

Luke 16:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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

Analysis

I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses. The steward reaches a decision—the verb "I am resolved" (ἐγνων, egnōn, aorist of γινώσκω, ginōskō) means "I know" or "I have realized," indicating a decisive epiphany. He has formulated a plan to secure his future. The temporal clause "when I am put out" (ὅταν μετασταθῶ, hotan metastathō) acknowledges the inevitability of his dismissal—he's not trying to avoid judgment but preparing for life after judgment.

His goal: **"that they may receive me into their houses"** (δέξωνταί με εἰς τοὺς οἴκους αὐτῶν, dexōntai me eis tous oikous autōn). In ancient Near Eastern culture, hospitality was sacred—those who benefited from his coming actions would be obligated to reciprocate. The steward plans to create indebtedness: by reducing what the master's debtors owe (vv. 5-7), he positions himself as their benefactor, ensuring they'll welcome him when he's unemployed. Jesus' point is NOT to endorse fraud but to highlight the steward's **urgent, strategic use of present resources to secure future benefit**. Believers should show similar wisdom—using earthly wealth ("unrighteous mammon," v. 9) to make eternal investments that will welcome us into "everlasting habitations."

Historical Context

Ancient Mediterranean society operated on patronage networks and reciprocal obligation. Benefactors who granted favors expected future loyalty and support.

The steward's plan exploits this cultural dynamic—by reducing debts (possibly forgiving his own commission rather than cheating his master), he creates grateful clients who will feel honor-bound to assist him. The phrase "receive me into their houses" implies ongoing hospitality and support, not merely temporary shelter. This social reality provides the backdrop for Jesus' application in verse 9: use wealth to create relationships that have eternal significance.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does the steward's strategic planning for his future after dismissal illustrate the wisdom believers should show regarding eternal realities?
2. In what practical ways can Christians use 'unrighteous mammon' (earthly wealth) to invest in eternal relationships and heavenly rewards?
3. What does this parable teach about the urgency of acting decisively while we still have opportunity and resources?

Interlinear Text

ἔγνω	τί	ποιήσω	ἵνα	ὅταν	μετασταθῶ	τῆς
I am resolved	what	to do	that	when	I am put out	G3588
G1097	G5101	G4160	G2443	G3752	G3179	
οἰκονομίας	δέξωνταί	με	εἰς	τοὺς	οἴκους	αὐτῶν
of the stewardship	they may receive	me	into	G3588	houses	their
G3622	G1209	G3165	G1519		G3624	G846