



Reflection from Ben Babaran

In some ways, the world hasn't changed much since the time of prophet Amos. During that time, Israel was enjoying financial and material prosperity so much so that the Israelites lost focus on God. They resented the Sabbath and the new moon which were days of prayer and rest because they were interruptions to their money making activities. They cheated and exploited both their suppliers and customers. Worst, they did not value life!

While Amos who was a farmer spoke directly, Jesus spoke in parables. He made his audience think. The parable of the dishonest steward in today's Gospel is one of the trickiest and most puzzling of Jesus' teaching. He leaves us with many questions.

I believe the key to understanding the parable is in this verse: "And the master commended that dishonest steward for acting prudently." Jesus is not praising the steward because he is dishonest. He praises him because he was prudent.

Prudence is the first of the four cardinal virtues. It is having the knowledge of what a person needs to do and the concrete means to accomplish it. Both the prodigal son of last Sunday's parable and today's steward acted prudently. Thus, the father of last Sunday and today's master were ready to forgive them of their failures in the same manner as our Father in heaven looks not in our weaknesses and failures but our resourcefulness, resolve and prudence.

Here at St. James, we have the knowledge of what needs to be done to "build the Reign of God here in Midtown Kansas City." More importantly, we are putting together concrete means to accomplish it. The challenge is "to walk the talk" using all our resources, including even our failures and problems and above all – prayer.

*Blessings,
Ben*