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## The Unsaved Steward.

Luke 16, 1-13.

BY REV. EDWIN FAXON OSBORN.

**I**N a recent paper upon this passage a certain writer took the ground that the text had evidently been garbled, by some ancient transcriber, for ulterior purposes; and proceeds to tell that the Saviour did say, getting his knowledge from precedent and common sense

This certainly is an advance beyond the historical methods, and at an presumptuous bound leaps past scholarly and painstaking textual criticism. It does away with authoritative revelation and leaves us stranded on the rocks of precedent and common sense.

This will never do. Let us depend upon a careful exegesis, attempting it well assured that we are garbled rather than the text, for I am not aware that our best manuscripts differ here, except possibly in one word.

The text as it stands is harmonious with itself and with the other teachings of our Lord.

Here is a rich man commending his foreman for playing a final trick upon him before he is discharged for rascality. The foreman discounted his master's bills, and the debtors understood that the favor was done by the foreman and not by the master. The debtors were grateful, and the foreman, when he should be discharged, would find at least a temporary home with them. The rich man does not say that his foreman has done honestly. He does not say that he is pleased. No doubt he is displeased. No doubt he would get redress if he could. But he goes home to his wife and says, "That foreman of mine is a sharp fellow. He has completely outwitted me, and has made friends of my debtors in doing it. The scoundrel! However, I admire his wit." To the man himself he says, "Well, my man, seeing you had no chance left of living with me, you have done well for yourself in your last act of rascality. I praise your shrewdness."

After completing the parable the Lord says that worldly-minded people are wiser in their own generation, that is, in the sphere of worldliness (see Thayer, *genoa*, 2, b.), than the children of light. This man had wit enough to make use of his worldly power to provide himself a home. The Lord exhorts the disciples to do likewise, but also differently. They were not "in their generation," but ought certainly to have the wit of those who were "in the sphere of worldliness." The unjust steward lost his place because he was not faithful. If he had been faithful he would have received from his master a larger trust; for, "he that is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much; and he that is unrighteous in a very little is unrighteous also in much." This man was unfaithful in the trust given him. Of course his master would discharge him. But his quick wit grasped something even out of his fall. The disciples should have all the worldly wisdom of this man without the unfaithfulness that led to his fall. They should have wit enough to provide themselves a home, at least in part by means of the unrighteous mammon; but they should do better than this unjust steward did. They should be faithful to their Master, as the unjust steward was not to his, and so secure their home with the Master instead of with his debtors. Then the Master will intrust to them the true riches, even "the riches of his grace." These are of priceless value. It is worse to misuse them than to misuse the Master's money. "But if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will trust to you the true; and if you have not been faithful in that which belongs to another, who (of us) will give to you our own?" (hemeteron, Westcott and Hort.) By fidelity in their use of the worldly means which God has intrusted to them, Christians must prove their worthiness to be intrusted with the wealth of his spiritual kingdom.

Christians must be honest also, for if they will

not deal honestly with another they will not deal honestly with God, and God will not trust them with spiritual riches. He could not if he would, for their unfaithfulness and dishonesty makes it impossible for them to take hold of the spiritual riches.

Indeed, let us not be deceived in this matter. As the unjust steward, in unfaithfulness, lost his master, and as a poor substitute gained a transient home with his master's debtors, so if we are not faithful to God in the unrighteous mammon we shall lose our home with him. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." We must make mammon serve God for us. This is the real teaching of the parable. And mammon in our hands must not be unrighteous. It must be the means of all righteousness. If we serve mammon, that is, fail to recognize God's right to all our worldly goods, claiming them and loving them as our own, and so being unfaithful to what God has intrusted to us, wasting his goods, we must make shift as best we can to make friends with God's debtors; for he will not retain in his service any who are unfaithful to him in this matter of worldly goods.

There is no trouble in the parable. Worldly wisdom looks out for a home—misusing God's property, a home with the Devil. Christians are to have worldly wisdom enough to look out for a home and friends, but more wisely—rightly using God's property, a Home with Him.

But to this day it remains true that "the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light." were used for God with the same determination and wisdom with which the wealth of the "children of their generation" is used for mammon, the nations of the world would be evangelized before the middle-aged are dead.

## Heart vs. Intellect.

WM. W. BARKEE.

