STEWARDSHIP

TAKING CARE OF GOD'S BUSINESS

PART IV

What Is Stewardship?

Most people, when they hear the word "STEWARDSHIP", think about money ~ tithes, offerings, and campaigns

STEWARDSHIP is faithfully managing whatever God gives us…
opportunities, interests, skills, employment, power, family, talents, spiritual gifts, land, money, etc.
FOR HIS GLORY.

Principles From First Two Weeks

Stewardship Begins With What You Already Possess

Stewardship Is Trusting That God's Insight Leads To Increase

Stewardship Includes Prioritizing The Assignment Over The Abundance

Stewardship Prepares With An Expectation Of Increase

Last Week

The Stewardship Journey Is Consistent

It Began With Management In The Garden

In The Wilderness, There Is The Management of Provision

In The Promised Land, There Is The Management of Increase

Jesus Continues The Stewardship Principle Of Faithfulness

Tonight…

The Journey Continues

Jesus Continues The Principles Introduced In the Old Testament

Key Verses?

Deuteronomy 16:16-17 (NKJV)

16 Three times a year all your males shall appear before the Lord your God
in the place which He chooses: and they shall not appear before the Lord empty-handed.
17 Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord your God which He has given you.

Matthew 6:21 (NKJV)

21 For where your treasure is, there YOUR HEART will be also…

Introduction

*Throughout the Old Testament, God gave **HIS PEOPLE specific instructions** concerning their possessions.*
He taught them to give their firstfruits…
He taught them to return the tithe…
He taught them to give to the poor…
He taught them to bring offerings into His presence

In the Old Testament, God gave instructions concerning THE HAND…
Deuteronomy 16:16-17 (NKJV)
16….and they shall not appear before the Lord empty-handed.
17 Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord your God which He has given you.

God establishes THE EXPECTATION concerning how His people approached Him and their giving
Giving was connected to their worship
Giving was connected to their ability
Giving was connected to their blessings

In the Gospels, Jesus Connects THE HAND to THE HEART
If you are not willing to give what God has placed in your hands, you value something else in your heart
The Hand Expresses What The Heart Values
STEWARDSHIP Requires More Than A Willing Hand… It Requires A Surrendered Heart

Introduction

Jesus Spends Significant Time Dealing With The Heart of Stewardship

He Emphasizes The Heart Behind How We Handle Our Possessions

The Hand Reveals Our Actions… **But** The Heart Reveals Our Allegiance

Matthew 4:8-10 (NLT)

8 Next the devil took him to the peak of a very high mountain and showed him the kingdoms of the world and all their glory. 9 "I will give it all to you," he said, "if you will kneel down and worship me."
10 "Get out of here, Satan," Jesus told him. "For the Scriptures say, '
You must worship the Lord your God and serve only him.'"

Matthew 6:24 (NIV)

24 "No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other,
or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. YOU CANNOT SERVE BOTH GOD AND MONEY.

Jesus wants to address WHAT HAS AUTHORITY OVER YOUR HEART

The issue is not simply Do you possess any money…The issue is Does money possess you?

This is why Jesus talks about money and possessions so frequently….

MONEY BECOMES A SPIRITUAL DIAGNOSTIC TOOL…

Jesus told **38 Parables** ~ 16 of the 38 dealt with money, possessions, and stewardship {42%}

Jesus is not simply examining the amount in your hand….

He is examining the attitude in your heart

The Heart Of Contentment

Luke 12:15 (NIV)

15 Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed;
a man's life does not consist in THE ABUNDANCE OF HIS POSSESSIONS."

Jesus Challenges Us To Be Satisfied With God's Provisions and Not Be CONSUMED With Accumulating More

Luke 12:16-21 (NLT)

16 Then he told them a story: "A rich man had a fertile farm that produced fine crops.
17 He said to himself, 'What should I do? I don't have room for all my crops.'
18 Then he said, 'I know! I'll tear down my barns and build bigger ones. Then I'll have room enough to store all my wheat and other goods. 19 And I'll sit back and say to myself, "My friend, you have enough stored away for years to come. Now take it easy! Eat, drink, and be merry!"'
20 "But God said to him, 'YOU FOOL! You will die this very night. Then who will get everything you worked for?'
21 "Yes, a person is a fool to store up earthly wealth but not have a rich relationship with God."

