

Luke 16 : 1-13—Memory Verses, 8, 9.

Golden Text—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.—Luke 16 : 10 (Rev. Ver.).



1 And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward ; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods.

2 And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship : for thou mayest be no longer steward.

3 Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do ? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship : I cannot dig ; to beg I am ashamed.

4 I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.

5 So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord ?

6 And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty.

7 Then said he to another, And how much owest thou ? And he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore.

8 And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely : for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.

9 And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness ; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.

10 He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much : and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.

11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches ?

12 And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own ?
13 No servant can serve two masters : for either he will hate the one, and love the other ; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

THE LESSON RETOLD

The Lesson tells us about a man who was very unhappy. He was a steward, that is, a servant whose duty it was to take care of his master's goods and money. This servant was greatly trusted by his master.

Jesus told a story about this steward. The rich man, who was the steward's master, was greatly displeased with him. He had trusted the man, but he had not been faithful. He had been unjust, and had wasted his master's possessions.

The master found out his dishonest servant's secret, for such a man cannot always keep his wrongdoing hidden. The servant was frightened and unhappy, because no one is really happy who is unfaithful. He was afraid of losing his position because he had not been faithful in his duties.

The unfaithful servant went from his master's presence, wondering what he could do to keep his place. For he did not know what to do if he should lose it.

He said to himself : "What shall I do ? My place will be taken away. I cannot dig. I am ashamed to beg." Then he planned and planned till he found a way which he thought would keep him from the trouble which seemed to be coming upon him.

The right thing would have been to make up for his wrongdoing. But he did not do this. He tried to make friends with other people, and in doing this he did more wrong.

Jesus did not praise this man for doing wrong. He did praise him for being more eager to keep his place in his master's house than many children of God are to try to keep a place in the kingdom of heaven. Jesus would have His followers learn something even from the dishonest servant who had cheated his master.

Those who can be trusted in little things, please God just as much as those who can be trusted in big things. That is what the Golden Text means and we should try to learn and practise what it teaches.