

Title: Stewarding Our Treasure: Giving as Worship, Sacrifice, and Obedience

What if the way we handle our resources, our time, and our talents is one of the most honest reflections of what we actually believe about God? This message cuts straight to the heart of that question. At the core of the teaching is a foundational shift in perspective rooted in Psalm 24:1, which reminds us that the earth and everything in it belongs to the Lord. When that truth settles into us, it reframes everything. We stop asking how much of our money God wants and start asking how much of His money He wants us to keep. That is not a small distinction. It is a complete reorientation of how we move through life. The message walks us through giving as an act of obedience, drawing from Proverbs 3:9-10 and the ancient principle of first fruits, and then brings it forward into our everyday decisions. We are also challenged by the story of the Macedonian churches in 2 Corinthians 8, who gave out of extreme poverty with overflowing joy, not because they had much, but because they had first given themselves to the Lord. That sequence matters deeply. Surrender comes before generosity, and joy follows both. If we have ever wondered why our faith sometimes feels disconnected from our daily financial decisions, this message offers a compelling and honest answer.

Sermon Summary: In the concluding message of the "Build Together" series, the pastor addresses the stewardship of financial resources and material possessions as a spiritual discipline. The sermon establishes that believers are not owners but managers of what God has entrusted to them, and that giving flows naturally from a heart surrendered to the Lord. Drawing from both Old and New Testament passages, the message frames giving not as an obligation or a transaction, but as an act of obedience, sacrifice, worship, and joy. The pastor emphasizes that God's blessing follows faithfulness, and that when the church collectively surrenders its time, talents, and treasure to the Lord, lives are transformed and the kingdom advances. The call to action is not rooted in guilt but in a willing, prayerful response to what God is asking each individual to give in this new season.

Key Points:

- We are not owners but managers of what God has given us, and recognizing this shifts how we relate to our time, talents, and resources
- Giving to the Lord is an act of obedience, rooted in the biblical principle of first fruits seen throughout both Testaments
- Giving to the Lord is an act of sacrifice, modeled ultimately by Christ's sacrificial love, and expressed when believers willingly give up something valuable for a greater eternal purpose
- Giving to the Lord is an act of worship, as true worship is not limited to a Sunday gathering but encompasses a life wholly surrendered to God in every area
- Giving to the Lord is a joy, as demonstrated by the Macedonian churches who gave generously and even beyond their ability in the midst of their own severe trials
- Giving to the Lord leads to blessing, not in a prosperity gospel sense, but in the sense that faithfulness with little positions believers to be trusted with more, and that disobedience in this area can result in the withholding of God's favor

- The church is called to collectively seek God's kingdom first with their resources, trusting Him to multiply what is surrendered to Him

Stories:

- A storm damaged a neighbor's home and a church member, prompted by the Holy Spirit, persistently returned to offer help; approximately 20 church members showed up on a Saturday morning with chainsaws and trailers to clear the property, and the homeowner, an older man moved to tears, accepted the Lord
- An illustration of a father giving his three daughters bags of candy during a parade with the instruction to share with people along the street; one daughter ate all of hers while the others gave generously, illustrating that God entrusts more to those who use what He gives them for His purposes
- The account of the boy who gave his small lunch to Jesus, which was then multiplied to feed thousands, used to illustrate how surrendering what little we have to God leads to miraculous provision beyond our own needs
- The account in Matthew 21 of the owner of a donkey who, upon hearing that the Lord had need of it, released it without hesitation, illustrating willing and immediate obedience when God calls us to give

Scripture References from the Sermon

Psalms 24:1 -- the earth and everything in it belong to the Lord

Proverbs 3:9-10 -- honoring God with first fruits and how that leads to abundance

John 3:16 -- God's sacrificial love as the model for giving

Matthew 6:19-21 -- the call to store up treasures in heaven rather than on earth

Romans 12:1 -- presenting oneself as a living sacrifice as true and proper worship

2 Corinthians 8:1-5 -- the generosity of the Macedonian churches amid severe trial and poverty

2 Corinthians 9:6-11 -- sowing generously, giving cheerfully, and God's abundant provision

Luke 6:38 -- the principle of giving and receiving in full measure

Proverbs 11:25 -- the generous person will prosper and be refreshed

Luke 16:10-11 -- faithfulness with little leads to being trusted with much

Haggai 1:7-11 -- God's rebuke of His people for neglecting His house while building their own

Malachi -- God's people accused of robbing Him by withholding tithes and offerings

Matthew 21 -- the account of the disciples retrieving the donkey for Jesus's entry into Jerusalem

Genesis 4:3-5 (Cain and Abel bringing firstfruits offerings)

John 6:1-13 (the boy's lunch and the feeding of the multitudes)

Nehemiah (rebuilding of the walls, referenced as the prior sermon series)

Deuteronomy 8:17-18 (God as the source of all wealth and ability)

Matthew 6:33 (seeking first the kingdom of God)

1 Chronicles 29:14 (everything belongs to God)

Hebrews 13:15-16 (sacrifice of praise and doing good as worship)

Matthew 25:21 (faithful with little, trusted with much)

The sermon describes a shift in perspective from asking 'how much of my money does God want?' to 'how much of God's money does he want me to keep?' How does this reframing change the way you approach financial decisions in your daily life?

The Macedonian churches gave generously out of extreme poverty and did so with overflowing joy, first giving themselves to the Lord before giving their resources -- what does it look like practically to 'give yourself to the Lord first' before giving your time, talents, or treasure?

The sermon draws a connection between sacrifice and love, pointing to John 3:16 as the ultimate example -- in what areas of your life do your sacrifices reveal what you truly love most?

Romans 12:1 calls believers to be living sacrifices as their true spiritual worship -- how does understanding stewardship of time, talent, and treasure as an act of worship rather than a religious obligation change your motivation to give?

The story of the man whose property was cleared after the storm illustrates how persistent obedience to the Holy Spirit's nudging led to someone accepting Christ -- can you think of a time when you almost ignored a prompting from God, and what was the result of either following or ignoring it?

The people in Haggai's time had good intentions but gradually shifted their focus from building God's house to building their own -- in what ways might modern believers fall into the same pattern, and how can a community of faith hold one another accountable?

The sermon uses the illustration of a parent distributing candy to children to explain how God entrusts more to those who are faithful with little -- in what specific area of your life do you sense God is waiting to see faithfulness before entrusting you with more?

The owner of the donkey in Matthew 21 gave without hesitation when told the Lord had need of it -- what would it look like for you to hold your possessions so loosely that your immediate response to God's request is simply 'if the Lord needs it, he can have it'?

The sermon presents both the blessing of obedient giving and the consequences of withholding from God, as seen in Malachi and Haggai -- how do you personally navigate the tension between giving out of genuine love for God versus giving out of fear of missing his blessing?

The sermon emphasizes that the church building together -- through unified giving of time, talents, and treasure -- creates opportunities for people to encounter Jesus in ways they otherwise could not -- how does your individual act of stewardship connect to the broader mission of your church community, and does that connection motivate you?