

STEWARDSHIP

week 11



NOTES

After we accept Jesus Christ as our Savior, we are still called to live on this earth until God calls us home to Heaven. While on earth, we still have to deal and struggle with the affairs of this life. One of those cares can often be finances. God's Word provides financial principles and guidance.

Whether God has blessed you financially or only given you a little, God's principles of finances will help you glorify God and be wise with your finances. As we look at this lesson, it is important to understand that these are principles from God's Word for our benefit. Let's take a look at how we can become committed followers of Christ even with our finances:

GOD IS THE PROVIDER OF EVERYTHING WE HAVE.

People in today's culture work hard. Many scrape and claw for every penny they earn. While our work days are longer, the fact is, we did not give what we earned to ourselves.

James 1:17

Because God is the provider of everything we have in life, this should lead us to three truths to help the Christian properly understand their finances:

GOD IS THE OWNER OF ALL.

We understand that God created the universe and everything within. Because He is the creator of all, He is also the owner of all.

Psalm 24:1

God is the one who provides for our needs.

Psalm 145:15-16

GOD GIVES HIS BLESSINGS TO MANKIND.

Jesus shared a parable (an earthly story with a heavenly meaning) to show that God is the one who gives to all men. We will refer back to this parable several times for the remainder of the lesson.

Luke 19:12-27

Christ has entrusted every one of us with His resources. To properly understand our finances and stewardship, it is critical for us to comprehend where everything

comes from God.

GOD GIVES TO ALL MEN DIFFERENTLY.

One of the principles to notice in the parable that we just read is that the nobleman did not give the servants the same amounts. No matter what God has placed in your hand, it has come from Him, and He wants you to use it for Him. You may not be able to do what others can, but you can do manage what God has placed in your hand. Jesus gives a perfect example of this in Luke 21:1-4.

Luke 21:1-4

And he looked up, and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury. And he saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites. And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all: For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had.

This widow was not able to match the financial stewardship of the rich, but she was able to give what she had.

If God is the owner and provider of everything we have, we should have a desire to properly care for it. This is called stewardship.

WE ARE STEWARDS OF ALL THAT GOD GIVES.

A steward is manager. We do not own what has been given to us. In the parable we just read, God gave to every man differently. Two of the servants He gave resources to took them and multiplied them showing wise stewardship. One took the resources and did nothing with it show unwise stewardship. Let's take a look at some of the Biblical principles of stewardship and how we can ensure that we are being wise and faithful with what God has given us to manage.

Conversation Starter: Have you ever broken something you had borrowed from someone? Have you ever had someone take ownership of something that belonged to you? How did that make you feel? Spend time clarifying the difference between a borrower and owner and the rights of both.

STEWARDSHIP REQUIRES FAITHFULNESS.

Sometimes we attach unrealistic expectations to being a steward. Biblical stewardship is simple. Stay faithful with what God has given you.

1 Corinthians 4:2

Paul gives the qualifying attribute of stewards in his letter to the Corinthians.

Matthew 25:21, 23

In a similar parable as the one we read before, Jesus shares the story of two other servants who were rewarded for their faithfulness with what God had given them..



WE WILL GIVE AN ACCOUNT FOR OUR STEWARDSHIP.

Comparison is dangerous in any arena of life. The actually uses the term “unwise” in II Corinthians 10:12 when referring to comparison. For us to understand the gravity of stewardship, it cannot be because we are being judged by others, but by God.

I Corinthians 4:3

In the same passage where Paul gives the qualifier for a steward, he also tells them that he is not judged by them.

Romans 14:10-12

We will give an account for what we did with all that God gave us to manage.

GOD HAS GIVEN PRINCIPLES FOR FAITHFUL STEWARDSHIP IN HIS WORD.

If we are all stewards of what God has given us and we will give an account for what we did with it, we must notice some of the principles of faithful stewardship found in God’s Word.

Give regularly.

If we are honest, God has given so much to each one of us. The least that we can do is give back some of what God has given to us. Throughout Scripture, God gives examples of people who gave. Consider these examples of God’s Word that demonstrate God’s desire for us to give:

The example of Abraham - Genesis 14:20

The promise of Jacob - Genesis 28:22

The command of God - Malachi 3:8-10

The instruction of early Christians - I Corinthians 16:2

In these situations, God does not ask for all, but just a portion. Many times only a tenth was given to God. This has become referred to as the tithe which is the practice of giving God 10% of all that He has given you through your local church.

