

Thursday, March 11

Stewardship Principle

Readings: Psalm 32; Joshua 4:1-13; 2 Corinthians 4:16—5:5

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Accept a challenge

means recognizing the dynamic nature of our faith. As our faith grows so will our blessings, and our responsibilities. Paul writes,

“... the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.”  
2 Corinthians 9:6

Prayer: *Lord Jesus, we find it easier to place our focus on ourselves, what is happening in our lives now and find it more difficult to see the future you have promise with it goodness for all creation. Move us, by your Spirit, to act appropriately in all times and places; so that all will come to know and trust the gift you give us. In Jesus name. Amen.*

Focal Verse: “So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.” 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

Reflection: We must begin with this basic vision: our goal is to find the life that God wants us to have, in confidence that this will be the best life we could possibly have.

What we are supposed to do for God is directly related to what God does for us. For example, the Bible teaches that generosity is a fruit of God’s Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). The way to become generous people, then, involves not quenching God’s Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:19), but allowing the transforming work of Christ to have its full effect in shaping us to be the people God wants us to be (Romans 12:2; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 2:20; Philippians 1:6).

We are invited to put money in the offering plate on Sunday morning not because the church needs our money but because *we want and need to give it*. We have a spiritual need to worship God, and through our offerings we are able to express our love and devotion for God in a way that is simple and sincere. The motivation of the giver is what counts most, not the size of the gift or degree of benefit to the recipient (see Mark 12:42-44).

There is a strong connection between *love* and *giving*. Most of us know what it is like to love someone so much that we want to give them things. The motivation for such gifts is not primarily obligation but desire – we give not because it is something we *should* do but because it is something we *want* to do.<sup>40</sup>

What do you hear?  
How does it make you feel?  
Toward what are you being drawn?  
What do you sense you should do?

<sup>40</sup> Powell, Mark Allan, Giving to God: The Bible’s Good News about Living a Generous Life, © 2006, Errdmans Publishing, p. 3, 4 12, and 15.