

STEWARDSHIP IN LIGHT OF ETERNITY – LESSON 5 “THE TITHE IS THE BEGINNING”

COLOSSIANS 3:1-3; 1 CORINTHIANS 4:2; MALACHI 3:8-12

REVIEW:

Over the past few weeks we have been talking about stewardship. Of course, when we talk about stewardship, we are talking about being faithful stewards of our time, our talents, and our treasures. As believers, redeemed by the blood of Christ (1 Peter 1:18-19) we belong to HIM (1 Corinthians 6:20) and all that we do should bring HIM glory (1 Corinthians - 10:31). As Children of God, if we could get hold of this concept of biblical stewardship in light of eternity it could, should and no doubt, would transform our lives! **Jonathon Edwards**, the great Puritan preacher, often spoke of heaven. He said:

It becomes us to spend this life only as a journey toward heaven ... to which we should subordinate all other concerns of life. Why should we labor for or set our hearts on anything else, but that which is our proper end and true happiness?

Last week we looked at two attitudes that are prevalent, when it comes to the matter of giving:

1) The Wrong Attitudes about our Treasures

1Tim. 6:9-10 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

2) The Right Attitudes about Our Treasures

Matt. 6:19-21 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Of all the areas to talk about in church, giving of treasures is the most controversial. Let's consider a few introductory thoughts:

- **God has given us the strength to make all the money we have**

Deuteronomy 8:11-18 Beware that thou forget not the LORD thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day: Lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein; And when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the LORD thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage; Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint; Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end; And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth. But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day.

- **Giving helps us to avoid materialism**

1 Tim 6:10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows

- **God asks his children to give Him the “Tithe” of their income**

Malachi 3:8-11 Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts.

“Tithe” means 10% of one’s income: This is the starting point of our giving to God

1) God equates not tithing with robbing Him

“Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.”

- Robbery is worse than stealing because you are taking it from the person while they have it *or are in the presence*

2) The tithe goes to the church

“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse . . .”

- Give to the church where you are being feed

3) The tithe goes to the church to meet its needs

“. . . that there may be meat in mine house.”

- That is God’s chosen way to meet its needs
- What if came to church w/ no elect, dirty, no bulleting, no speakers- they don’t come from thin air

4) God says He will use tithing to prove His reality in your life

“. . . and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts . . .”

- We serve a living God
- Christ is a living Saviour
- If we can trust him to save us and change our life certainly we can trust him to meet our
- needs

5) The blessings you receive from tithing far exceeds what you gave

“ . . . if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.”

Acts 20:35 I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

- It all boils down to faith- do I believe God enough to do what he says

6) Tithing is just the starting point for Christians

“ . . . In tithes and offerings . . . ”

- He mentions offerings
- Once the blessing flows it will be easier to give

7) God doesn't look at how much you give, but how much you have left

Mark 12:41-44 And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.

III- Man with \$100,000 and widow who makes \$800 a month

In conclusion:

- If you give yourself to Christ, stewardship will not be a problem to you
- Make a commitment to be a faithful steward in the three areas we have discussed this month