Not only is God concerned that you give, but how you give. Many Christians miss the blessings and benefits of giving because they gave grudgingly.

Give cheerfully - II Corinthians 9:7

Give by grace - II Corinthians 8:1-4

The work of God moves forward when Christians become faithful in their giving. Not just in the giving of their finances, but also in the giving of their time and talent. If we are to be faithful stewards, God desires that we give a portion back to Him of what He has given to us.

Save actively.

Many Christians have a misconstrued view of God that all He wants is for them to be poor and give all their money away. God does desire that we give, but He understands that we need finances to live. For this reason God gives principles about savings as well:

Savings can help us out of a tight spot - Proverbs 21:20

Savings occurs over time - Proverbs 13:10



The Word of God alludes to savings other times as well. Isn't it comforting to know that we have a God who has our best interest in mind so He advises us to save and stay free of debt.

Borrow rarely.

In a world where debt has become the financial norm, it is hard to comprehend the power of a life without debt. While borrowing may be the only means to gain a necessity, the wise and faithful steward should understand some of the Biblical principles of debt:

Debt makes us a servant to the lender- Proverbs 22:7

Debt should always be paid back - Psalm 37:1

Debt should not be acquired from friends - Proverbs 17:18

Debt can be forgiven because of the work of Christ - Matthew 6:12,
Matthew 18:26-35

When we follow the financial principles of giving, saving, and borrowing, we are following some of God's principles for faithful stewardship.

GOD REWARDS FAITHFUL STEWARDSHIP.

The result of our faithful stewardship is that God will reward as only He can. In each of the parables we mentioned earlier (Luke 19:12-27, Matthew 25:14-30), the servants who were faithful were rewarded because of their faithfulness. Let's close this lesson by looking at how God rewards faithful stewardship:

GOD WILL MEET OUR NEEDS.

While some preach and teach that giving to God will bring prosperity, this is not a Biblical principle. The Macedonian Church that was referenced in II Corinthians 8:1-4 gave out of their poverty making this teaching Scripturally inaccurate. What we do see from the church of Macedonia in another Scripture is that God will meet our need as we give to Him.

Philippians 4:19

Our job is not to worry about the needs of this earth. Rather, we are to focus on putting treasure in Heaven and allow God to handle the needs we may face before we get to Heaven.

Matthew 6:25-33

GOD WILL BLESS OUR GIFTS.

God promises to bless in proportion to what we give.

Luke 6:38

While we are blessed in proportion to what we give, we can always guarantee that God is going to give back to us much more than what we have given to Him. Sometimes, this may not always be financial. This is why it is vital for us to be constantly aware of providence of God in our lives. One Christian described it as this, "God shovels in, and I shovel out, but God has a bigger shovel."



GOD WILL MULTIPLY FRUIT TO OUR ACCOUNT.

Once you accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior, you opened an account in Heaven. Now, you have a choice to make. Will you choose to build your account on earth or your account in Heaven?

Matthew 6:19-21

The church of Macedonia was commended by Paul because their gifts helped him reach more people.

Philippians 4:15-18

As you give the tithe to your local church or above the tithe to missions, you are adding fruit to your account when someone is saved.

APPLICATION.

God has not placed a high standard of expectations on the Christian in regards to stewardship, simply faithfulness. Let's take the time to apply how we can remain faithful in all that God has given us.

Because God is the provider of everything that you have in this life, would you begin to give Him ownership? As a steward, we are simply managing what God has given us. Rather than taking ownership of what God has given you, choose to manage it for His honor. Choose to see every gift from God as an opportunity to glorify Him. What do you need to give ownership of back to God? Have you taken the time to notice all that God has given to you?

Because we are called to be stewards of what God has given us, would you begin to follow God's principles of faithful stewardship? God has given us Biblical financial stewardship principles; it is our job to follow them for His glory. Would you begin to give? Would you begin to care for your finances Biblically and wisely? Would you accept the challenge to tithe to the work of God and see what God does for you?

Because God rewards faithful stewardship, share God's goodness with someone else! The Bible promises God's blessings in the life of a faithful steward. When you experience God's blessings and faithfulness in your, share it with someone else who can rejoice with you.

