

NORTHEAST HOUSTON COMMUNITY CHURCH
SERMON – Stewardship Pt 1
Topic: It all belongs to God
Scripture: Luke 19:11-27
02/05/2006

Quote: “If your giving does not match your income God can fix it so that your income will match your giving.

Luke 19:11-27 11 Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately. 12 Therefore He said: 'A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. 13 So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, 'Do business till I come.' 14 But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We will not have this man to reign over us.' 15 "And so it was that when he returned, having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. 16 Then came the first, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned ten minas.' 17 And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.' 18 And the second came, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned five minas.' 19 Likewise he said to him, 'You also be over five cities.' 20 "Then another came, saying, 'Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief. 21 For I feared you, because you are an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.' 22 And he said to him, 'Out of your own mouth I will judge you, you wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow. 23 Why then did you not put my money in the bank, that at my coming I might have collected it with interest?' 24 "And he said to those who stood by, 'Take the mina from him, and give it to him who has ten minas.' 25(But they said to him, 'Master, he has ten minas.') 26'For I say to you, that to everyone who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. 27 But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay them before me.'" NKJV

When the mention of stewardship is heard there is an immediate grab to protect the purse or wallet. Some think the stewardship is all about raising money. I hope that by now you all know that is not what I preach on or the purpose of my preaching.

I can understand this opinion in light of the frequent request from religion for money. We all agree that we should all give to support the work of the kingdom but I found it easier to give when I understood the purpose for giving and the responsibility for giving associated with good stewardship.

Good stewardship is not only one of the building blocks for our faith but even more it is one of the foundation blocks for our faith.

To establish this, let's go back to Genesis, the book of beginnings. What would be your answer to the question, "Why am I even here?" Meaning; born on the earth living a life. What is our true purpose?

As you may be thinking about your answers, because there may be more than one, but most are secondary to the true basic and paramount reason as to why mankind is here. If you were trying to answer the question as to why YOU are here you have just experienced the natural tendency of man to look inward at himself more than outward at all mankind.

Here is what I think is the main reason we, mankind, man, woman, are here. I wonder how many came up with this one. It is found in Genesis 1:27.

Gen 1:26-27 27 So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. NKJV

We are here because we are God's creation in His image. When we read the Genesis creation story can we accept that mankind was created LAST? Mankind did not make anything it was all here when man got here because it all belonged to God. Adam became the first steward of the earth.

Gen 2:15 15 Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. NKJV

We all know of the sin that took place and the effect it had on the relationship between God and Man and the earth and man. Ever since the fall into sin, mankind has always turned inward to himself to satisfy himself, making decisions that revolve around what they want, what they think they need, when they think they should have it and all the things they are concerned about.

Christians struggle with this inward thinking. As a Christian matures in the faith, he/she begins to understand and know that it is not about them but about God. We often take solace in knowing that Christ came and died for us. That is inward thinking and caused by inward preaching.

Though it is true but not complete. God sent Christ to bring salvation to His creation. (*ref Gen 1:27*). What does John 3:16-17 say?

John 3:16-17 16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. 17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. NKJV

It's God's world and we happen to be a part of it, His creation.

What is the steward highest priority? To bring an increase to the Master. Jesus gives two parables that nail this thought down they are found in *Matthew 25:14-30* in the story about the Minas. Minas were a small amount of money. A similar story is found in *Luke 19:11-27*, the story of the talents. A Talent was a large sum of money.

To me this teaches that it is not about the amount but what you do with what has been given to us. Although money was used in the story, perhaps everyone even back then could relate to money it was more about the Gospel of Salvation. The application is the same.

I hope to show you in this series how appropriate the analogy really is. Gospel is the true value but money or more likely the stewardship of money can and will have a positive or negative effect on our bringing forth an increase of the Gospel.

For some this would be a good jumping off point to talk about giving more money to the church, but I am not going there at all. Later you will see what I am talking about in regard to the relationship with your stewardship of money and the work of the kingdom.

What about our “Material” possessions? The first change of thinking we must adopt is that the money and all we have and all the things we think we own are all God’s possessions.

*Ps 24:1 The earth is the LORD's, and all its fullness, The world **and those who dwell therein.** NKJV*

*Ex 19:4-5 5 Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for **all the earth is Mine.** NKJV*

*Ps 50:12 12 "If I were hungry, I would not tell you; **For the world is Mine,** and all its fullness. NKJV*

*Hag 2:8 8' **The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine,**' says the LORD of hosts NKJV*

There is nothing left to belong to anyone else.

When you were born into this world, what did you bring with you? Let me give you a news flash, you will not take anything out with you either.

I do not expect the non-Christian to believe this but every Christian should understand and accept this fact.

Man has never made anything he has only changed what was already here.

We are only Stewards. Some notable stewards in the Bible include, Joseph, the servant of Abraham looking for a wife for Isaac. I am sure that there were others but they called themselves “Servants”. To be a servant of the most High God is great, to be a servant of Jesus Christ is great. A servant owns very little but often cares for a lot.

Some stewards have more, some have less, but all have the privilege, duty and responsibility to give that which is in their charge of **T**ime, **T**alent and **T**reasure for the work of the kingdom

How much of our time, talent and treasure should a Christian give? If we can embrace the fact that everything is the Lords and He first gave to us then giving back to Him from what He has given us will not be too hard.

1 Chron 29:14 14 But who am I, and who are my people, That we should be able to offer so willingly as this? For all things come from You, And of Your own we have given You. NKJV

This concept applies to all three T’s.

TIME

Who is the creator of time? God. How much of the time you now have did God give you?

None of us know how much time we have left on this earth, but every one of us know how much time we have had on this earth. If the Lord allows it, we all know how much time we can have today, 24 hours. God gives the same amount to us all. Just as in our focus scripture, all 10 servants were given the same amount in minas, one.

