

Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.
Mt 10:39

Share the teaching
Guard the sharing

Male Call

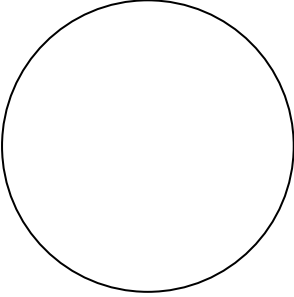
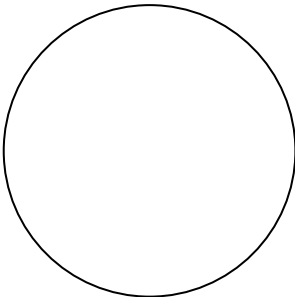
May 18, 2007

Stewardship—What's The Big Deal?—Part I

6:00 – 6:05	1) Coffee & Donuts 2) Opening Prayer
6:05 – 6:25	<p>1) What is “Stewardship”? God gave them his blessing and said: Have a lot of children! Fill the earth with people and bring it under your control. Rule over the fish in the ocean, the birds in the sky, and every animal on the earth. (Gen 1:28 CEV)</p> <p>Each of you has been blessed with one of God's many wonderful gifts to be used in the service of others. So use your gift well. If you have the gift of speaking, preach God's message. If you have the gift of helping others, do it with the strength that God supplies. Everything should be done in a way that will bring honor to God because of Jesus Christ, who is glorious and powerful forever. Amen. (1Pet 4:10-11, CEV)</p> <p>You surely know that your body is a temple where the Holy Spirit lives. The Spirit is in you and is a gift from God. You are no longer your own. God paid a great price for you. So use your body to honor God. (1Cor 6:19-20 CEV)</p> <p>2) Should we be concerned with our stewardship? <i>Our stuff and the spiritual development of our soul...are very important topics to God—so important that seventeen of the thirty-eight parables of Christ were about possessions. Possessions are mentioned 2,172 times in Scripture—three times more than love, seven times more than prayer, and eight times more than belief. Obviously God understood that believers would find this a difficult area of our lives to turn over to him. [Stewardship] is God's design for living as a Christian in a non-Christian world through how we handle our time, talents, and money. Stewardship is God's way of raising people, not man's way of raising money.¹</i></p>

¹ God & Your Stuff, p9.

- 3) How does God view stewardship?²
- a) Luke 16:1-15; possessions are a:
 - i) *Tool* used to further God’s Kingdom
 - ii) *Test* of our responsibility
 - iii) *Trademark* of our Christianity
 - b) Mark 8:36-- What will you gain, if you own the whole world but destroy yourself?
- 4) How should we view stewardship?
- a) Phil 3:7-11—all is secondary to our seeking Jesus
 - b) 2Cor 8:1-5—beg for the privilege of giving
 - c) Notice in the church today how often we focus on “giving” from a guilt perspective instead of from a perspective of obedience, spiritual growth (abiding), and participating with God. We should encourage giving as a way of drawing closer to God, not as a painful duty. See 2Cor 9:7
- 5) What is the error in our thinking?
- a) It is a zero sum game—WRONG!
 - b) It is my stuff—WRONG!
 - c) I earned what I have through my own effort—WRONG!
 - d) Mt 6:25-34
- 6) HOMEWORK
- a) What are your talents? How are you using them for God?
 - b) Where does your use of possession tell you about your heart?

<u>Time</u>	<u>Money</u>
<p>Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. 1Cor 10:31</p> <div style="text-align: center; margin: 20px 0;">  </div> <p style="text-align: center;">Make a pie chart of your time use</p>	<p>You cannot serve God and money. Lk 16:13</p> <div style="text-align: center; margin: 20px 0;">  </div> <p style="text-align: center;">Make a pie chart of your money use</p>
<u>Where is your heart?</u>	

- 7) You will find you cannot “do” stewardship on your own.
- a) Mother Teresa, when someone commented on her passion for the poor, stated that she had no passion for the poor; she had passion for Christ, he had passion

² *God & Your Stuff*, p13.

	<p>for the poor.</p> <p>b) In the same way, any passion for stewardship comes from our passion for Christ, not from ourselves.</p> <p>c) The end of the good race is to be like Christ, but not in our own strength. It can only be obtained by dying to ourselves, by realizing we are great sinners (see Paul's statement in 1Tim 1:15). Over time, we see ourselves as greater and greater sinners with the gulf between us and God's holiness every widening and impassible in our own strength. During our lives, we should increasingly see how much we need Jesus to be able to do anything honoring to Christ.</p>
--	--

6:25 – 7:00	<p>Interaction and prayer</p> <p>1) How did your dual challenge go this week? [1) 5 min reading the Bible, 5 min in meditation, 5 min in prayer; 2) praying with your family]?</p> <p>2) One use of possessions is a “heart test.” For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Mk 6:21).</p> <p>a) What are your treasures?</p> <p>b) Where are they?</p> <p>3) Paul tells us to test ourselves (2Cor 13:5). How are you using God's possessions of which you are the steward as tools, tests, and trademarks?</p> <p>4) What are some concrete ways in which we can be good stewards of God's possessions?</p>
7:00	Closing Prayer

Further reading:

- The *Bible*
- Willmer, Wesley K., *God & Your Stuff*
- Cushman, Ralph Spaulding, *The Message of Stewardship*
- Brother Lawrence, *The Practice of the Presence of God*
- Piper, John, *don't waste your life*
- Hughes, R. Kent. *Disciplines of a Godly Man*
- Murray, Andrew. *With Christ in the School of Prayer*