

Slide Nov 20, 2011

Stewardship is Lordship

Proverbs 3:5-10

Slide Proverbs 3:5-10 **Trust in the LORD with all your heart; and lean not unto your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct your paths. Be not wise in your own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil. It shall be health to your navel, and marrow to your bones. Honor the LORD with your substance, and with the first fruits of all your increase: So shall your barns be filled with plenty, and your presses shall burst out with new wine.**

Normally when we think of stewardship, we consider it merely as a matter of our giving of money to God through the church. While the giving of tithes and offerings is an important aspect of stewardship, it is secondary.

Slide **Stewardship is the lifestyle of one who accepts Christ's Lordship, it is walking in partnership with God and acting as His agent to manage His affairs on earth, entrusted to us.**

So; Stewardship is a reflection of my relationship to my God and my Savior. As I observe the truths contained in Proverbs 3, I see a pattern for stewardship that asserts loudly and clearly "Stewardship is Lordship!"

Slide **I. MY HEART – HIS HEART (Trust in the LORD with all your heart)**

At the heart of every true act of stewardship, every work of ministry, every acceptable act of worship is the heart, a heart close to God.

John 14:23 "Jesus answered and said to him, 'Jesus replied, "**Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.**"

A French soldier who had served ably in Napoleon's army lay dying of a wound received in battle. As they probed his shattered ribs to find the fatal bullet he said, "Dig a little deeper and you will find the emperor."

If we dug deeply, would we find Christ in our hearts? That's a question we all must ask ourselves. –

**Proverbs 23:26 " My son, give me your heart and let your eyes delight in my ways
MY MIND – HIS MIND (lean not unto your own understanding)**

Oswald Chambers said; "Christian thinking is a rare and difficult thing; so many seem unaware that the first great commandment according to our Lord is, "Love the Lord your God . . . with all your mind."

Stewardship involves allowing God to work in us. **A W Tozer said, "To do his gracious work God must have the intelligent cooperation .. of his people. If we would think God's thoughts, we must learn to think continually of God."**

Slide **Philippians 2:5 "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:"**

Philippians 4:8 "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

Slide MY WAYS – GOD’S WAYS– Isaiah 55:8 "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, says the LORD."

Your Way – Your path or direction. Is the direction of your life consistent with the direction that God wants for your life?

God basically instructed King David as recorded in 1 Kings 2:4 "That ...if David’s children would take heed to their way; to walk before God in truth with all their heart and with all their soul; he would not fail to have one of his descendants perpetually on the throne of Israel."

Slide Psalms 128:1 "Blessed is every one that fears the LORD; that walks in His ways." There is peace, prosperity, and safety in being in the center of God’s will and walking in His ways.

David Livingstone told how he was chased up a small tree and besieged by lions. He said the tree was so small that he was barely out of reach of the lions. He said they would stand on their back feet and roar and shake the little tree, and that he could feel the hot breath of the lions as they sought him. "But," he stated, "I had a good night and felt happier and safer in that little tree besieged by lions, in the jungles of Africa, in the will of God, than I would have been out of the will of God in England." There is one safe and happy place, and that is in the will of God.

[William Moses Tidwell, "Pointed Illustrations."]

Haggai 1:5-7 "Now this is what the LORD Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways. You have planted much, but harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but are not warm. You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it. This is what the LORD Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways."

When we refuse to give to God what God requires – we will never be content and always be short of what we need. Giving to God, doesn’t take from us, it actually adds to what we have. This is why God says, “Give careful thought to your ways.”

Slide Living Sacrifices

Ecclesiastes 12:13 "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man."

Romans 12:1-2 "Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will."

Stewardship only begins with our money – it really entails every aspect of our lives.

God has chosen to use you and I to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ with a lost world. That includes using our money, our time, our talents, our gifts, our graces, our witness and every area of our lives to share Christ.

Slide God first (Proverbs 3:9 “Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, ”

John Wesley said, “*When the Possessor of heaven and earth brought you into being and placed you in this world, He placed you here not as an owner but as a steward. As such He entrusted you for a season with goods of various kinds--but the sole property of these still rests in Him, nor can ever be alienated from Him. As you are not your own but His, such is likewise all you enjoy.*”

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."

“A handful of people went on a mission trip to Eastern Europe. Upon returning, they said that they were really impressed with the dedication of the Christians in Eastern Europe. Christians there don't have very much, but they believe they should tithe. They think that's God's standard. But the government of the country they were in is repressive, and they are allowed to give only 2.5 percent of their income to charitable organizations. They're trying to minimize the opportunity for any anti-government organization. So the Christians in that country are searching for loopholes in the law, so that they'll be able to give 10 percent. These believers have less, and they're looking for a way to give 10 percent. **We have more, and we're free to give as we please.** In fact, we get a tax break by doing so, and we're looking for loopholes in the Scripture to avoid doing it. What an indictment.”

Some get .. upset when pastors talk about money. Jesus talked much about money. Sixteen of the thirty-eight parables were concerned with how to handle money and possessions. In the Gospels, an amazing one out of ten verses (288 in all) deals directly with the subject of money. **The Bible offers 500 verses on prayer, less than 500 verses on faith, but more than 2,000 verses on money and possessions.**

Luke 12:34 "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Slide 1 Corinthians 4:2 declares, "Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." Every one of us will give an accounting to Christ for our stewardship of those things, which He has entrusted to us. If your heart his heart? Is your mind His mind? Are your ways His way? Is your cleanliness His cleanliness? Are your possessions His possessions? On that accounting day will Christ say to you, “**Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.**” (Matthew 25:23)