

THE BLE\$\$ED LIFE
Week 5: The Stewardship Principle
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



RECAP

In the fifth sermon of this series on money and giving, Josh discusses The Stewardship Principle and looks at Matthew 25:14-30 to discuss how giving connects to the bigger issue of stewardship.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Josh started with an illustration about Thanksgiving and that one relative that can't be trusted with money. Without betraying names or confidences, do you know someone that can't be trusted with money? Why wouldn't you give them money if they asked you?
2. Josh discussed the concept of stewardship as someone who manages the affairs for another person, using the illustrations of house sitters and retirement money managers. Who are some of the stewards in your life? Are you a steward for someone else? How?
3. The Stewardship Principle is: How you handle God's money now is a trial run for greater riches. In what other arenas of life does this idea of a 'trial run' or gradually increasing responsibility play out?
4. Josh argued that most people think the answer to their problems is more money, while the real answer is better handling the money you already have. Do you agree with that? Why do most people stay fixated on "more money" as the answer?
5. Review Matthew 25:14-30. In the parable of the bags of gold (or talents), Jesus tells a story of a master who entrusted money to his servants. Are there any other things besides money that God has entrusted to us where this principle applies (like influence, job responsibilities or life opportunities)?

NEXT STEP

Josh finished with 5 Steps to Be a Better Steward of God's Money. Review them and identify one step you can begin to follow through with:

1. Acknowledge that "your" money is God's money.
2. Get out of debt.
3. Start tithing.
4. "Spenders": Use your power to change your family.
5. Watch God show up in tangible ways.

For more information (training and support) on how to start and lead a small group, contact steve.lizzio@cbcva.org



CENTREVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2018
WEEK 5: THE STEWARDSHIP PRINCIPLE
MATTHEW 25:14-30

The Stewardship Principle: How you handle God's money *now* is a trial run for

_____.

5 WAYS TO BECOME A BETTER STEWARD OF GOD'S MONEY

1. Acknowledge that "_____" money is _____ money.
2. Get out of _____.
3. Start _____.
4. "_____": Use your power to change your family.
5. Watch God _____ in tangible ways.

To start giving to Centreville Baptist Church, go to: cbcva.org/give

Bonus Content

Sunday (This Handout) - 7 Questions Worksheet on Matthew 25:21 and Small Group Questions for this week
Monday (Blog) - The Stewardship Principle: How you handle God's money now is a trial run for greater riches.
Tuesday (Blog) - Is God Looking at You the Same Way You're Looking at That Cousin Asking You For More Money?
Wednesday (Blog) - 5 Ways To Become a Better Steward of God's Money

For bonus content and much more, visit: joshdaffern.com

MATTHEW 25:21

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“His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’ *Matthew 25:21*

1. WHAT DID IT MEAN TO THE ORIGINAL READERS?

If you start with today you’re twenty centuries too late.

In Matthew 25:21, Jesus is in the midst of a parable explaining what the coming kingdom of heaven would be like. He likens it to a man going on a journey and his servants being entrusted with varying amounts of resources while he’s away. When the master returns, he will settle accounts. This response by the master to the servant is in response to the servant faithfully stewarding the five bags of gold entrusted to him into five more bags of gold. In response to the servant’s stewardship, the man calls him “good and faithful,” promising him a reward of future and increasing responsibility and duty. The crowd Jesus told this to would have been the working class, the servants in the story, and they all would have immediately identified with the servants in the story. Many of them would have been given responsibilities in the past and would have been held accountable to how they managed those responsibilities.

The twist in the entire story is that this very practical, very earthy story was exactly how God would interact with His servants when the time came for accountability on the Last Day. The goal for the servants in the story and the story for us today is the same: to hear our Master’s words of affirmation and an invitation to come and share the Master’s happiness. Another emphasis that comes out through this story is that the amount of what we’re given to steward is nowhere near as important as how we steward the gifts and resources given to us.

GREEK WORD OF THE WEEK

καθίστημι (*kathistēmi*) is translated into the English verb “I will put you in charge” and it means to assign a duty, responsibility or obligation to someone. This word is fascinating in that it both speaks to the concept of eternal rewards, that our actions in this life have consequences in the next, and it also reveals a bit of the nature of what eternal life may be like. The popular idea of heaven is a bunch of angels sitting on clouds playing harps. With this verb, Jesus is saying that we will have responsibility and duty, although it’s not revealed exactly what kind of work or responsibility that it will be.

2. WHAT’S THE CONTEXT? *Scripture without context makes no sense.*

The context for Matthew 25:21 is the larger parable that Jesus is teaching, known as the Parable of the Bags of Gold (or the Parable of the Talents). This parable is in and of itself part of a larger teaching section that Matthew records in Matthew 25 where Jesus is teaching on the coming kingdom of God and what the second coming of Christ will look like. In the Parable of the Ten Virgins, Jesus exhorts his followers to be prepared for the second coming. In the Parable of the Bags of Gold, he reveals that we will be held accountable for the resources God gives us to steward in this life, and in the final parable, Jesus reveals that our actions in this life (or lack of action) have eternal consequences. It is a powerful trio of parables that should mold and shape our view of the afterlife and this life as well.

3. WHAT TIMELESS TRUTHS ARE THERE?

Since the Word doesn’t change it still matters today.

- God cares about and watches how we utilize the resources He has given us.
- Stewardship is the biblical principle of faithfully managing something (our money, talents, opportunities) that belongs to someone else (God).
- Our actions in this life (although not specifically explained how) have definitive consequences and rewards in the life to come.

5. HOW DOES IT APPLY TODAY? *Information without application becomes stagnation.*

Information without application becomes stagnation.

- How we handle God’s riches today is a trial run for greater (or lesser) riches in the future.
- If we are not good stewards of God’s money now (i.e. trusting God with a tithe, staying out of debt), why would we ever expect God to trust us with more wealth?
- If we are running out of money, the answer is never ‘more money.’ The solution is to become a better steward of the money God has already given you.

4. WHERE ELSE IN SCRIPTURE DOES IT SAY THIS?

The best interpreter of Scripture is Scripture.

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.
1 Peter 4:10

“Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches?” *Luke 16:10-11*

6. HOW SHOULD THIS CHANGE THE WAY I LIVE IN COMMUNITY?

The Bible comes alive in me when I live it in community.

- Talk about how this principle of stewardship has played out in your own life. Has your faithful handling of smaller responsibilities, opportunities or resources ever led to greater responsibilities, opportunities or resources?
- If you were God, and if you honestly looked at how you were handling God’s money, could you honestly say, “Well done, good and faithful servant?” What needs to change about how you steward God’s resources?

7. HOW CAN MY LIFE GET BETTER BECAUSE OF THESE VERSES? *If I trust God and step in faith, what kind of life will God create?*

If I trust God and step in faith, what kind of life will God create?

God is a loving, giving God. His power and wealth are far beyond our capacity to even grasp a shadow of it. When it comes to material wealth, life opportunities and responsibilities, God is not holding back because He is stingy or poor. He is a giving God and all things are His to give. When we take the stewardship principle seriously and begin to faithfully manage the resources already given to us, God will give more and more, giving us as many resources as we can faithfully steward. The answer to a lack of money is never ‘more money.’ The answer is to better steward what we already have. Imagine a life where God continues to funnel more and more resources, opportunities and responsibilities your way because you’re faithfully stewarding what you’ve already been given!