


NAMPA BIBLE CHURCH NEWSLETTER

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Stewardship – By Josh Norris

Depending on how you were brought up, the word stewardship can conjure up many different ideas. Some Christians think of giving 10 percent of their post-tax earnings. Others imagine proper investing and caring for the needs of their family. Still others envision a life of minimal spending and maximal giving. But, what is God's idea of stewardship? In order to understand God's will for us in this matter we need to look at His word closely and compare this with our current resources and habits.

The first task at hand is to define stewardship. A steward, as the word is used in the Bible, is simply someone who manages resources for another. These resources were typically physical, such as a household or a financial portfolio, but the idea could also encompass other areas such as time and relationships. The task of a steward was to prosper his master; to take his resources and cultivate them. God has described us as His stewards on earth. We are to take His resources, which He has given to us, and to cause them to grow.

Since James 1:17 tells us that God has given us every good thing we have, and has described us as His stewards (Matt 25:14-30), we can safely assume that we are to use all things as good stewards and to cause them to grow for His benefit. More specifically this means our use of the gospel (I Thess 2:4), our time (Eph 5:15), our bodies (Psalm 139:13) and our money (Acts 2:45, Matt 19:21) are to be used for His glory. And since earth is not our home (I Peter 2:11) we can view our earthly treasures as opportunities to build treasures in heaven and to bring our God glory. As Jim Elliot said, "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose".

It's worth noting that the idea among many Christians that we are to "give 10% to the Lord" is an unbiblical one. The first problem with comparing our giving to Israel, where the term 'tithe' was introduced among God's people, is that it's not spoken of in the New Testament or in the Acts church. The other problem is that while it's true that Israel was to give a tithe, which meant 10 percent, they also gave much more. Between other offerings throughout the year their real annual giving was likely between 20 and 30 percent. Our desire to further the Kingdom should cause the percent of giving to increase as our income moves further and further beyond a healthy standard of living. The Acts church lived this as they sold their

"possessions and belongings" and distributed the money to those in need. (Acts 2:45)

For those of us who don't use God's resources for the good of the kingdom there are frightening promises made. Both Matthew 25:14-30 and Luke 12:16-21 make it clear that God has a very low tolerance for misuse of His resources. God prospers us so that we can give more, not so we can hoard His gifts. But where is the proper balance? Stewards have needs and, thankfully, our Master is generous. God doesn't demand that we live in poverty and He doesn't demand we forego all expenditures. However, He would likely not be pleased to see His resources being spent entirely on our earthly pleasure. I Tim 6:17-19 shows us that it's not wrong to be rich. God makes some rich for a reason. The wealthy are to be "rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share" and the truth is that virtually all of us are wealthy. We all live comfortably and have excess money to spend on our desires. Christ taught us that we cannot serve two masters and that split loyalty is no loyalty at all. Our devotion and our passion must be found in Him alone. So we must remember that giving is the antidote to materialism and our hearts go where our money goes.

Stewardship will likely look different from person to person but ask yourself this; "If Christ returns tomorrow, what will happen to all the money sitting in bank accounts, retirement programs, estates and the stock market? Has God given us use of His money to tuck away so that we can retire to a life of ease? Or, has He given us His money so we can feed the hungry, help those in need and fulfill the great commission?" Everything we "own" will someday end up at the city dump. Why not take our money and invest it in eternal treasure while we still have the chance?

Quote to live by...

"Money never stays with me. It would burn me if it did. I throw it out of my hands as soon as possible, lest it should find its way into my heart. I judge all things only by the price they shall gain in eternity" - John Wesley

Current Calendar Events....

Date Night – Nov 10th The Men’s Ministry is sponsoring a date night, so grab your gal and come on out for a fun evening with other couples. Childcare will be provided. Sign up today for more information.

Baby Shower for Corey Norris – Nov 6th, 6:30 p.m. at the home of Janie Glover (849 Sherman Way). A light dinner will be served. Corey is in need of diapers (size one only) or warm clothing (sizes 0-6 months). Corey would especially love a gift certificate to “Dinner’s Ready.” Anyone wishing to contribute to a larger gift, please contact Janie at 463-9413 or 283-5684.

Ladies’ Fall Book Study - All ladies are welcome to this discussion of the book, “*When People are Big and God is Small.*”

Kristin Lacy’s home, Mondays, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Crystal Anderson’s home, Tuesdays, 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Kim Arnold’s home, Fridays, 10:00 a.m. – noon (babysitting provided)

AWANA - 4:30 – 6:30 p.m. at Lakeview Bible Church

Home Groups - The ideal place for families to get together, to grow closer as brothers and sisters in Christ, and to study God’s Word and how it applies to our lives. The goal is to get everyone in the church involved in this exciting new ministry! Please call Josh Norris (463-4755) or see the Home Groups table in the foyer for details.

Pray For...

- Faith, hope and love for our brothers and sisters in Christ (I Thess 3:11-13)
- Faithful sacrificial living and faithful stewardship
- Filling with knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding (Col 1:9-12)

Did You Know....

Building Project information, including funds, plans & dates, are available at www.nampabible.org/building

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Application Verse....

Matthew 25:14-30 Shows us the value of Stewardship.... “Again, the Kingdom of Heaven can be illustrated by the story of a man going on a long trip. He called together his servants and entrusted his money to them while he was gone. He gave five bags of silver to one, two bags of silver to another, and one bag of silver to the last—dividing it in proportion to their abilities. He then left on his trip.

“The servant who received the five bags of silver began to invest the money and earned five more. The servant with two bags of silver also went to work and earned two more. But the servant who received the one bag of silver dug a hole in the ground and hid the master’s money.

“After a long time their master returned from his trip and called them to give an account of how they had used his money. The servant to whom he had entrusted the five bags of silver came forward with five more and said, ‘Master, you gave me five bags of silver to invest, and I have earned five more.’

“The master was full of praise. ‘Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let’s celebrate together!’

“The servant who had received the two bags of silver came forward and said, ‘Master, you gave me two bags of silver to invest, and I have earned two more.’ “The master said, ‘Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let’s celebrate together!’

“Then the servant with the one bag of silver came and said, ‘Master, I knew you were a harsh man, harvesting crops you didn’t plant and gathering crops you didn’t cultivate. I was afraid I would lose your money, so I hid it in the earth. Look, here is your money back.’

“But the master replied, ‘You wicked and lazy servant! If you knew I harvested crops I didn’t plant and gathered crops I didn’t cultivate, why didn’t you deposit my money in the bank? At least I could have gotten some interest on it.’ “Then he ordered, ‘Take the money from this servant, and give it to the one with the ten bags of silver.’

To those who use well what they are given, even more will be given, and they will have an abundance. But from those who do nothing, even what little they have will be taken away. Now throw this useless servant into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

Do you have ideas for additional newsletter segments?

Would you like to be involved in writing for, or assembling, the newsletter?

Email webmaster@nampabible.org or talk to Josh Nor-