

Sermon Title: Growth through Stewardship

This last chapter, the 5th thing that every Christian needs to grow is on stewardship.

- Stewardship is the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care.
- It makes me think of the first job I had as a manager.

Today we are going to talk about what it means to be a good steward of what God has given to us.

- The beginning of us all understanding the principle of stewardship boils down to 1 verse: **Psalm 24:1**
- God created everything in the world. And what God created He owns.
- If God owns everything, do we really own anything?
- Our job on earth as Christians is to manage God's possessions that he has given to us

If we can change the way we look at things in the world based on having a Psalm 24 mindset, then this will be the biggest thing that will cause growth in our Spiritual walk.

Luke 12:35-37,40-44, 48

How can we be good stewards of what God has given us?

- Dress ready for action
 - Greek "Gird your Loins"
 - We are on call 24/7 to do God's work in the world around us.
- Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes.
 - Not physically awake but spiritually awake.
 - Participating in spiritual disciplines, like the ones we have been talking about for 5 weeks, will keep us awake.
- Jesus says that to whom much was given, much will be required.
 - Jesus is talking about using our talents, and giving back to God.

Giving back to God is directly tied to the OT concept of the tithe.

- **Tithe means tenth.**
- It is a constant reminder that everything is God's and we are just managing His resources.
- It's another discipline that helps you grow more and more into the image of Jesus Christ.
- Matt 8:20, Jesus has nothing of his own, why should we think that following him would be any different?

Stewardship and giving back to God goes all the back to the Garden of Eden:

- Adam was created to manage the garden.
- **Genesis 4:3-5**
- Cain's heart was why his gift was rejected by God.
- The tithe was added to the Law of Moses.
- Malachi 3:8-10 God told the Israelites they were robbing Him.
- Jesus teaches us about giving back many times, twice in Matthew 6, and later he uses tithing to refute the Pharisees. **Matthew 23:23**

Studies show that 86% of Christians believe the tithe is still a biblical principle today, but only 4% of Christians today actually give 10%.

So how can we practically grow in the area of stewardship?

1. Start giving whatever you can to God today but set a goal to increase that amount in January of 2022.
2. If you struggle with the concept that we are just managers, please take a Crown ministries class or a Dave Ramsey class.
3. If you don't currently have a household budget, make one.
 - a. Everydollar App or paper and pen.

Challenges:

1. Start looking at yourself as a manager of God's blessings, instead of an owner of possessions.
2. Continue giving back to God and start to think about how you can give sacrificially.
3. Track how you spend your time, as well as your money.

This area of stewardship has been one I have grown in significantly over the last few years, and I'm still growing, will you grow with me?

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Scripture passages to go up on the Screen:

Psalm 24:1 - The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it;

Luke 12:35-37,40-44, 48 - ³⁵“Stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning, ³⁶and be like men who are waiting for their master to come home from the wedding feast, so that they may open the door to him at once when he comes and knocks. ³⁷Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will dress himself for service and have them recline at table, and he will come and serve them. ⁴⁰You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”

⁴¹ Peter said, “Lord, are you telling this parable for us or for all?”

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? ⁴³Blessed is that servant^[i] whom his master will find so doing when he comes. ⁴⁴Truly, I say to you, he will set him over all his possessions. 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.

Genesis 4:3-5 - ³In the course of time Cain brought to the Lord an offering of the fruit of the ground, ⁴and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering, ⁵but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell.

Matthew 23:23 - “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others.