

STEWARD OF THE KING—WEEK 4

Ephesians 5:15-16; 1 Peter 4:10; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2

January 28, 2024

1. Introduction

a. Welcome—Guests

b. Mission & Vision

c. Series—Steward of the King: God’s Resources in Your Hands

i. God’s Resources

1. Psalm 24:1. The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.

ii. In Your Hands

1. 1 Peter 4:10. Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.

2. 1 Corinthians 4:7. What do you have that you did not receive? Nothing! Everything we have is a gift.

iii. God’s Resources in Your Hands = Time, Talent & Treasure

1. Series will cover stewardship using the three T’s from creation to consummation—Genesis to Revelation.

iv. Week One—The Original Design: **Our stewardship should reflect God’s ownership.**

1. He owns by giving—out of freedom, love & generosity. Not by taking or keeping.

v. Week Two: Restoring stewardship in a fallen world: Part 1—OT

1. **God's people must grow from students to stewards.**
Sabbath, Skilled Labor, Tithes & Offerings

vi. Week 3: Restoring stewardship in a fallen world: Part 2—Gospels.

1. Jesus taught the spirit of the law, not the letter. It gives life!

2. In the parables, Jesus commended initiative & investment in working for a return and condemned passivity & laziness.

3. **You can't take treasure with you, but you can send it ahead.** Jesus *wants* us to store up treasure where it will benefit us for eternity.

4. God wants your heart, and your heart follows your treasure. If you want to grow your heart for God, give with the heart of God.

vii. Today: Restoring stewardship in a fallen world: Part 3—The Early Church.

1. A practical template for us. **Make a plan for how and when to give your time, talent & treasure.**

2. Why give?

- a. We're created to give as God's image bearers. We're to give like God gives.
- b. It brings God's promised blessing. We can't outgive God. We'll never be able to give as much as God gives.
- c. We gain treasure in heaven by giving treasure on Earth.

2. Time

- a. Pick a sabbath day and work toward it.
 - i. **Romans 14:5.** One person considers one day more sacred than another; another considers every day alike. Each of them should be fully convinced in their own mind.
 - ii. STORY. Sabbath isn't easy to build in, but work at it. I changed my off day from Friday to Monday to get a better Sabbath.
- b. Redeem the time.
 - i. **Ephesians 5:15-16 ESV.** Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.
 - ii. Romans 13:11-14. And do this, understanding the present time: The hour has already come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord

Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the flesh.

1. Sober-minded v. escaping responsibility
2. Morally upright v. worshiping pleasure
3. Peacemaking v. worshiping power & possessions

3. Talent

a. **1 Corinthians 12:4-7.** There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.

i. Lots of gifts—what are spiritual gifts?

1. Not the same as personality traits—Myers-Briggs, Enneagram, DISC, StrengthsFinder, all of that.

a. Personality traits are given at conception, spiritual gifts are given at conversion.

b. But will be exercised through your personality traits.

i. **EXAMPLE.** If your DISC profile is more people oriented, you'll probably exercise a gift of mercy or service in a relational way. If you're more task oriented, you may accomplish a lot of good by exercising a gift of administration.

2. Not the same as natural talents—baseball, math, management, cooking, etc.
 - a. Leslie Flynn. “Talents have to do with techniques and methods; gifts have to do with spiritual abilities. Talents depend on natural power, gifts on spiritual endowment.”
 - b. But your natural talents can be platforms or roles in which you exercise your spiritual gifts.
3. Definition. **A spiritual gift is a “God-given special ability, given to every believer at conversion by the Holy Spirit, to share his love and strengthen the body of Christ.” Eric Rees, SHAPE: Finding and Fulfilling Your Unique Purpose for Life.**

ii. What’s the purpose of spiritual gifts?

1. To fulfill the purposes of the Church.
 - a. Rees. To share his love (outreach/evangelism) and strengthen the body of Christ (discipleship/mobilization)
2. To serve others.
 - a. **1 Peter 4:10.** Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.
 - b. Os Guinness. “The purpose of giftedness is stewardship and service, not selfishness.”

- i. They turn our personality traits and natural abilities outward for the good of others—giving vs. taking. Like God!
 - ii. Tie them together. Do what you're good at for God's kingdom!
 - iii. Who gets spiritual gifts?
 1. Everyone who becomes a child of God by turning to Jesus and following him. Not special Christians. *Every* Christian. Not talented or good-looking or smart or extra holy Christians. *Every* Christian.
 - iv. What are the spiritual gifts?
 1. A handful of NT passages list spiritual gifts.
 - a. **Romans 12:6-8**
 - b. **1 Corinthians 12:8-10, 28**
 - c. **Ephesians 4:11**
 2. Taken together, there are twenty spiritual gifts listed in the Bible.
 - a. Read the passages. Google it. It's easy to find the list.
 - v. How do you know your gift(s)?
 1. Spiritual Gifts test, like a personality test. Can be helpful. You can Google those too.
 2. Rees says discovering your gifts is twofold: 1) examining what gifts you think you may have, and then 2) serving in

various roles to see which ones bring the greatest fulfillment for you and the greatest results for God.

3. Rick Warren. “Just start serving, experimenting with different ministries, and then you’ll discover your gifts. Until you’re actually involved in serving, you’re not going to know what you’re good at.”

4. Treasure

- a. **1 Corinthians 16:1-2.** Now about the collection for the Lord’s people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.

b. **Five Principles for Giving:**

i. **Giving is to be periodic.**

1. “On the first day of every week” they gave to the church collection when they gathered for worship.
 - a. It was through the church that needs in the community and congregation were met.
 - b. It was as a church that Christians grew together as stewards of the resources God put in their hands.

ii. **Giving is to be personal.**

1. “Each of you”
2. **2 Corinthians 8:7.** But since you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness

and in the love we have kindled in you—see that you also excel in this grace of giving.

iii. **Giving is to be planned.**

1. “Set aside a sum of money”
2. **2 Corinthians 8:10-11.** And here is my judgment about what is best for you in this matter. Last year you were the first not only to give but also to have the desire to do so. Now finish the work, so that your eager willingness to do it may be matched by your completion of it, according to your means.

iv. **Giving is to be proportional.**

1. “In keeping with your income”
2. **2 Corinthians 8:12.** For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what one does not have.

v. **Giving is to be plentiful.**

1. “Saving it up ... so that no collections need to be made.”
2. **2 Corinthians 9:6-8.** Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

3. **Luke 6:38.** Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

5. Invitation

a. Make a plan

i. Time

1. Pick a Sabbath day and work toward stopping, resting, delighting and contemplating.
2. It will grow your heart for God.

ii. Talent

1. Examine the spiritual gifts and start serving somewhere.
2. It will grow your heart for others.

iii. Treasure

1. Pray God's promises back to him ("test me"), trust him by giving as generously as you can according to the New Testament pattern, and see what happens in your life!
 - a. EXAMPLE. We give 10% to the church and freewill offerings to other causes as we're able.
2. Remember, where your treasure is, that's where your heart will be.

3. It will grow your heart for heaven.

iv. If you want to grow spiritually, give.

b. For Lake Norman 2.0