



Go for God!

CHRISTIAN COUNSELING SERIES (CLASS #15)
Counseling Topic: "STEWARDSHIP FOR SUCCESS!"

I) STEWARDSHIP, SIN AND SWEAT!

- **In the beginning – STEWARDSHIP!** – Genesis 1:26-31 - *Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."*

Genesis 2:15-17 - *Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."*

- **SIN produces SWEAT!** – Genesis 3:17-24 - *Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it':*

"Cursed is the ground for your sake;

In toil you shall eat of it

All the days of your life.

Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you,

And you shall eat the herb of the field.

In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread

Till you return to the ground,

For out of it you were taken;

For dust you are,

And to dust you shall return."

- **Sweat is a product of sin, sin and sweat create a foul stench! Why does sweat create body odor?** According to Rachel Ward, MD, everyone has a personal odor. Normal amounts of bacteria on your skin interact with common sweat to create your personal scent. But when you have too much bacteria on your skin or in your clothes, this can cause what's known as B.O. Ah, yes, body odor! "Sweat itself has no smell," says Dr. Ward. "But when it comes into contact with bacteria on your skin, that's when things begin to turn foul." She says bacteria eat organic particles in your sweat and excrete digestive gas, and "what you smell is bacterial flatulence." Yes, you read that right! Bacteria farts! Ew!

II) STEWARDSHIP AND THE SAVIOR!

> **From selfishness to sharing to salvation!** – Jesus explains in Luke 19:1-10.

- Warren Wiersbe has well said, “*The heart of every problem is the problem of the heart, and only God’s Spirit and God’s Word can change and control the heart. To be filled with the Spirit means to be controlled by the Word.*”

- **Let us look at the three step progression of true repentance in Ephesians 4:28** – *Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.*

Step #1 – **REPENT OF SIN!** - *Let him who stole steal no longer,*

Step #2 – **RETURN TO RIGHTEOUSNESS!** - *but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good,*

Step #3 – **RELEASE A BLESSING!** - *that he may have something to give him who has need.*

1 Timothy 5:8- *But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.*

> Ten Commandments of personal finance:

1. **Thou shalt create a savings plan**
2. **Thou shalt not spend more than you make**
3. **Thou shalt not try to keep up with the joneses**
4. **Thou shalt limit the amount of debt on credit cards**
5. **Thou shalt pay monthly bills on time**
6. **Thou shalt avoid get-rich-quick schemes**
7. **Thou shalt protect thyself against risk**
8. **Thou shalt teach your children to handle money wisely**
9. **Thou shalt plan for retirement**
10. **Thou shalt legally protect thyself and thy family**

III) STEWARDSHIP FOR SUCCESS!

> Is found in Ephesians 6:5-9 - *Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free. And you, masters, do the same things to them, giving up threatening, knowing that your own Master also is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.*

~ Ten keys to success:

(v5) Bondservants & Masters can be used comparatively to our modern Employee and Employer relationship.

- Key #1 – Be OBEDIENT to your employer (the word “obedient” is *hupakouo* (*hoop-ak-oo'-o*); to hear under (as a subordinate), i.e., to listen attentively; to heed or conform to a command or authority)

– Discover your JOB DESCRIPTION and DO IT!

- Key #2 – Work with FEAR and TREMBLING

– This is not telling us to be afraid of our employer but work with a REVERENCE AND RESPECT “as to Christ” and thus REPRESENTING CHRIST to your employer and fellow employees. Remember a doer of the Word presents a powerful testimony; let’s walk the talk before we talk the talk.

- Key #3 – Work with SINCERITY OF HEART

– To be sincere is to be HONEST, not DECEITFUL, DON’T LIE, be GENUINE AND TRUE, AS TO CHRIST!

- Key #4 – Not with EYESERVICE

– The old expression comes to mind, “When the cat is away the mice will play.” Guard yourself against laziness and a lack of discipline. Check out Proverbs 6:6-11-

Go to the ant, you sluggard!

Consider her ways and be wise,

Which, having no captain,

Overseer or ruler,

Provides her supplies in the summer,

And gathers her food in the harvest.

How long will you slumber, O sluggard?

When will you rise from your sleep?

A little sleep, a little slumber,

A little folding of the hands to sleep —

So shall your poverty come on you like a prowler,

And your need like an armed man.

- Key #5 – Don’t be a MEN-PLEASER

– Whether it’s for the boss or your peers. In other words “be a God pleaser;” you will not commit SIN to get ahead, get a pay raise or a promotion, or protect someone who’s done wrong. Maintain VIRTUE and SOUND BUSINESS ETHICS.

- Key #6 – Be a BONDSERVANT OF CHRIST at work – How?

- Work unto the Lord, start your day in prayer and His Word then work faithfully, be timely, be fair, be courteous, be kind, be positive, and be vibrant and alive! The word SERVANT is found 522 times in the Bible.

Jesus said in Mark 10:42-45 - *"You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."*

- Key #7 – DOING THE WILL OF GOD FROM THE HEART

– What would be the will of God for you at work? Jesus said, “*Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.*” (Matthew 5:16) Attitude, attitude, attitude!

