

The Promises of God

Title – Stewardship

Prayer

Purpose/Review

God cannot lie... and God does not change...

We have been taking a look at God's promises...

How many of us believe God...?

How many of us believe in God's promises...?

For the next couple of weeks...

We're going to continue to look at some of God's promises...

Promises that... may challenge our faith

Sermon Title - Stewardship

Stewardship - a person who acts as the surrogate of another or others, especially by managing property, financial affairs, an estate, etc.

Where is the first place in the bible that we are introduced to Stewardship...?

Reading

Genesis 2

15 Then the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it.

Doctrinal

Adam was entrusted...

To tend the garden's fruitfulness and protect what God had placed under his care.

Later in Genesis we find that Joseph administered (steward) over Potiphar's household

Genesis 39

4 So Joseph found favor in his sight and became his personal servant; and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he owned he put in his charge.

NOTE-

Later Joseph would become the Steward over all of Egypt
Second in command to Pharaoh

New Testament Stewardship - The call to absolute commitment to Christ is the central theme of the New Testament. Jesus never seemed to be satisfied with a slice of the pie of our obedience.

Good stewardship is central to the teachings of Jesus

There are different parts to being a good steward

A few examples are...

A good steward recognized God's gifts

A good steward understands commitment

A good steward is prayerful

This morning I want to explore what the bible teaches us

About being a good steward with our finances

DISCLAIMER-

We are not talking about what's known as the Prosperity Gospel
The Prosperity Gospel... or the Health and Wealth Gospel is an abomination

It's a false gospel and distorts scripture
And makes God subservient to us

Like Adam... the Lord has entrusted us with all that He's given us...

And that includes all of our possessions...

That is something we should always... always remember...

Application

Our first bullet point...

A New Testament Steward
1) Everything belongs to God

Psalm 50

10 For every beast of the forest is Mine, the cattle on a thousand hills.11 I know every bird of the mountains,and everything that moves in the field is Mine.

I know every bird...I know everything that moves...

The truth that God owns everything was codified in the Law...

Leviticus 27

30 'Thus all the tithe of the land, of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's; it is holy to the Lord.

Tithe – Tenth

NOTE-

We first read about the idea of giving God a 10th when Abraham met Melchizedek
After he returned home with the spoils of battle

The tithe... is holy to the Lord

Why... Why is the tithe holy to the Lord....?

Holy means set apart... reserved for divine use

Which brings us to our second bullet point...

The Makings of a Good Steward

- 1) Everything belongs to God
- 2) Money, Wealth and Possessions

QUESTION-

If we believe that God owns everything... then what can we give God that is ours?

NOTE-

When the Jews returned to Jerusalem, they neglected rebuilding the temple
Because they prioritized their own comfort over God's house

OPEN YOUR BIBLES TO Haggai 1:2-5**Haggai 1**

2 Thus says the Lord of hosts: These people say the time has not yet come to rebuild the house of the Lord. 3 Then the word of the Lord came by the hand of Haggai the prophet, 4 Is it a time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, while this house lies in ruins? 5 Now, therefore, thus says the Lord of hosts: Consider your ways.

God had to send a prophet to get them to get their priorities in order...

Why do you worry about your own house while the house of God lays in ruin...?

What are your priorities...?

We are given this beautiful church building...

In the same way It is our responsibility to maintain it...

NOTE-

Last year we had the driveway sealed to protect it and to maintain it
This year we had to replace one air conditioner
Roof leaks were repaired in the Mission Café building

These are just a few of the repairs that have been made...!

Where does the church get the money to pay for these repairs...?

By the generous... sometimes sacrificial giving of church members...

IMPORTANT-

Tithing or giving is NOT just about meeting the church's expenses
It is much more important than that

NOTE-

Jesus taught that money is a spiritual test of allegiance
How we handle the money that He has given us is a heart Indicator

Our financial priorities reveal spiritual conditions

Let's look at one of God's promises that may be difficult for some to believe...

OPEN YOUR BIBLES TO Malachi 3:8-10

Malachi 3

8 Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing Me! But you say, How have we robbed You? In tithes and offerings. 9 You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing Me, the whole nation of you! 10 Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this," says the Lord of hosts, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows.

How do we rob God today...?

I don't have any money to give to the church...?

I'll give when I can afford too...?

I give to other charities and other organization...?

Look at these verses again.... Do you see the promise...?

Test Me now in this,” says the Lord of hosts, “if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows.

