

## **The Biblical Responsibility Of No Waste**

Many people, deep in debt, complain that their employers don't pay them enough, their taxes are much too high, their business costs have skyrocketed, or render some other excuse why they cannot plan for their financial future. Of course, some of these excuses may have a certain amount of legitimacy to them, but they don't excuse a person from the responsibility of "no waste." The problem is not a lack of money; it is a problem of lack of money management.

---

In Luke 16, the story is told of a dishonest steward who wasted his lord's goods for which he was liable, and was judged by his master.

In times past, I thought this steward was expelled from his job because of fraud. But the verses do not say this. If it were fraud, the master never would have let him stay around long enough to make alternate arrangements with the master's debtors. The verses simply infer that he was a bad money manager. If the steward had not been so fiscally challenged, the master could have had a better return on his investments, and not wasted the investment return he never received.

Today, we also are responsible to our Master for His creation and blessing. The scope of the parable suggests to us that it is important to manage our possessions and life on earth in such a way that will benefit us in eternal life. It's not that eternal life is our sole reason for managing our possessions judiciously. We should do this from our obedience, appreciation and our love for God.

We are wrong to make bad decisions when we waste the finances God has allowed to flow through our lives. All of us are stewards of what has been entrusted to us. We have a fiduciary responsibility to employ our wealth in acts of charity and good works, seeking an eternal return much the same way the dishonest steward employed his abilities to achieve the greatest temporal profit.

A lot of wasteful spending is incurred on perfectly good purchases, but more often than not, many purchases are for things we neither need nor use. How many attics, basements and garages are full of great buys that were never used? If they were used, maybe they were rarely used. I could tell you about some exercise equipment I

purchased that falls into this category. When all is said and done, the amount spent on these items, although seemingly legit, was very wasteful.

In Luke 16, the steward's lord commended him because he finally showed some ingenuity and ambition, even though it was for his own personal gain and benefit. The steward is not commended because he showed good credible sensitivity, rather because he had done wisely for himself. The steward who was about to be dismissed made every attempt to better his cause through any means available – even though that cause was self-serving.

Most people today live far above and beyond their means. Their spending exceeds their earnings. Many people earn large incomes, but because of wasteful spending habits, little goes to personal investment, debt reduction or charitable contribution.

By not spending wisely, or watching every dime spent and knowing for what it was spent, you will be led to poor financial decisions. Bad money management leads to a lot of debt and a lot of debt usually causes a tremendous amount of strain and anxiety on an otherwise good marriage. This kind of pressure can lead to anger, fighting and possibly even divorce.

**Learn the right way to live. Understand the responsibility of no waste!**