- Key #8 – WITH GOODWILL DOING SERVICE

– Your “GOODWILL” and “SERVICE” will develop a TEAM SPIRIT OF SUCCESS, which brings prosperity to the company, your boss, yourself, and fellow employees. Your success brings prosperity to your family, your community, your city, your state, and your country.

- Key #9 – KNOWING THAT WHATEVER GOOD ANYONE DOES, HE WILL RECEIVE THE SAME FROM THE LORD

– The word RECEIVE means that God will provide for you, take care of you, tend to your needs (Matthew 6:19-34).

Famous employees are found in the Scriptures; we find them promoted to incredible leadership positions; for example there’s Joseph, Moses, Joshua, David, and Nehemiah; and in the New Testament we have Peter, James, and John as fishermen, Matthew a tax collector, Paul the tentmaker, let’s not forget the carpenter’s son, our Lord Jesus who was and is SERVANT TO ALL!

- Key #10 – Masters, which is EMPLOYERS DO THE SAME THINGS (which is #'s 1 through 9) FOR YOUR EMPLOYEES AND GIVE UP THREATENING!

- John D. Rockefeller, Sr. one of the richest men in history, was once asked how much money it takes to make a man happy. Rockefeller’s famous reply was, “just a little bit more.”

- Remember, 1 Timothy 6:10-12 - 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. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

- John Wesley speaks to our hearts when he said, “Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can.”

- Paul wrote in 1 Timothy 6:17-19- *Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.*

- Jesus said in Matthew 16:25-27- *For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works.*

IV) STEWARDSHIP AND SUFFICIENCY!

Let us learn from 2 Corinthians 9:5-15.

(v5-7) What does the Bible teach about giving/tithing?

- The first recorded instance of tithing in the Bible occurs in Genesis 14:17-24 - And the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley), after his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with him. Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High. And he blessed him and said:

*"Blessed be Abram of God Most High,
Possessor of heaven and earth;
And blessed be God Most High,
Who has delivered your enemies into your hand."
And he gave him a tithe of all.*

Now the king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give me the persons, and take the goods for yourself." But Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have raised my hand to the Lord, God Most High, the Possessor of heaven and earth, that I will take nothing, from a thread to a sandal strap, and that I will not take anything that is yours, lest you should say, 'I have made Abram rich' — except only what the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men who went with me: Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take their portion."

After returning from rescuing Lot and defeating his enemies, Abraham met MELCHIZEDEK, the "king of Salem" and "priest of God Most High." The text

states simply that Abraham gave Melchizedek a tithe of all the goods he had obtained in battle. The author of the Book of Hebrews, in recounting this episode, considered the Levitical priests who descended from Abraham and who appeared centuries later as having paid tithes to Melchizedek through Abraham (Hebrews 7:1-10). There is no recorded demand of Abraham for a tenth. Neither is an explanation given about why Abraham gave a tithe to Melchizedek. Jacob also, long before the law of Moses, promised that he would give to the Lord a tenth of all he received (Genesis 28:22). The law of Moses prescribed tithing in some detail in Leviticus 27:30-32; Numbers 18:21-32; Deuteronomy 12:5-7,11-12,17-18.

In the New Testament the words tithe, and tithing appear eight times (Matthew 23:23; Luke 11:42; 18:12; Hebrews 7:5-6,8-9). All of these passages refer to Old Testament usage and to current Jewish practice. Nowhere does the New Testament expressly command Christians to tithe. However, as believers we are to be generous in sharing our material possessions with the poor and for the support of Christian ministry. Christ Himself is our model in giving. Giving is to be voluntary, willing, cheerful, and given in the light of our accountability to God. Giving should be systematic and by no means limited to a tithe of our income, we read in 1 Corinthians 16:1-2 - *Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.*

We recognize that all we have is from God. We are called to be faithful stewards of all our possessions (Romans 14:12; 1 Corinthians 9:3-14; 16:1-3; 2 Corinthians 8:1-9:15). (from Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary)

Again, Warren Wiersbe gives insight by saying, “We must not be “sad givers” who give grudgingly, or “mad givers” who give because we have to (“of necessity”); but we should be “glad givers” who cheerfully share what we have because we have experienced the grace of God.”

- Jesus said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'” (Acts 20:35)

(v8) Teaches God’s ROI (return on investment) – His “*grace will abound toward us*” – we shall be “*sufficient in all things*”

- Paul writes in Philippians 4:11-13 - *Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*

- Paul strengthens our faith in Philippians 4:19-20 - *And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Now to our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.*

(v9-15) We give because God gave us HIS INDESCRIBABLE GIFT, HIS SON, OUR LORD, AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST! (John 3:16).

We give to proclaim the GOSPEL and to fulfill the GREAT COMMISSION!

We give in our THANKSGIVING TO GOD!

We give to GLORIFY GOD!

We give for IN-REACH in our local church, and OUTREACH in the community and in MISSIONS!

MONEY

It can buy you a House

But not a Home

It can buy you a Bed

But not Sleep

It can buy you a Clock

But not Time

It can buy you a Book

But not Knowledge

It can buy you a Position

But not Respect

It can buy you a Sex

But not Love

It can buy you a Medicine

But not Health

It can buy you Blood

But not Life!