3 Key Stewardship Principles

1) Don't Let MORE become your Primary Motivation
2) Don't Allow Increase To Make You Confuse Ownership
3) You Can Be Rich Materially But Bankrupt Spiritually

The Heart Of Surrender

Mark 10:21-22 (NIV)

*21 "Go and sell all your possessions and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven.
Then come, follow me." 22 At this the man's face fell, and he went away very sad, FOR HE HAD MANY POSSESSIONS.*

Jesus Challenges Us To Examine Those Possessions That We Struggle To Surrender When Asked To Release

Mark 10:17-22 (NLT)

*17 As Jesus was starting out on his way to Jerusalem, a man came running up to him, knelt down, and asked,
"Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"
18 "Why do you call me good?" Jesus asked. "Only God is truly good.
19 But to answer your question, you know the commandments: 'You must not murder.
You must not commit adultery. You must not steal. You must not testify falsely. You must not cheat anyone.
Honor your father and mother.'"
20 "Teacher," the man replied, "I've obeyed all these commandments since I was young." 21 Looking at the man,
Jesus felt genuine love for him. "There is still one thing you haven't done," he told him. "Go and sell all your possessions
and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. **Then** come, follow me."
22 At this the man's face fell, and he went away very sad, for HE HAD MANY POSSESSIONS.*

3 Key Stewardship Principles

1) Possessions Become Dangerous When You Cannot Release Them
2) Jesus Knows What Has Become More Important Than Him
3) The Heart Is Revealed By What The Hand Is Not Willing To Surrender

The Heart Of Compassion

Luke 16:25 (NIV)

25 "But Abraham said to him, 'Son, remember that during your lifetime you had everything you wanted, and Lazarus had nothing. So now he is here being comforted, and you are in anguish.

Jesus Challenges Us To Be Aware Of Needs That Can Be Met With Our Abundance

Luke 16:19-25 (NLT)

19 Jesus said, "There was a certain rich man who was splendidly clothed in purple and fine linen and
who lived each day in luxury. 20 At his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus who was covered with sores.
21 As Lazarus lay there longing for scraps from the rich man's table, the dogs would come and lick his open sores.
22 "Finally, the poor man died and was carried by the angels to be with Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried,
23 and his soul went to the place of the dead. There, in torment, he saw Abraham in the far distance with Lazarus at his side.
24 "The rich man shouted, 'Father Abraham, have some pity! Send Lazarus over here to dip the tip of his finger in water
and cool my tongue. I am in anguish in these flames.' 25 "But Abraham said to him,
'Son, remember that during your lifetime you had everything you wanted, and Lazarus had nothing.
SO NOW he is here being comforted, and you are in anguish.

3 Key Stewardship Principles

1) With Provisions Comes Responsibility
2) It Is Possible To Enjoy Blessings and Ignore Purpose
3) A Closed Hand Can Reveal A Closed Heart

The Heart Of Responsibility

Matthew 25:21 (NLT)

21 "The master was full of praise. 'Well done, my good and faithful servant.
You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities.
Let's celebrate together!'

Jesus Challenges Us To Be Responsible Managers With What We Have Been Entrusted

Matthew 25:14-19 (NLT)

14 "Again, the Kingdom of Heaven can be illustrated by the story of a man going on a long trip.
He called together his servants and entrusted his money to them while he was gone.
15 He gave five bags of silver to one, two bags of silver to another, and one bag of silver to the last...
dividing it in proportion to their abilities. He then left on his trip.
16 "The servant who received the five bags of silver began to invest the money and earned five more.
17 The servant with two bags of silver also went to work and earned two more.
18 But the servant who received the one bag of silver dug a hole in the ground and hid the master's money.
19 "After a long time their master returned from his trip and called them to give an account of how they had used his money.

3 Key Stewardship Principles

1) God **ENTRUSTS** Different Amounts To Different People
2) God **EXPECTS** Productivity With What He Has Entrusted
3) Stewardship Prevents Comparing What God Gave You With What He Gave Somebody Else

The Heart Of Worship

John 12:3-8 (NKJV)

3 Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus,
and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.
4 Then one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, who would betray Him, said,
5 "Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?"
6 This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the money box;
and he used to take what was put in it.
7 But Jesus said, "Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial.
8 For the poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have always."

Two People looking at the same gift, but seeing it completely differently
The difference was not in the value of the perfume… It was the condition of their hearts…

3 Key Stewardship Principles

1) When the heart values Jesus properly, giving to God is never considered a waste
2) The Heart Determines How We Calculate Value
3) Stewardship Says What Can I Give For All That He Has Done ~ The World Says What Can I Get For All I Do

Conclusion

WHAT DOES THE WAY I HANDLE WHAT IS IN MY HAND REVEAL ABOUT WHO HAS AUTHORITY OVER MY HEART

Matthew 15:8 (NKJV)

8 'These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But THEIR HEART is far from Me.

The Heart Of Contentment

The Heart Of Surrender

The Heart Of Compassion

The Heart Of Responsibility

The Heart Of Worship

YOU ARE RIGHT…. GOD DOES KNOW YOUR HEART

With God All Things Are Possible



Let's Continue To Go Above And Beyond