



Today's Message

Date: August 29, 2021
Speaker: Pastor Steven Thomas
Title: *Pressing the Gate of the Kingdom*

Text: Luke 16:14–18 (ESV)

¹⁴ The Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard all these things, and they ridiculed him. ¹⁵ And he said to them, “You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God.

¹⁶ “The Law and the Prophets were until John; since then the good news of the kingdom of God is preached, and everyone forces his way into it. ¹⁷ But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one dot of the Law to become void.

¹⁸ “Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery, and he who marries a woman divorced from her husband commits adultery.

Introduction: In Luke 16:1-13, Jesus spoke to his disciples, warning them against following the example of the Pharisees. Unlike the Pharisees, his followers must invest in the eternal good of others, display their character by faithfulness in little things, and resist divided loyalties, which is idolatry.

In today's sermon text (Luke 16:14-18) we learn that the Pharisees heard what Jesus said but ridiculed him. Jesus then unmasked the true condition of their hearts. Despite all their talk about the message of the Law and the Prophets, they didn't believe it. If they did, they would listen to Jesus and would thus enter the Kingdom.

I. The Pharisees rejected Jesus' message. 14

- A. They heard his message fully . . .
- B. yet they ridiculed him for it . . .
- C. because it exposed the idols of their heart.

II. The Pharisees' rejection of Jesus' message revealed their true spiritual condition. 15

Jesus essentially said,

- A. "You can fool those who see only the outside . . . 15a
- B. "but you cannot fool God who sees the heart. 15b
- C. "and he will be your Judge." 15c

III. The Pharisees missed the kingdom of God because they rejected the message of Jesus.

- A. The ministry of John marked a transition point in God's revelation: Jesus is the fulfillment of the Scriptures' promises. 16a
- B. Those who hear and believe *his* message "press" their way into the kingdom. 16b
- C. The Scriptures will never be nullified. 17
- D. But the Pharisees missed the kingdom because they did not care about the Scriptures. 18

Today's take-home truth: Press your way into the kingdom; trust and obey Jesus with a supreme sense of urgency.