



Foundations of a Healthy Church

Giving

Questions for Discussion

- What is the purpose of giving in the life of the church?
- What points of confusion have you seen either in the culture or in church life surrounding the topic of giving?
- Why might giving be a hard topic to address in our culture?

Biblical Principles for Stewardship

- **Definition of Stewardship**
 - **Dictionary of Bible Themes:** The careful use, control and management of the possessions of one that have been entrusted to another. The term is also used to refer to the responsible use of wealth and possessions by Christians.¹
 - **My Definition:** The management of God's resources for God's glory and for God's purposes.
 - **Resources:** Material things given by God that we are charged to oversee and spend for His glory.
- **Examples of Stewardship**
 - Adam in the Garden: *Involves Intentionality*
 - **Genesis 2:15** - ¹⁵The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to *work* it and *keep* it.
 - Joseph in Potiphar's Household: *Involves Authority*
 - **Genesis 39:4-6** - ⁴ So Joseph found favor in his sight and attended him, and he made him *overseer* of his house and put him in *charge* of all that he had. ⁵ From the time that he made him overseer in his house and over all that he had, the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; the blessing of the Lord was on all that he had, in *house* and *field*. ⁶ So he left

¹ Martin H. Manser, [*Dictionary of Bible Themes: The Accessible and Comprehensive Tool for Topical Studies*](#) (London: Martin Manser, 2009).

all that he had in Joseph's charge, and because of him he had no concern about anything but the food he ate.

- Daniel in Darius' Court: *Involves Accountability*

- **Daniel 6:1-3** - ¹ It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom 120 satraps, to be throughout the whole kingdom; ² and over them three high officials, of whom Daniel was one, to whom these satraps should give account, so that the king might suffer no loss. ³ Then this Daniel became distinguished above all the other high officials and satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him. And the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom.

- **Scope of Our Resources**

- Often think of just the percentage we give to the church as the only "resources" we're called to steward. However...
 - **James 1:17** - ¹⁷ Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.
 - **Psalm 24:1** - The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein...

Biblical Principles for Stewardship

Below are several principles for stewardship that apply to us individually and as a church.

- **God Blesses for a Purpose**

- **Psalm 67**

¹ May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us, *Selah*

² that your way may be known on earth, your saving power among all nations.

³ Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you!

⁴ Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you judge the peoples with equity and guide the nations upon earth. *Selah*

⁵ Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you!

⁶ The earth has yielded its increase; God, our God, shall bless us.

⁷ God shall bless us; let all the ends of the earth fear him!

- **Resource Stewardship is an Expression of Worship**

- **Romans 12:1-2** ¹ I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. ² Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

- *"The dynamic of God's ethical instruction arises from its logical and necessary relationship to who he is and what he has done on our behalf."*²
- **How We Steward Resources Reveals our True Master**
 - **Luke 16:10-13**¹⁰ "One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much.¹¹ If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches?¹² And if you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own?¹³ *No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money."*
- **We Will be Accountable for How We Steward Resources**
 - **Luke 12:42-48**⁴² And the Lord said, "Who then is the faithful and wise manager, whom his master will set over his household, to give them their portion of food at the proper time?⁴³ Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes. ...⁴⁷ And that servant who knew his master's will but did not get ready or act according to his will, will receive a severe beating.⁴⁸ But the one who did not know, and did what deserved a beating, will receive a light beating. Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required, and from him to whom they entrusted much, they will demand the more.
- **How We Steward Resources Reveals our True Affections**
 - **Matthew 6:19-21**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.²¹ *For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*
- **How We Steward Resources Reveals our True Hope**
 - **Luke 12:16-21**¹⁶ And he told them a parable, saying, "The land of a rich man produced plentifully,¹⁷ and he thought to himself, 'What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?'¹⁸ And he said, 'I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods.¹⁹ *And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.'"*²⁰ But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?'²¹ So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God."
- While we've been entrusted with many resources, how we manage our **money** is a helpful starting place to measure Spiritual health in stewardship.
- **Giving** away our money is consistently a key marker of faithfulness in stewardship.

² Robert H. Mounce, [Romans](#), vol. 27, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 230.

Biblical Principles for Financial Giving

- Giving regularly is an act of worship.
 - **Philippians 4:18** ¹⁸ I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God.
 - **1 Corinthians 16:2** On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper, so that there will be no collecting when I come.
- Sacrifice is a key aspect of discipleship.
 - **Matthew 16:24-26** ²⁴ Then Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. ²⁵ For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. ²⁶ For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?"
 - **Luke 18:18-30** ¹⁸ And a ruler asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" ¹⁹ And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone. ²⁰ You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery, Do not murder, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother.'" ²¹ And he said, "All these I have kept from my youth." ²² When Jesus heard this, he said to him, "One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." ²³ But when he heard these things, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich. ²⁴ Jesus, seeing that he had become sad, said, "How difficult it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵ For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God." ²⁶ Those who heard it said, "Then who can be saved?" ²⁷ But he said, "What is impossible with man is possible with God." ²⁸ And Peter said, "See, we have left our homes and followed you." ²⁹ And he said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, ³⁰ who will not receive many times more in this time, and in the age to come eternal life."
- Giving evidences our trust in God.
 - **Mark 12:41-44** ⁴¹ And he sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people putting money into the offering box. Many rich people put in large sums. ⁴² And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which make a penny. ⁴³ And he called his disciples to him and said to them, "Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box. ⁴⁴ For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on."
 - **Malachi 3:10** Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need.

