

Luke 16:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.

Analysis

Jesus applies the lesson: 'And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.' The command 'make to yourselves friends' (ποιήσατε φίλους, poiēsate philous) 'of the mammon of unrighteousness' (ἐκ τοῦ μαμωνᾶ τῆς ἀδικίας, ek tou mamōna tēs adikias) means use money (inherently tied to this fallen world) strategically. The phrase 'when ye fail' (ὅταν ἐκλίπῃ, hotan eklipē) refers to death or money's ultimate failure. Then 'they may receive you' (δέξωνται ὑμᾶς, dexōntai hymas) 'into everlasting habitations' (εἰς τὰς αἰωνίους σκηνάς, eis tas aiōnious skēnas)—people you've blessed with resources will welcome you into eternity. Use money to advance the gospel and serve others; such investments yield eternal dividends.

Historical Context

This verse presents a theology of money unique in Scripture. 'Mammon' (μαμωνᾶς, mamōnas) is an Aramaic term for wealth, personified as a rival god (v. 13). Jesus calls it 'unrighteous' not because earning money is sinful but because wealth belongs to this fallen, temporary world system. Yet even tainted money can be redeemed through kingdom use. The startling promise is that generosity now creates eternal friendships—those blessed by our resources will greet us in heaven. This doesn't teach salvation by works but rather that genuine faith

expresses itself in generosity (James 2:14-17). How we use money reveals and develops our hearts.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does viewing money as 'unrighteous mammon' from a fallen system change your relationship with wealth?
2. What does it mean that people you've blessed financially will welcome you into eternity?
3. How should this teaching shape Christian attitudes toward giving, generosity, and financial planning?

Interlinear Text

κάγὼ ὑμῖν λέγω ποιήσατε ἐαυτοῖς φίλους ἐκ τοῦ
And I unto you say Make to yourselves friends of G3588
G2504 G5213 G3004 G4160 G1438 G5384 G1537

μαμωνᾶ τῆς ἀδικίας ἵνα ὅταν ἐκλίπητε,
the mammon of unrighteousness that when ye fail
G3126 G3588 G93 G2443 G3752 G1587

δέξωνται ὑμᾶς εἰς τὰς αἰωνίους σκηνάς
they may receive you into everlasting habitations
G1209 G5209 G1519 G3588 G166 G4633

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 19:21 (Parallel theme): Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.

Matthew 6:24 (Parallel theme): No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Proverbs 19:17 (Parallel theme): He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given will he pay him again.

Luke 12:33 (Parallel theme): Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.

Luke 16:11 (Righteousness): If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?

Daniel 4:27 (Righteousness): Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity.

Luke 14:14 (Righteousness): And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

Luke 16:13 (Parallel theme): No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Luke 11:41 (Parallel theme): But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you.

Acts 10:31 (Parallel theme): And said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God.