

The Wealth Of The Sinner
by Gary Carpenter

Prov 13:22b ... the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just.

Many who are called to steward wealth for the Kingdom of God in these last days are very familiar with this verse. The normal rendering is that there will be massive transfers of wealth from the world system of Mammon into the Kingdom of God through various means. That is correct.

However, there is another meaning to this verse as well. There will also be a transfer of wealth from those who are "called" to be stewards of wealth, but refuse to do so. Notice what happened to the wealth [the pound] that was entrusted to the third servant in the following passage;

Luke 19:20-26 And another came, saying, Lord, behold, *here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin:* (21) For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow. (22) And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, *thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow:* (23) Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury? (24) And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give *it* to him that hath ten pounds. (25) (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.) (26) For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him.

Remember, from the time of John the Baptist Jesus has been teaching concerning the Kingdom of God. This man was a "servant" of the Lord, but he was a "wicked servant." He refused to trade the Lord's pound unless there was personal profit in it for him.

What happened to the money that had been entrusted to him? It was taken from him and given to the man who had been the most successful in his stewardship of the Lord's money. There is coming a transfer of wealth from "believers" who refuse to function in the stewardship to which they have been called! We normally think of the "sinner" in Proverbs 13:22 as being people who are not born again. That is true. But is not this "wicked servant" from Luke 19 a sinner also?

James 4:17 Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

Did this man know what the Lord expected of him? Notice what the Lord said at the beginning of the parable when the pound was distributed to each servant;

Luke 19:13 And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, **Occupy till I come.**

OCCUPY (Strong's)

4231. pragmateuomai, prag-mat-yoo'-om-ahee; from G4229; to busy oneself with, i.e. to trade:--occupy.

Our English word "pragmatic" comes from this Greek word. These ten servants were to busy themselves in practical, pragmatic ways of trading to cause an increase in the pound. This third servant knew that! He knew what to do! He simply refused to do it because he did not have a servant's heart.

He had the heart of a hireling. Knowing that the purpose of his trading was to cause an increase for the Lord and not for himself, he had no heart to spend his life in that manner. He let the Lord's pound lay idle. I cannot help but think he did not allow his own money to be wasted in the same manner.

Some additional observations are necessary before we proceed further. At first glance it seems that at this reckoning the wicked servant intends to willingly turn over the pound back to the Lord. I say that based on this statement;

Luke 19:20 And another came, saying, Lord, behold, *here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin:*

In the King James version, notice that the words "here is" are in italics, indicating that they are not in the original Greek manuscript. They were added at the discretion of the translators. Those words cause us to think that the servant brought the pound to willingly place it on the Lord's reckoning table. He had no intention of doing so. I say that based on this verse;

Luke 19:24 And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds.

Notice that the pound was forcibly removed from him and given to the good servant. The Lord did not tell the wicked servant himself to hand it over to the good servant. Why not? This wicked servant had not obeyed the Lord up to this point and there was no reason to think that he would start now. The wealth was forcibly removed from him by "those that stood by."

Who are "those that stood by?" We are not told. Perhaps Jesus is speaking of angels. Perhaps He is speaking of circumstances. Perhaps He is speaking of other stewards of Kingdom Finances whose wisdom and knowledge will cause the wealth to be transferred from the wicked servant to the good servant. We are not told in detail "who" forces the transfer of wealth nor "how" the forcible transfer is made. We are told enough from this parable, however, to make the following conclusions:

- 1) The transfer of wealth was made at the command of the Lord.
- 2) The transfer of wealth was forced upon the wicked servant.
- 3) There was nothing the wicked servant could do to stop the transfer of wealth.
- 4) Jesus Himself commands the transfer of wealth from "wicked" servants to "good and faithful" servants.

As an additional proof that the "sinner" in Proverbs 13:22 is not only speaking of unbelievers, but also of believers who will not spend their life stewarding the Lord's money, notice the great similarity between the words of Solomon's Proverb and the words spoken by the wicked servant;

Prov 13:22b ... the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just.

Luke 19:20 And another came, saying, Lord, behold, [here is] thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin:

Now we can discuss another difficult statement by Jesus;

Luke 19:26 For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him.

What is Jesus talking about when He says, "Unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not ..."? Is He talking about the money, the pound? No, Jesus is talking about something the wicked servant "had not" before the money was "taken away."

What was it that the first two servants had that the third did not? THE HEART OF A FIRST CLASS SERVANT! The first two had the heart of a bond slave. They were willing to spend their lives stewarding the pound to gain increase for the Lord and His Kingdom even if it meant no personal profit for themselves.

The wicked servant "hath not" that kind of a heart. Having not the heart of a true servant, even what he did have was taken from him ... the pound, the money. That wealth was transferred, forcibly from him to the best steward. In this parable we are seeing "the wealth of the sinner" being transferred to the "just!"

Another point is very important. This parable deals exclusively with stewardship ... not provision! Again, it is important to notice that none of these servants, not even the wicked one, took their own provision from the pound entrusted to them. No, this represented "extra" money, above and beyond the funds that provided their own needs.

What is the most common complaint that I hear from God's people when it comes to finances? "Brother Gary, I would like to give more into the gospel. Honest I would. But there just never seems to be any extra money to give. We seem to always be in a state of just barely making it financially. There never seems to be any extra."

Well, according to this passage, it was the "extra" money, above and beyond living expenses, that was taken from the wicked servant and given to the good steward of Kingdom Finances. The qualifying question arises, "What did you do with the extra money the last time you had some?"

Did you consider it [even a portion of it] to be the Lord's pound and set about to increase it through trading for Him? Sadly, most believers today do not act even as righteously as the wicked servant in this parable. At least he did not consume the pound upon himself! What did you do with the extra money the last time you had some? Did you consume all of it upon yourself?

Perhaps you did as the Lord suggested and opened an interest bearing savings account at the bank. But did you do so to gain increase for Him or to gain increase for yourself? The Lord is not against us having personal savings, but if you want to become a steward of Kingdom Finances that the

Lord can entrust with large sums of money ... SOMETIME you have to begin developing the mindset that at least a portion of your "extra" money MUST be considered HIS!

Let's take one more look at the following verse;

Luke 19:26 For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him.

The Greek word translated "taken away" has a very interesting connotation to it.

TAKEN AWAY (Strong's)

142. airo, ah'ee-ro; a prim. verb; to lift; by impl. to take up or away; fig. to raise (the voice), keep in suspense (the mind); spec. to sail away (i.e. weigh anchor); by Heb. [comp. H5375] to expiate sin:--away with, bear (up), carry, lift up, loose, make to doubt, put away, remove, take (away, up).

Especially notice the meanings "to sail away" and "to weigh anchor." My, how often believers have written to me with almost that very wording describing how it seems that just when it looks like they are finally going to have some extra money, it just seems to "sail away" from them. Something unexpected happens that causes the anticipated "extra" money to be consumed on something or other.

Again, without having this "first class servant's" heart developed within us, we can expect that pattern to continue. How do you know if you have this heart of a servant within you or not? Check to see if you have this motivation within you: "At least a portion of the next 'extra' money I receive IS THE LORD'S POUND! I will set it aside from my own finances and begin seeking the counsel of the Holy Spirit as to how I could pragmatically trade and/or invest to cause increase for the Lord and His Kingdom. That money shall never be mine to consume. Both it and the increase shall be the Lord's, to use however He directs me by the Holy Spirit's leading."

To him that "hath" a heart like that ... MORE shall be given! You have the word of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself on it. Jesus said,

Mark 13:31 Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.