

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER 2015

The Message of Stewardship

There are three dominant messages in the theology of stewardship.

Sunday, November 1, 2015

Thankful Witness to God's Benevolence.

Stewardship is our thankful witness to God's benevolence. The right order is God giving to us followed by our response. We love God because He first loved us (*Rom. 5:8*). We did not have the ability to respond to His love until He gave the ultimate gift of love.

Because we know God's benevolence is free and undeserved, the living spring of our practice of stewardship is gratitude. We give because we are thankful. Stewardship is the practical expression of appreciation to the giver of every good and perfect gift. We give because God gave, and we are thankful for His generosity.

Sundays, November 8, 15, 2015

Obedient Witness to God's Sovereignty.

Stewardship is our obedient witness to God's sovereignty. It is the Child of God in action, doing deeds that prove belief in God (*Acts 26:20; James 2:14-18*). Stewardship is action that flows from the acceptance of the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

The theology of stewardship starts with the acknowledgement that God is sovereign over our lives. Therefore, we acknowledge Him as the ultimate authority. It is the practical expression of our yielding to the divine revelation – “*I Am the Lord your God*” (*Ex. 6:7*). Stewardship is the consecration of one's self and possessions to the service of the King. It acknowledges in practice that we do not have the right of control but are under the constant orders of our Lord. As faithful stewards, we realize that we are not our own, but belong to Christ.

Sundays, November 22, 29, 2015

Faithful Response to God's Commission

We have been chosen and commissioned to continue Jesus' Ministry (*John 14:12*). The practice of stewardship is our participation in the continuing ministry of Jesus Christ to the people of His world. It is the expression of our incorporation

into the body of Christ. The whole church is called to share in the ministry of our Lord.

The mission of the church is to be a witness to the world of God's great act of reconciliation through Jesus. Stewardship is our responsibility to share the message of hope to a lost world. It is our highest service to mankind. At its best, stewardship is self-sacrificial giving. It began with Christ giving of Himself on the cross and culminates as we give ourselves away in order to give Christ to a lost and dying world.

Faithful stewardship is an evidence of salvation. In *Psalms 107:2* we read: ***“Let the redeemed of the Lord say this.”*** The saved will speak of their redemption with their mouth, and they will prove their redemption by their deeds.

In *Luke 7 (vs. 36-50)*, we have the account of Jesus going to the home of Simon the Pharisee for dinner. A woman who was a prostitute heard that Jesus was eating there. She came to the house bringing an alabaster jar of perfume. As she stood behind Jesus, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she dried his feet with her hair, kissed them, and poured perfume on them. Simon the Pharisee said to himself, “If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is – that she is a sinner” (Luke 7:39). In response, Jesus turned to Simon and told him the following story:

“Two men owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he cancelled the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more? Simon replied, I suppose the one who had the bigger debt cancelled. You have judged correctly, Jesus said. Then he turned to the woman and said to Simon, do you see this woman? I came into your house; you did not give me any water for my feet. But, she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven – for she loved much. But he who has been forgiven little loves little.”

Then Jesus said to her, “Your sins are forgiven – your faith has saved you; go in peace.” Luke 7:41-50

The Proof of the woman's salvation was in her deeds. Our works or deeds do not save us; however, if we have been saved, our works and deeds will show our salvation to the world. Stewardship is faith and salvation in action.