

Good Call!

Called to Serve

September 18, 2022

Overarching Theme: 2022 – The Year of the Lord’s Favor (Luke 4:19)

Instructions:

When using this material as teacher, feel free to pick and choose the point you want to emphasize in the lesson. The format of the curriculum is designed to have an abundance of information in which to refer as desired.

Core Point:

As the world awakens from 2 years of pandemic stupor, the words of Jesus proclaiming “the year of the Lord’s favor” is a message whose time has come. This passage from Luke 4 harkens back to the ‘year of jubilee’ of Leviticus 25 and Isaiah 61, a year of a fresh start, a clean slate and reset for everyone who can envision new possibilities with God this year and always.

Reflect on this Scripture:

Luke 16:10-13 (NRSV)

¹⁰Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much; and whoever is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much. ¹¹If then you have not been faithful with the dishonest wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? ¹²And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to another, who will give you what is your own? ¹³No slave can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.’

Commentary:

In this passage we hear Jesus saying that faithfulness and honesty are not related to wealth and power. One who is faithful over little will be faithful over a large amount. The contrast between little and much is then applied in two ways. First, if one has not been faithful over worldly wealth, how can that person be trusted with true wealth? Second, if you have not been faithful over what belongs to another (the worldly wealth God has entrusted to you), then who will give you your own treasure in heaven?

God and wealth cannot be served equally. Wealth, which can serve as a means and opportunity for securing one’s place in the kingdom if used shrewdly for the sake of others, can become a master. Materialism enslaves us, but God requires exclusive loyalty. Since one cannot serve two masters, one cannot be devoted

both to acquiring wealth and to serving God. Moreover, the way we use what we have reveals who we serve. The choice of having no master is not an option.

Christians are to be faithful whether we deal in little things or vast resources. Whether we are as shrewd as a dishonest steward depends on whether we use our material goods, great or small, to help those in need. Then, when we worship God rather than our wealth, we will find that we truly have friends in high places.

The New Interpreter's Bible Commentary, Vol IX, p. 309

Questions to Ponder for Accountability in the Group:

1. Consider the talents and gifts God has given you. Are you being a shrewd steward of all that God has blessed you with?
2. Are you being faithful with even the smallest of treasure? How is God using something you have that you may find insignificant to bless others?
3. When you use your treasure to serve others, are you responding with joy, or a feeling of dreaded obligation?
4. Does your graciousness extend only to friends and family, or does it include the stranger in your midst?

Activity for the Life of a Disciple:

1. Remember to find encouragement for the day by reading the daily devotional from FUMCC.
2. Ponder and pray on this scripture this week: Luke 16:10 NRSV
Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much.