How much of that time have you given back to Him?

Take any week you want in 2005 and think about your stewardship of time.

There are 24 hours in a day. During that day we all should get close to 8 hours of sleep that leaves about 16 waking hours. (16x7=112 waking hours a week.)

If we estimate Sunday worship lasting 2.5 hours and let's be generous by adding 2 more hours for get ready and travel time. That means 4.5 to 5 hours a week devoted to God the giver of our time. That is 4.3% of our time we give back to God. For some we can add 2 hours for Wednesday Bible study. That brings our weekly **total to 7 hours or 6% of our waking weekly hours.**

If you could add just .5 hours for God each day for saying grace, prayers before you go to bed, prayers in the morning when you get up. Reading your bible, charity work, evangelizing, witnessing and studying. That would be 3.5 – 4 hours more a week **added to the 7 (7+4=11 or 9.8% or rounded to 10% of your waking hours.**

Remember that 10% of your first fruits should be given to God as a minimum. This is assuming faithful attendance to Church and Bible study.

Here comes a thoughtful question. How much time do you have to give to Him? I do not repeat a lot of sermons but there is one that I preach at every new engagement if the occasion allows it. It is titled, **“Do you have any time for God?”**

The sermon focuses on the importance of having a quiet time with God, but it also includes going to church, participating in church activities, evangelism and such. There is one statement I am sure to make in that message is that if we ever find ourselves saying or implying that we are too busy to give time back to God then brothers and sisters you **ARE too busy.**

My heart is warmed when I see those faithful church attendee's, those faithful Bible study Attendees, now we have some faithful members coming to choir rehearsal, I have some help on Saturdays evangelizing.

I am very conscious of not burning people out therefore I do not believe that everyone has to make time for everything, but that doesn't mean you don't make time for nothing.

A good steward set priority for the use of the resources his master has entrusted to him. His desire is to bring about an increase not a decrease.

Ask yourself, do you feel that you are a good steward of the time God has given you. Or has Satan drawn your attention to look inward in the use of your time? It doesn't matter how noble we think we are using our time if it is not bringing and increase or glorifying God then we are only making excuses.

Talent

What about our talent/skill/aptitudes/ where did that come from? Let's look at an example.

Ex 35:35 35 He has filled them with skill to do all manner of work of the engraver and the designer and the tapestry maker, in blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and fine linen, and of the weaver — those who do every work and those who design artistic works. NKJV

God gave the skill/Talent to the people for the purpose of them to give a portion of it back for the work of the Lord. It wasn't for them to open a shop for business. I imagine some later did but it was given to them to give back to God.

Today, every Christian is GIVEN a gift(s) by the Holy Spirit. They are not given to go on a performance tour, to bury in the ground, to talk about and infrequently use. They are given for the work of the ministry, the work of the Lord.

Eph 4:12 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, NKJV

Believe me brothers and sisters it is work even with the gifts. It takes practice, time, money, and the application of the gift. That's why there is choir practice, that is why Teachers and preachers spend time studying and preparing. We give back a portion of gifts God gives us to help build the Kingdom of God.

I have found that there is no greater feeling nor is there any greater labor you can be engaged in than that which God has called you too. That which you do is not a job it becomes your ministry.

The use of your gift is not a one-time thing. It is not always done in front of a crowd. Many of the most meaningful gifts are exercised in secret, like prayer and encouragement. It is not always done in front of an adoring crowd where applauses ring out. Sometime the message or lesson is hard to take but it is given for our own betterment.

Some preachers won't preach unless it is before a crowd, some won't preach unless the money is high enough. Some preachers won't go to a service unless they are on the program.

A good steward is always looking to bring and increase for His master then He relies on his master to pay what is right.

Take one last quick look at our focus passage and look at something I didn't see before. In verse 13 there are mentioned 10 servants each given a mina. (A mina is different from a talent. A talent is worth a100 time more than a mina)

In verse 14 there is another group apart from the 10 or that hated the nobleman, who was going to receive a kingdom, and refused to have him reign over them.

There are even some who call themselves Christians that refuse to let Christ reign over them. Christ is Lord of All.

Look at verse 16, 18, and 20, We see the first servant (steward), V18 the second, v20 the next or perhaps the third. He suffered loss. The scripture mentions no more. What about the remaining seven (7)?

27 But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay them before me."

God has impressed upon me to do this series and the importance of His message is greater than I have ever been taught. The truth of this series strikes very deeply within me and I can only ask God to forgive my poor stewardship and to help me to do better.

Satan has enslaved so many Christians that even those that desire to give more of their time, talent and treasure cannot do so because they have mismanaged their stewardship position so badly that they cannot bring an increase to their master. We don't have time for God because we are too busy doing for ourselves getting into debt then trying to get out of debt.

Without time for God we cannot apply our talents for God. And because we are in so much debt, we cannot give God His rightful share of our treasure.

Christ has freed us but we ourselves have allowed Satan to enslave us in another way which affects or effectiveness for the work of the ministry.

Let us ask His forgiveness and repent, Turn away to good stewardship.

End.

Reference

Stewardship 2: the conducting, supervising, or managing of something; *especially:* the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care

MINA Matthew 25:14-30

Mina. A weight equal to about **50 common shekels**, similar to the Canaanite system (1 Kings 10:17; Ezra 2:69; pound,

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES Luke 19:11-27

Talent. The heaviest unit of weight in the Hebrew system. The talent was used to weigh gold (2 Sam 12:30), silver (1 Kings 20:39), iron (1 Chron 29:7), bronze (Ex 38:29), and many other commodities. The common talent weighed about **3000 shekels** or the full weight that a man could carry

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