke 16:1-17)

USING TEMPORAL THINGS TO
INVEST IN ETERNAL THINGS

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1 Timothy 6:11–19 (NKJV)

¹¹ But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness. ¹² Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. ¹³ I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and *before* Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate, ¹⁴ that you keep *this* commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing, ¹⁵ which He will manifest in His own time, *He who is* the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, ¹⁶ who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom *be* honor and everlasting power. Amen.

1 Timothy 6:11–19 (NKJV)

¹⁷ Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. ¹⁸ *Let them* do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, ¹⁹ storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.