Notice what’s missing...

God does not say...

After you pay all of your bills and after you buy what brings your comfort... then test me

No... He says... Test Me now...

NOTE-

We are not to test God because we doubt Him

We are not to put God to the test

Test Me now... This testing is based on faith

SLIDE- Monthly Expense (Prioritizing Our Expenses)

Monthly Expenses	Monthly Expenses
1. Food	1. Tithing
2. Shelter	2. Food
3. Gas	3. Shelter
4. Clothing	4. Gas
5. Recreation	5. Clothing
6. Savings	6. Recreation
7. Tithing	7. Savings

Test Me now in this,” says the Lord of hosts, “if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows.

NOTE-

Tithing is all about our heart condition

STORY-

My 7-year-old grandson had become enamored with money. When he saw the plastic cup in my bedroom overflowing with coins, he asked about it. I told him I empty my pockets each night and drop the coins there. Sometimes I put it in the church mission offering, sometimes I give it to someone in need. Various things.

Grant, would you like to have that money? His eyes bugged out. “Yes!” I said, “Well, have a discussion with your parents on what to do with it. When they say it’s okay, I’ll bring this money to your house.”

That night, he called. “Grandpa, I’m ready.” Next day, I drove over and presented Grant with the sackful of coins.

He and his dad sat on the floor and counted it all out, putting it into stacks of one dollar. It came to \$33 and some cents, as I recall. They had decided that 10 percent would go into the church bank, 10 percent into Grant’s savings bank, and the rest would go into his personal bank for whatever he wished to buy.

A half-hour later, as I was preparing to leave, I glanced down the hall and saw him on the floor with the three banks. As he was depositing the tithe into the church bank, he would slowly and carefully pick up a coin, hold it in his hand a moment, and then as he dropped it into the slot, in the saddest voice you will ever hear, said a mournful, “Bye-bye.” Another coin into the slot, “Bye-bye.”

It was killing him to give the Lord a tithe.

And yet, an hour earlier, he had nothing. I had given every dime of it to him.

Sound familiar?

NOTE-

Tithing or giving is not a... have to — it's not a New Testament rule
It is a reflection of the spiritual condition of our heart

2 Corinthians 9

6 Now this I say, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7 Each one must do just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

Not under compulsion... for God loves a cheerful giver... Why?

STORY-

Suppose a football coach does not say to his high-school team, "Everybody must get up at 5:00 every morning and run three miles so as to be fit for the maximum effectiveness of this team."

But instead the coach says, I want you to love this sport with all your heart, and I want you to give it all you have got this season. I want you to pursue maximum excellence and serve this team to make it as great as it can be.

Giving is not to be under compulsion

Our giving is loving God and trusting in Him

STORY-

When I first started coming to Cornerstone close to 30 years ago.
I found myself in a conversation with Mike and Sally talking about tithing.

Sally mentioned that she was clearing out their office and came across bank envelopes that had old checks.

As she was looking through them... she found a check made out to their church for something like \$7.35.... **What does that tell you?**

They were living in Virginia Beach while Mike was attending a bible college
Sharing a small house with 2 other bible college student.
Sally had \$25 a week to feed 4 adults and their son Micah.

They didn't have money to go to the laundromat
So Sally washed the dippers by hand and hung them to dry on ropes in the living room.

A few years later... Mike got a job with the 700 Club playing bass

What does that tell you...?

Which brings us to our third bullet point...

The Makings of a Good Steward

- 1) Everything belongs to God
- 2) Money, Wealth and Possessions
- 3) Our Testimony**

What will our testimony be to the Lord...?

Romans 14

12 So then each one of us will give an account of himself to God.

QUESTIONS-

Do we really trust God and His Word...?

Do we trust Him enough to give sacrificially...?

Is our focus on this world or the world to come...?

Our answers to these questions are of the utmost significance...

It is our answers to these question that Jesus is warning us about...

Matthew 6 ESV

19 Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.

Whatever you choose to do it will reveal this truth...



Matthew 6 ESV

21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

NOTE-

Our Treasure... our Earthly wealth which is all of our possessions
All of the money that we have accumulated for our own personal security... or status

The bible teaches us that all of our material provisions are God's gift

How we view our wealth becomes spiritually dangerous
When it rules the heart or replaces trust in God.

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also...

What will we say when we stand before our Lord...

Or... what will He say to us...

Matthew 25 ESV

21 His master said to him, Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your Master.

CLOSE