



## **Developing Your Stewardship Philosophy: Giving Generously**

### **What is Biblical Stewardship?**

- Biblical stewardship is the use of God-given resources for the accomplishment of God-given goals and objectives
- With respect to giving, it embraces the concepts of giving generously and giving wisely with an eternal perspective
- Recognition that:
  - God owns everything
  - He is responsible for our wealth
  - He entrusts us with His money & I am His money manager
  - We are accountable to God
  - Every financial decision is, in fact, a spiritual one

### **Why Do We Give?**

- We give out of gratitude for the blessing we have already received because of Christ and since God is generous toward us, exceeding our needs.
- Our main duty is to glorify God; one way we do that is by good stewardship
- Stewardship, as reflected in our attitude toward money, means we are to build His kingdom through support of His mission of reaching the world for Jesus Christ (Great Commission)
- Stewardship of the Great Commandment: God tells us to love others as ourselves which, in part, requires us to give our time, talent & treasures to help others less fortunate
- While the Bible specifically tells us we can only be saved by grace through our faith in Jesus Christ and not our works, God promises an inheritance or rewards in heaven to all who obey Him based on our works.
- We will give an account of ourselves and be judged according to our works
- Our works are what we have done with our time, talent and money.

### **What Are Common Barriers To Giving?**

- Fear: financial uncertainty and fear of the unknown causes us not to trust the Lord's promise to provide for us.
- Materialism: we are under intense peer and societal pressure to increase our standard of living...build bigger houses (barns, as in the parable of the rich fool, the only man in scripture who Jesus calls "fool" to his face, Luke 12:13-21)
- Selfishness/Disobedience: we are commanded to love others as ourselves and specifically commanded to care for the poor, do we?

### **How Much Are We Supposed To Give?**

- Tithing is an Old Testament requirement better viewed as a tax

- Even though it is an Old Testament command, would Jesus expect less of us lavished by His grace than of those under the yoke of the Law?
- New Testament teaches to give ourselves as a living sacrifice (Romans 12)
- So how much would God expect us to give to worship and glorify Him and be obedient to his commands to build His kingdom and love others as ourselves?

### **How Do We Decide How Much To Give?**

- As stewards of God's resources, every financial decision is, in fact, a spiritual one
- When I spend money, I am acting as God's money manager
- How would God want me to spend or invest his money?
- A proper stewardship mindset is to think in terms of delivering generous gifts from the one & only Generous Giver, God
- Realizing that we will one day give an account of our stewardship, we should be both sacrificial and strategic in our giving
- When we give sacrificially, we give a little of our selfishness away and thus surrender more to Christ
- When we give strategically, we are maximizing the return on His money

### **What Are Steps Toward Strategic Kingdom Stewardship?**

- Explore ministry opportunities you are most passionate about and give intentionally of your time, talent & treasure.
- Teach your family how to sacrificially and strategically steward God's resources together
- Invite God to be Lord of your possessions and to get involved in your finances.
- Be more strategic stockpiling treasure in heaven than on Earth.
- Ask yourself "Where is the greatest investment of my time and resources for maximum Kingdom impact?"
- Ask yourself "How can I steward my resources to do maximum damage to the enemy?"

### **What Steps Can We Take To Increase Our Standard Of Giving?**

- Make giving a priority in your budget
- Overcome the fear of giving by stepping out in faith
- Start by tithing
- If young, minimize increases in your standard of living as your income increases
- If older, consider lowering your standard of living
- Think in terms of how God would want me to spend His money...do I need a bigger barn or nicer car? Ask yourself, how much is enough?
- When planning your estate, ask how much will my children really need?
- Give to be a tax minimizer (giving up to 50% of income is tax deductible) and a Kingdom maximizer!

### Who Should I Give To?

- Your Church
- Ministries pursuing the Great Commission (evangelism) and/or the Great Commandment (love others and especially those less fortunate)
- Ask yourself, would the Lord want me to give to this?
- Ministries that are which can demonstrate their effectiveness and accountability

### What Is A Stewardship Philosophy?

- What are my core beliefs, objectives and commitments with respect to money and giving?
- Recognizing that God owns everything, what is my allocation of resources between consumption, savings and giving?

### Stages Of Spiritual Maturity Towards Stewardship: Where Do You Fall?

Types of Giver	Emerging	Maturing	Generous
<b>Value System</b>	Love the world and the things of the world	Dissatisfied, searching for something more satisfying	Love Christ with their whole heart
<b>Source of Significance</b>	Possessions, status, titles	Searching, transitioning	In Christ
<b>Life Orientation</b>	Self	Others	Christ
<b>Stewardship Orientation</b>	Mine	Ours	God owns everything
<b>Attitude for Giving</b>	Defensive and reluctant	Beginning to enjoy sharing	Joyful giver
<b>Motive for Giving</b>	Selfish or guilt driver	Self-interest	Worship
<b>Object of Faith</b>	Self	Transitioning	Christ