

CELEBRATING OUR GIFTS

Psalm 24:1, Luke 6:38; 12:15
and Matthew 25:14-30

How can we use our gifts to make Christ known (advance the Kingdom of God) in the best possible way?

What are the gifts you have?

Time

Talent

Treasure

Time

“So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom.”

(Psalm 90:12)

“Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.”

(Ephesians 5:15-16)

Talent

It includes our **abilities, personalities, passions, knowledge, experiences, relationships, spiritual gifts...**

Treasure

It includes our money, possessions, family, friends, church, small group, colleagues...

Treasure – Money

Scripture relates money to the love of God:

“If someone has enough money to live well and sees a brother or sister in need but shows no compassion—how can God’s love be in that person?”

(1 John 3:17)

Treasure – Money

Money is a **good servant** but a **bad master**.

“No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.”

(Luke 16:13)

Treasure – Money

“Either we serve God and use money or we serve money and use God. Yet, few Christians deliberately dedicate their lives to materialism. Wealth is deceitful, Jesus told us, and its bondage is subtle.”

(Haddon Robinson)

Outline

1. God owns everything
2. Guard against covetousness
3. God gives us more than we need
4. Be faithful to what God has entrusted to us

God owns everything

“The earth is the LORD’s, and everything in it. The world and all its people belong to him.”

(Psalm 24:1)

“For all things come from you, and of your own have we given you.”

(1 Chronicle 29:14)

God owns everything

We come into the world **with nothing** and leave it **with nothing**.

“After all, we brought nothing with us when we came into the world, and we can’t take anything with us when we leave it.”

(1 Timothy 6:7)

God owns everything

God warns us against this attitude:

“I have achieved this wealth with my own strength and energy.”

(Deuteronomy 8:17)

God owns everything

Tithing

- Giving God a tenth of our income – proves that we believe it.
- The issue is not how much we give but how much we keep.

Guard against covetousness

"You shall not covet..."

(Exodus 20:17)

"Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

(Luke 12:15)

Guard against covetousness

“Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have...” (Hebrews 13:5)

- The opposite of covetousness is **contentment**.
- Covetousness: wanting things so much that you lose your contentment in God.

Guard against covetousness

The way to win the fight against covetousness is to give.

“The principle of the consumer age is: if you have it, spend it. The discipleship principle is: if you have it, it is a gift from God, a gift to enjoy, but the only way you will truly enjoy the gift is to give it back.”

(Peter Maiden, *Discipleship*)

Guard against covetousness

“When we give money, we are releasing a little more of our egocentric selves and a little more of our false security... **Giving frees us to care...**”

(Richard Foster, *Money, Sex and Power*)

God gives us more than we need

Difference between **grabbers** and **givers**:

“If you cling to your life, you will lose it, and if you let your life go, you will save it.” (Luke 17:33)

“He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.”

(Jim Elliot)

God gives us more than we need

God gives to us according to the measure that we give – the more we give, the more we receive from God.

“Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.” (Luke 6:38)

Be faithful to what God has entrusted to us

Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30)

- The rewards were not based on how much they were given, but on what they did with what they were given.
- Do not compare.
- Be faithful.

Conclusion

“God never asks us to give what we do not have... But he cannot use what we will not give.”

(Richard Stearns, *The Hole In Our Gospel*)

“We can do no great things, only small things with great love.”

(Mother Teresa)