- Giving should be done willingly, sacrificially, and generously, in the pattern of Christ.
 - **2 Corinthians 9:7** Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.
 - **2 Corinthians 8:1-9** ¹ We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, ² for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. ³ For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord, ⁴ begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints— ⁵ and this, not as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God to us. ⁶ Accordingly, we urged Titus that as he had started, so he should complete among you this act of grace. ⁷ But as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love for you—see that you excel in this act of grace also. ⁸ I say this not as a command, but to prove by the earnestness of others that your love also is genuine. ⁹ For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.
- Giving reflects our spiritual trustworthiness.
 - **Matthew 25:23** 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.’
- Giving should be rooted in love, not merely duty.
 - **Acts 2:45** And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need.
 - **2 Corinthians 8:8** I say this not as a command, but to prove by the earnestness of others that your love also is genuine.
- Giving results in our blessing.
 - **Luke 6:38** “Give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.”
 - **Proverbs 19:17** Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will repay him for his deed.
 - **2 Corinthians 9:11** You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God.
- Giving looses the invisible chains of the world from around our hearts.
 - **Deuteronomy 8:11-18** ¹¹ “Take care lest you forget the LORD your God by not keeping his commandments and his rules and his statutes, which I command you today, ¹² lest, when you have eaten and are full and have built good houses and live in them, ¹³ and when your herds and flocks multiply and your silver and gold is multiplied and all that you have is multiplied, ¹⁴ then your heart be lifted up, and you forget the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, ¹⁵ who led you through the

great and terrifying wilderness, with its fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where there was no water, who brought you water out of the flinty rock, ¹⁶ who fed you in the wilderness with manna that your fathers did not know, that he might humble you and test you, to do you good in the end. ¹⁷ Beware lest you say in your heart, 'My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth.' ¹⁸ You shall remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your fathers, as it is this day.

How Much Should I Give?

- **Old Testament: Giving is commanded.**

- Purposes
 - Reminded the people of God's provision and expressed gratitude.
 - Provided for the worship practices and the needs of the Levites.
 - Met the needs of the poor, needy, and the sojourners.
- Key Points
 - Tithe was key component of worship. (Deut. 12, 14, 26)
 - Came from "first fruits", or the first and best of one's gains.
 - Giving was more than 10%!
 - 10% Levitical Support (Leviticus 27:30-32; Numbers 18:21-24)
 - 10% Tithe of the Feasts (Deuteronomy 14:22-27)
 - 10% Tithe for the Poor (Deuteronomy 14:28-29; every 3 years)
 - Countless sacrifices for sin offerings, gratitude offerings, etc.

- **New Testament: Giving is expanded.**

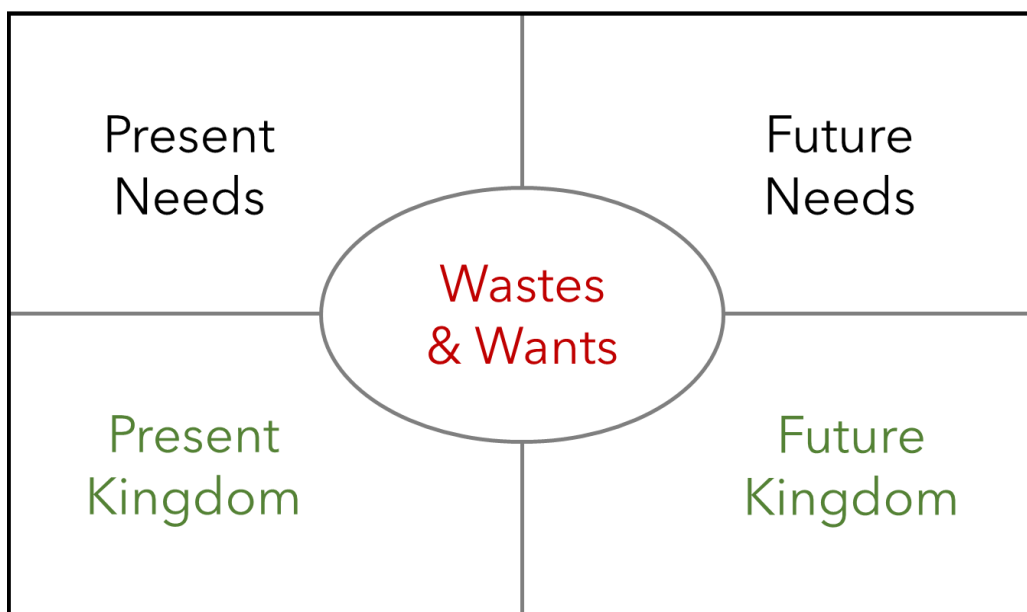
- Rooted in Christ's lordship over our lives (our lives are His)
- No legal binding on amount; not from compulsion. However, idea is to maximize our generosity for the purpose of God's kingdom and as an expression of thankful worship.
- Not as simple as set percentage
 - Consider widow who put in "all she had", or 100%
 - *She was commended for her faith.*
 - Consider millionaire who only contributes 10%
 - *This does not likely represent a sacrifice.*
 - "Not what you give but what you keep is what the King is counting."
(From the hymn "Simple Living", Keith and Kristyn Getty)

RESOURCES EVALUATION WORKSHEET

All your financial and material resources fit into one of the five fields, below. Use the questions below to prayerfully evaluate where you're investing.

Try to link every resource you've been entrusted to a God-glorifying purpose.

***For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
Matthew 6:21***



Questions:

1. What are the present needs that God has called you to meet with the resources he's entrusted?
2. What are future needs that God has called you to save for?
3. What are present kingdom needs that you could give toward now for the advance of the gospel?
4. What are some ways you may be called in the future to contribute to kingdom needs that you can begin saving for now?
5. What are some "wastes and wants" that you can cut to free up more kingdom work or to better provide for yourself and/or your family?