

WEEKLY SERMON

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I want you to be smart in the same way – but for what is right

The Parable of the Dishonest Steward is not an easy one to get our heads around.

We can see how dishonest he is, taking advantage of his position and when he is found out and fired (in the words of The Message version); he seems to compound this even more.

He collects what is owed at a discounted rate, in effect cheating his manager out of the full amount that is owed and making himself look good and generous! What is then even more surprising is that the 'rich man' - his manager - seems to praise him for his shrewdness and creativity.

What does this say to us today? That the dishonest, the crooked get rewarded? Maybe they do...but that does not make it right. The Message puts Jesus' words like this, "...I want you to be smart in the same way – but for what is right – using every adversity to stimulate you to creative survival, to concentrate your attention on the bare essentials...".

There is no doubt that these are difficult times. Covid led to many of us having to be creative in different ways...the current cost of living crisis, filling up our cars with fuel, trying to heat our homes and pay bills is going to have a huge impact on all our lives and especially for those who have been already struggling with poverty and debt. This too may lead to a need for creativity in order to survive adversity.

However, each one of us has a responsibility, not to just ourselves and our families but to wider society and globally in our decision making; in what we buy, what we do, how we look after our world so that it is not at the expense or to the detriment of others welfare and well-being.

As Jesus says, if we are honest in small things then we can be trusted with the bigger things. If we are a crook in the small things however, then it too will follow that we will be a crook in the big things.

Ultimately, we are to serve God, not money. Not the bank, not dishonest or crooked institutions and in serving God, we serve the needs of our others. In loving God, we are also to love our neighbour.

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