**S**OME people see wrong and gloat over it, but not being a moral turkey-buzzard seeking carrion. I simply speak on a very important topic for the benefit of those who appreciate these thoughts.

I know a minister that treats his congregation every Sunday as if the members of it, like the Athenians of old, "Spend their time in nothing else; but either to tell or to hear some new thing." He studies ardently during the week and when his people gather to worship God on the Lord's day, he puts them through a series of mental gymnastics such as no class in a college is given in the same space of time. Before him are business men who have thoroughly used their brains during the previous week and are tired in mind and body, these, with mothers whose household and family cares have severely tried them, factory girls needing something that will be a balm to mind and heart, young mechanics needing something to strengthen their manhood, old people longing for heavenly manna, and children that seek the crumbs that fall from the Master's table make up his congregation. It takes a mother to know what food her children need and the God-directed minister can surely ascertain from his knowledge of his heart-yearnings, his observation of the work done or not done by his people, the warmth or coldness of the spiritual life of the church and from his pastoral visitation what food the hungry souls before him require.

Some congregations know more after their services about ancient Greece and Rome, about the Swiss Alps, the great building of Europe and the topics of the day than they do of the "One altogether lovely." Some congregations don't know what they have been told (I suppose the minister does), and some are treated to all the negations that make the religious atmosphere in some places today intensely foggy. How delightful must be the sensation of preaching "I don't know," and "We are not certain," it is

much in advance of Paul's day, for he said, "I know, and am persuaded." Ah! sweet food for hungry souls, this speculating! Possibly Paul was wrong after all when he said to Timothy: "Preach the Word."

I wish the words, "Feed my sheep" were emblazoned over the clocks in every meeting house, and that every Christian preacher in the land would not get past the point of taking notice of them. "Feed my sheep!" Yes, Lord, thou hast commanded and it shall be done. Life is short, we must "redeem the time," and as there is no likelihood of drying up the fountain of truth we will keep going to it so that "the word of Thy grace which is able to build us up and give us an inheritance among them that are sanctified" may alone be relied upon.

What this world needs is heart rather than intellect. There has been more good done through the promptings of hearts filled with the love of Christ than all the cold, austere and heartless intellectual philosophizing that has been given to the world. I disparage not the use and development of the mind; this I believe absolutely essential to the establishment of the religion of Him who "spoke as never man spoke;" but I contend that intellect must be made subservient to hearts filled with the Holy Spirit of God. Indeed, if we go beneath sentiment and judgment into the intuitions of our hearts whence all actions of the conscience spring, we will find, if they have been properly trained by the Holy Spirit, we get intellect guided by the heart and made subservient to it; and the teaching that springs from such a source will be the best possible to procure on this earth. We are told to "keep our hearts with all diligence, for out of them are the issues of life" and yet men go on training their minds and they never, never, think of training their hearts. Heart training must be first. Give me the eloquence of a warm heart rather than the "glittering generalities" or "discoveries" that come frigidly cold from a mind subsisting simply upon its own workings. Let preachers attend to their hearts and their words will take care of themselves.

After all, people love the "old, old story," for it's a simple one. A man heard a great preacher in London one Sunday morning and came out of the church saying "What a great intellect!" He heard Spurgeon that night and came out of the church saying, "What a great Saviour!" Away then with this "darkening counsel, by words without (heart) knowledge." It takes a great man to be simple and the greatest preachers—great in the effectiveness of their sermons—have so well understood what they were preaching that they could tell others plainly, so that they too could understand and carry some good away. The way to tell a preacher is by the men and women he produces. Some years ago a great English surgeon visited Paris to meet a great medical practitioner there. Being both interested in the science that had made them famous, they talked about their operations upon their patients and the results of them. The Englishman said that he had performed thirteen operations; the Frenchman said with much pride that he had performed one hundred and eleven. "I saved eleven out of my thirteen," said the man from England; "how many did you save?" "I did not save any," came the answer, "but *ze operation was very brilliant!*" The lesson is palpable.

## As to Repentance.

**R**EPENTANCE, according to New Testament teaching, is not an emotion. Neither is its chief quality emotional. Our dictionaries mislead us. When they define repentance as "feeling sorry for what one has done," they may reflect the popular theology, and give expression to current superficial notions on the subject, but they do not reflect the New Testament. There may be