Luke 16:1-8
Jesus said to his disciples, "A rich man had a steward who was reported to him for squandering his property. He summoned him and said, 'What is this I hear about you? Prepare a full account of your stewardship, because you can no longer be my steward.' The steward said to himself, 'What shall I do, now that my master is taking the position of steward away from me? I am not strong enough to dig and I am ashamed to beg. I know what I shall do so that, when I am removed from the stewardship, they may welcome me into their homes.' He called in his master's debtors one by one. To the first he said, 'How much do you owe my master?' He replied, 'One hundred measures of olive oil.' He said to him, 'Here is your promissory note. Sit down and quickly write one for fifty.' Then to another he said, 'And you, how much do you owe?' He replied, 'One hundred measures of wheat.' He said to him, 'Here is your promissory note; write one for eighty.' And the master commended that dishonest steward for acting prudently. For the children of this world are more prudent in dealing with their own generation than the children of light."
Our Gospel text has puzzled many people throughout Christian history: Is Jesus advocating dishonest business practices? Of course not. Jesus was sinless. He would never mislead His people. He does, very cleverly, use the seemingly dishonest behavior of the steward in His story as a way of teaching true discipleship.

In the ancient world, the oikonomos (steward) was the most trusted and powerful member of the master’s estate. He had been given over by his parents to the Master as a young child to be raised by him along with the Master’s own children. For many years he learned the master’s way of life and of doing business. As an adult he ran the Master’s business on his behalf and with the FULL AUTHORITY OF THE MASTER. When the Master was away, the oikonomos’ authority was equal to that of the Master, his signature was equal to the Master’s signature. He could buy and sell as if he were the Master.

For some reason, the steward learned he was about to be let go. It was then that he acted in such a way that seemed dishonest, but it wasn’t. To “feather his nest”, or in other words, to prepare for the very lean times ahead, he goes to the Master’s debtors and subtracts his own commission, not the balance due the Master. In doing so, he is not stealing from the Master, the Master will receive his due upon payment of the debt, however, the steward gives up his commission. Why? So that the debtors might one day show kindness to him during his time of need.

So, what does this have to do with true discipleship? Jesus taught that if we could use the same energy and creativity that we use for our secular/business affairs for our faith/religious affairs, we would all be eligible for sainthood!

Food for your Journey

Two stories from the "It's Not What You Think" category.

Reaching the end of a job interview, the human resources person asked a young engineer fresh out of MIT, "And what November 8, 2019

Scripture
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Our Scripture Reflection
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Reaching the end of a job interview, the human resources person asked a young engineer fresh out of MIT, "And what starting salary were you looking for?"
The engineer said, "In the neighborhood of $125,000 a year, depending on the benefits package."
The interviewer said, "Well, what would you say to a package of five-weeks vacation, 14 paid holidays, full medical and dental, company matching retirement fund to 50 percent of salary, and a company car leased every two years -- say, a red Corvette?"
The engineer sat straight up and said, "Wow! Are you kidding?"

A Prayer from the Heart
Dear God, You created me and endowed me with many talents, all of which are meant to be used at Your service. You love me and trust me more than what I realize. As Your trusted servant, help me to use my gifts to do good things for Your Kingdom and glory. Amening

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The engineer sat straight up and said, "Wow! Are you kidding?"

And the interviewer replied, "Yeah, but you started it."

A Prayer from the Heart

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