

Christian Stewardship

Lesson for Sunday, January 22, 2023

NOTE: Please see the application where we explain the commitment card for January 29. Please be sure you save the necessary time to cover this part of the lesson!

INTRODUCTION:

- Where did you learn about tithing? *Allow for some discussion...*
- Or, what is the best financial advice you have every received?
- Every year, for over 50 years, our church designates an annual time to teach on the biblical topic of stewardship. *(Especially important to point out if you have guests.)*
- Unbelievably, if you were to survey the Christian world today, there are a variety of opinions on the subject of the tithe. Ask: What are they?
 - “Isn’t the tithe an Old Testament practice?”
 - “New Testament Christians are not required to tithe!”
 - “The amount of 10% is just a suggestion.”
 - “As long as I give to a Christian organization, that is all that is expected.”
- The only opinion that matters on stewardship (or anything else for that matter) is what God has to say about it. And God has lovingly provided clear teaching in His Word about this important spiritual discipline.

BIBLE STUDY:

1. A Stewardship Summary
 - a. How are we to think biblically about stewardship? What are the bible verses that provide a framework for a biblical view of our money? There are four key facts must shape our thinking:
 - i. First, God owns it all (Psalm 24:1).
 1. Notice the key words in this verse: “earth” - “the fulness thereof” – “the world and they that dwell therein.” That’s a fancy way of saying God owns it all.
 2. This is based on the principle that since God is the Creator of it all, He owns it all (Genesis 1:1).
 - ii. Second, everything we have is on loan from God.
 1. James 1:17 says, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above.”
 2. Think of the things we often don’t think about: The strength to get out of bed, the opportunity to be educated, the ability to perform tasks that contribute to my employer and are a help to others – it all come from God! See Deuteronomy 8:18.
 3. Instead of owners, we are managers or stewards
 - iii. Third, the tithe belongs to the Lord (Leviticus 27:30).
 1. Definition of “tithe” is a tenth or 10%.
 2. God’s people commanded to tithe (Malachi 3:10).
 3. Christ endorsed the tithe (Matthew 23:23).
 - iv. Finally, the focus of a steward is faithfulness (1 Corinthians 4:2).
 - a. Break the class into small groups and assign them one of the following references. Give them time to read the reference and determine the reason that
2. The Christian motive for giving.
 - a. Break the class into small groups and assign them one of the following references. Give them time to read the reference and determine the reason that

this reference provides for why Christians should give. As the groups report back, lead a brief discussion on each.

- b. 9 Reasons why Christians should give because:
 1. It is commanded by God, I Cor. 16:1-2.
 2. Begins by giving ourselves, our lives to the Lord, 2 Cor. 8:5.
 3. It proves the sincerity of my love, 2 Cor. 8:8.
 4. We are challenged to grow in this area, 2 Cor. 8:7.
 5. It keeps us from covetousness, Luke 12:15.
 6. It establishes the ownership of God in my life, Ps. 24:1.
 7. It reflects the Lord, who gave first, Romans 8:32, John 3:16.
 8. It costs me something of tangible value, 2 Samuel 24:24.
 9. It brings God's blessings, Mal. 3:10, 2 Cor. 9:6, 8.

APPLICATION:

- A. BRAINSTORM AS A CLASS: When I obey God with the tithe, what am I showing Him? What am I demonstrating by my actions?
 1. I believe your promises of provision.
 2. I trust you to provide for me rather than my logic.
 3. You give me that ability to perform my job.
 4. I love the Lord.
 5. I am interested in seeing His work on earth advanced.
 6. Everything I have comes from you, so I willingly give back what is already yours.
- B. Explain the stewardship commitment card to the class. They will bring this card completed to the service next Sunday, Chest of Joash Day. Here are some key thoughts to communicate. *Don't assume everyone knows this.*
 - God's designated place of worship had been neglected for years. King Joash led the people in an effort to fund the repair of the temple & ministry by asking the people to place their offering in a chest. We follow this model by asking people to place their commitment card indicating their tithe in the chest as an act of worship to God. (Based on 2 Chronicles 24:1-14.)
 - The card is totally anonymous! Why?
 - This is a commitment to tithe between a believer and his Lord.
 - This is NOT a pledge. No one from the church will ever call you or send you an "amount due" statement.
 - Make sure to designate the amount you give by a weekly amount.