

The Parables of Jesus



Investing in
God's
Kingdom

The kingdom of heaven is like...

What's a Parable?

A short story that reveals or conceals an unseen spiritual reality (kingdom secret) through the use of familiar images, objects, people and/or events. The story becomes a mirror where the hearers can see themselves in the story.

Why Did Jesus Speak in Parables?

1. Test of the heart: Receptive vs Unreceptive
2. Deconstruct common beliefs and attitudes that are contrary to God's design and desires
3. Challenge the hearers perception of reality and truth by revealing how God see things

Luke 16:1-15

Jesus told his disciples: “There was a rich man whose manager was accused of wasting his possessions. ² 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.’

³ “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— ⁴ I know what I’ll do so that, when I lose my job here, people will welcome me into their houses.’

⁵ “So he called in each one of his master’s debtors. He asked the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’

⁶ “‘Nine hundred gallons of olive oil,’ he replied.

Luke 16:1-15

“The manager told him, ‘Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it four hundred and fifty.’

⁷ “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.’

⁸ “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. ⁹ I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings.

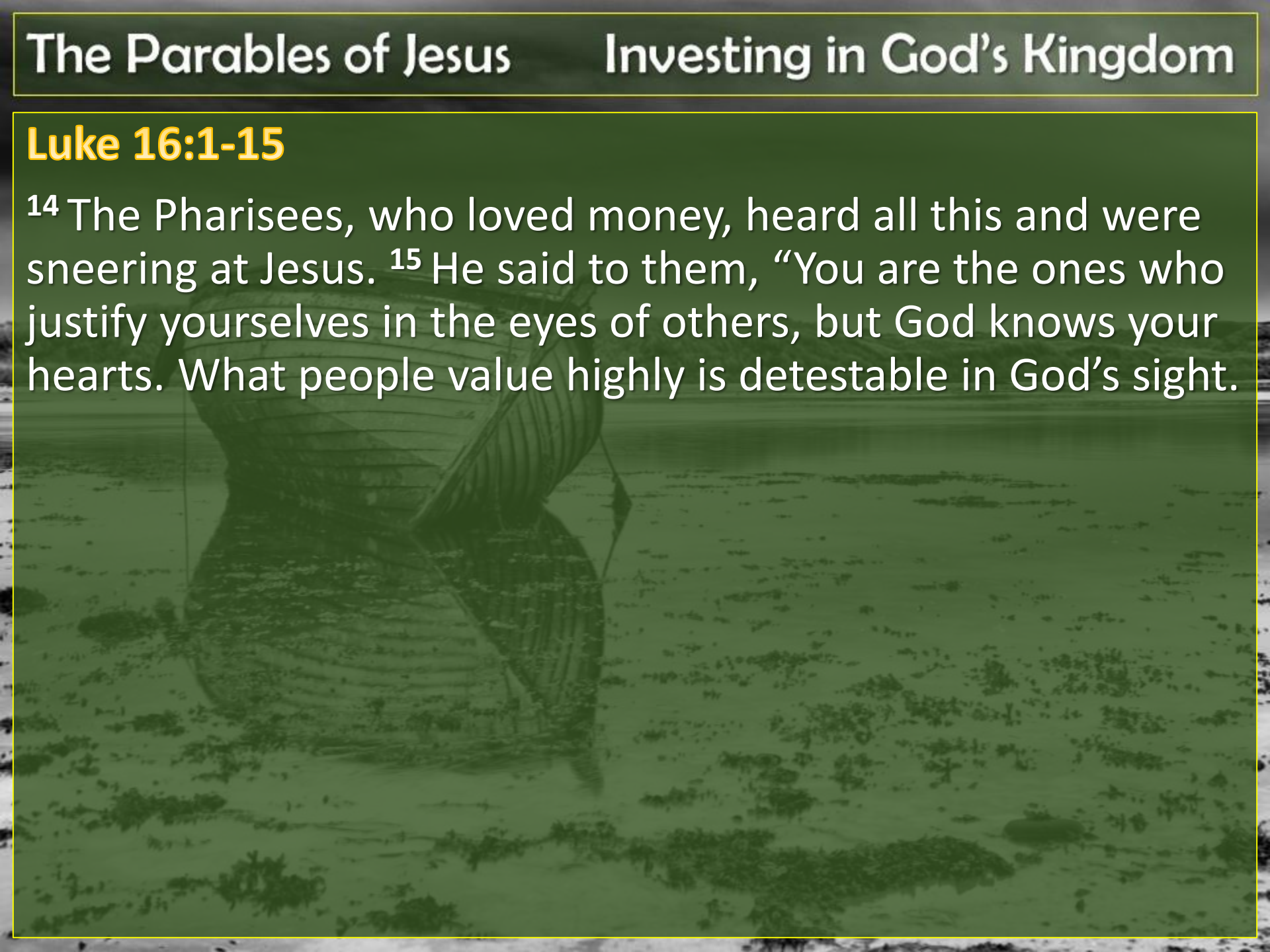
Luke 16:1-15

¹⁰ “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. ¹¹ So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? ¹² And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own?”

¹³ “No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.”

Luke 16:1-15

¹⁴ The Pharisees, who loved money, heard all this and were sneering at Jesus. ¹⁵ He said to them, "You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of others, but God knows your hearts. What people value highly is detestable in God's sight."

A photograph of a wooden boat on a body of water, with a green overlay. The boat is in the foreground, and its reflection is visible in the water. The background shows a calm sea and a distant horizon.

The Context:

- Jesus has just addressed the Pharisees with the parables of the lost coin, lost sheep and lost son
- Switches his focus to his disciples
- Uses the theme of worldly wealth for most of the parables in this discourse

The Problem:

People are more concerned with taking care of their earthly well-being than their eternal well-being

- Confusion: comparison and contrast of manager

Like the dishonest manager, Believers...

1. Need to be investing what they have been given towards their eternal future
2. Should be shrewd in eternal matters (intentional in how we use our resources)

Unlike the shrewd manager, Believers...

1. Are to be honest and faithful
2. Are not to use worldly wealth *primarily* to secure their earthly future

The Kingdom Secrets:

1. Use worldly wealth to invest in God's Kingdom
 - Sermon on the Mount:
 - Seek first the kingdom of heaven
 - Store up treasures in heaven
 - Making friends (vs. 9)? Jesus in Matthew 25:34-39
 - How are we to use our resources?
 - Generosity
 - Serving/using gifts for the Body
 - Using your mind for God's Kingdom
 - Paul in Col 3:2... “Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things”

The Kingdom Secrets:

1. Use worldly wealth to invest in God's Kingdom
2. What you have does not belong to you
 - The earth is the Lord's and ALL that is in it...
 - You are a steward/manager of God's resources
3. You cannot serve money and God
 - You can serve your money or your money can serve you. Can't be both
 - Where are your time, energy, money and gifts going?

The Mirror of the Parable:

1. Are you concerned more about earthly things than kingdom things?
 - Are you investing in God's Kingdom?
2. How are you managing God's resources?
 - Are you being faithful in managing what belongs to God?
 - Is it time to do an audit of your management?
3. Is the topic of money causing you to react like a Pharisee or a Disciple?