

SPIRITUAL ASPECTS OF STEWARDSHIP

Biblical Principles of Stewardship

The “Big Three”

- (1) God is the owner of all. He owns everyone and everything.**
- (2) God commands us to build His Kingdom.**
- (3) God is sovereign. He has plans for us.**

God is the owner of all.

He owns everyone and everything.

“The earth is the LORD’S, and everything in it, the world and all who live in it.” Psalm 24:1 (NIV)

God created us (Gen 1).

We were bought at a price (Psalm 24:1, 1 Cor 6:20).

God commands us to build His Kingdom.

Great Commission (Matt 28).

God is the owner of all.
He owns everyone and everything.
He commands us to build His Kingdom.

So . . . should we give everything to the church or other ministry?

No! God says that, with His help, we are to provide for our ourselves and our families and others. And God does not say we are to simply “pay” someone else to build His Kingdom.

God gives us time and talent, as well as treasure. In addition to property, God places people in our lives and passions on our heart.

Kingdom building is not just about heaven and eternity. Our Kingdom work includes our “work” on ourselves, our households, our spouses, our children, our places of employment, our co-workers, etc.

God is sovereign. He has plans for us.

He has plans for us (Eph 2:10, Jer 29:11), including plans for our stewardship (Prov 21:5). We are to have our “houses in order” (Is 38:1) . . .

- Spiritually
- Relationally
- Financially

Thought: Is planning as important as giving in our stewardship? Planning (on earth) means discerning, to the extent we can, God’s sovereign plan.

Other Biblical principles of stewardship

- (1) Motivation of all giving should be love (John 3:16, 1 Cor 13:3)
- (2) Priority of all stewardship transfer is dependency (1 Tim 5:8)
- (3) It is required of a steward that he be found faithful (Mat 25:14-30, 1 Cor 4:2)
- (4) People are always more important than dollars (Luke 15:11-31)
- (5) Tithe (Mal 3:8) and be generous (various NT)
 - Tithing = duty, mechanical; Generosity = matter of the heart
- (6) God will provide for us (1 Kings 17:14; Matt 6:25-32)
- (7) God will prosper us (Deut 30, Matt 13:12)
- (8) We should not store up treasures on earth (Matt 6:19)
- (9) We will be reward with treasures in heaven (Matt 6:20)

Other important principles or concepts

- (1) It is not generous giving unless you feel it, unless it hurts.
(C.S. Lewis, Tim Keller)
- (2) There is no value of ownership to an individual.
- (3) Given enough time, the use of property will exceed its original value.
- (4) There will always be an upper limit on what an individual can use.
- (5) God encourages a “multitude of counsel.”

Stewardship of what?

Of all that is God's

The Three Ts: Time, Talent, Treasure

The Four Ps: People, Property, Passions, Planning

Thought: Isn't good stewardship simply a process of finding (and implementing) the "highest and best use" of what is God's? But maybe "highest" should be "Highest"

People

- (1) Ourselves, including our mind, body, heart, talents and spiritual gifts
- (2) Those who are dependent on us
 - dependent children, elderly parents, others in need

“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.”
I Tim 5:8
- (3) Others with whom we have relationships
 - Family members, co-workers, pastors and flock
 - Believers and non-believers
- (4) Those with whom we may someday have relationships

Thought: WWJD? People and relationships pervaded His earthly life.

Property

- (1) Our “treasure” and “possessions” while here on earth
- (2) Money, stocks, bonds, business interests, residence, vacation home, farm, cars, boats, furniture, gadgets, collections, etc.
- (3) Perhaps, our particular “slice” of God’s creation?
- (4) 2,000-plus verses in the Bible on our “possessions”

Passions

In other words, those things that are on our heart . . . but not everything on our heart . . . some are not God's doing

It is OK to be passionate about people and the healthy relationships in our lives

It is OK to be passionate about ministry and our other Kingdom-building efforts

Thought: Is it OK to have property or money or possessions as our passion? Probably not . . .

Thought: Beware of idolatry. What are our idols or false gods? Property? The wrong people? The right people in the wrong way? Ministry in the wrong way?

Thought: People are more important than dollars.

Planning (and Plans)

Planning is where our people, property and passions should all come together

Requires deliberation and action

“Planning” and “plans” are different. Planning is the deliberative process. Plans are the result. Plans may change over time, but planning involves certain constants like prayer, time in God’s word, deliberation, dialog, assessment of self and circumstances, and probably more prayer.

Thought: Someone once said: “Plans are useless, planning is priceless.” Perhaps an overstatement, but the planning process is very important.

Closing Thought

So . . . is faithful stewardship a matter of the brain (i.e., obedience, knowing and fulfilling our duty, knowing our earthly circumstances)?

Or is faithful stewardship a matter of the heart (love, worship, service, passions)?

BOTH! Like all aspects of our walk with the Lord, in our stewardship, we should know, love, serve, obey and glorify Him and seek His will for our lives!

“For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the LORD, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’” Jeremiah 29:11



A ministry of stewardship

We seek to build God's Kingdom by helping believers as they consider and carry out the particular plan of stewardship that they believe God has set out for them. The Foundation offers assistance with estate design, gift planning and other areas of stewardship planning.

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Notes:
