

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

June 15, 2007

Stewardship—What Holds Us Back—Part V

6:00 – 6:05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Coffee & Donuts 2) Opening Prayer
6:05 – 6:25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Previous challenges: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Take 5: [1] 5 min reading the Bible, 5 min in meditation, 5 min in prayer; 2) praying with your family]? b) Graphing your money and time usage? 2) Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) All belongs to God (Gen 1) b) We are stewards of ALL that God has created: material things and ourselves. c) Possessions are mentioned three times more than love in the Bible. Stewardship is God's way of raising people; we should beg to participate (2Cor 8:1-5) d) Everything must be secondary to seeking Jesus (Phil 3:7-11) e) You will find you cannot do stewardship on your own. God must do the work in us. f) We give because God gives; we are made in his image g) Declare God as our Lord and trust that he will provide (Mt 6:33) h) We are to be seen but to hide it (from myself) 3) Separating Goats and Sheep; do for the least of these (Mt 25:31-46) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) We must start in Mt 22 with first the Pharisees trying again to trick Jesus (22:15-22, then Sadducees trying to use Jesus to prove they are theologically correct (22:23-32), and then the Pharisees coming back trying to one-up the Sadducees (22:34-40). b) Then, Jesus turns the tables on the Pharisees (22:41-46). c) Finally, Jesus takes on the scribes and Pharisees directly (23:1-33) d) Jesus shows them their guilt before God (23:34-36) e) And he laments for all of Jerusalem (23:37-39) f) Leaving the Temple, a disciple wants Jesus to admire the beauty of the Temple. Having just been in this heated exchange with the scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees and seen the bankruptcy of the religious leadership, Jesus launches into a discourse on the end times (24:1-41) g) He tells the disciples (from 24:1) to be ready for his return (24:42) <i>by being good</i>

stewards of the master's possessions (24:43-51, esp v45), failure to do so will bring about harsh treatment

- h) Jesus then tells us three parables
 - i) Be ready, the hour of the Master's return is unknown (Mt 25:1-13)
 - ii) Do well with what we have been given (Mt 14-30)
 - iii) What we do matters for eternity—caring for others is a top priority (Mt 25:31-46)
- 4) How do we typically respond to this message?
 - a) Like Adam! See Gen 3:11; we blame God or others
- 5) To which church would you belong? (Rev 2-3)
 - a) Ephesus
 - i) Praises for toiling, persevering, and testing for false teaching
 - ii) Chastised for leaving their first love
 - b) Smyrna
 - i) Praises for tribulation
 - ii) Warning of continued tribulation
 - iii) Encouragement to be faithful until death
 - c) Pergamum
 - i) Praises for holding to Jesus' name
 - ii) Chastised for allowing false teaching
 - d) Thyatira
 - i) Praises for love, faith, service, and perseverance
 - ii) Chastised for allowing false teaching
 - e) Sardis
 - i) Chastised for being dead: no deeds
 - ii) Warned to wake up
 - f) Philadelphia
 - i) Praises for being holy, true, and of good deeds
 - ii) Rewarded by being exempted from upcoming tribulation
 - g) Laodicea
 - i) Chastised for being neither hot nor cold; feeling they are "too rich" and need nothing from God
 - ii) Warned to be zealous and repent
- 6) We are princes of the Most High King

We never know how high we are
Till we are asked to rise
And then if we are true to plan
Our Statures touch the skies-

The Heroism we recite
Would be a normal thing
Did not ourselves the Cubits warp
For fear to be a king-
--Emily Dickenson (1870)

What do we fear from being the stewards God has asked us to be?

6:25 – 7:00	<p>Interaction and prayer</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) One use of possessions is a “heart test.” For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Mk 6:21). <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) What are your treasures? b) Where are they? 2) With respect to stewardship, it seems the modern church has tilted toward “hide.” Would a move toward the proper balance between “be seen” and “hide” change the way in which we exhibit our stewardship? 3) Paul often says, “Imitate me” and “Boast only in Christ.” How should a mature Christian publicly demonstrate his/her stewardship so that less mature Christians can learn to imitate? 4) See Mt 6:25-34 and Psalm 139:23-24. What are barriers preventing you from becoming a good steward?
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*
- Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *The Cost of Discipleship*