

Wednesday, March 24

Stewardship Principle

Readings: Psalm 20
Habakkuk 3:2-15
Luke 18:31-34

Prayer: *God of abundance, you have poured out a large measure of earthly blessings: our table is richly furnished, our cup overflows, and we live in safety and security. Teach us to set our hearts on you and not these material blessings. Keep us from becoming captivated by prosperity, and grant us in wisdom to use your blessings to your glory and to the service of humankind; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*⁶²

Focal Verse: "Now I know that the Lord will help his anointed; he will answer him from his holy heaven with mighty victories by his right hand." Psalm 20:6

1

Respond gratefully

to what God has first given us. All that we do is a response to God's grace. Everything we are, have, and use comes from God. Best of all, God gives the gift of Jesus Christ and the community of believers. It all begins with God. Our confession of faith in Jesus Christ is our Lord and Savior is not of our doing. Grateful stewards put God first.

"... but they gave themselves first to the Lord."
2 Corinthians 8:5

Reflection:

As soon as God is pictured as the owner and sovereign of everything in relation to which human beings can be at most stewards, institutions such as the holding of property, the hierarchic distribution of authority, the technocratic mastery of the natural world, and the like are thrown into a critical perspective.

Jesus is presented in the New Testament not in the role of owner, but as the authentic and preeminent steward: "all are yours; and you are Christ's; and Christ is God's" (1 Corinthians 3:22-23). Jesus in fact defines and fulfils the office of the steward. Because he is a just and faithful steward, unlike the unjust steward of Luke 16, he desires nothing for himself.

Jesus as chief steward of the mysteries of God lives in such faithfulness to the stewardly vocation ... that he becomes the primary model for our stewardship. In other words, Jesus Christ, who is God's, is the initiator and enabler of Christian stewardship: "you are Christ's; and Christ's is God's." The Christological basis of stewardship means not only that our stewardship is exemplified by Jesus; rather, ... it is the prior stewardship of Jesus into which, through the Spirit and through faith, we are initiated.

In short, the Christian view of stewardship states with the stewardship of the One who did not grasp at equality with God, but was obedient (Philippians 2). It is his stewardship in which by grace we participate.⁶³

What do you hear?

How does it make you feel?

Toward what are you being drawn?

What do you sense you should do?

⁶² <http://www.mpls-synod.org/stewardship/prayers>

⁶³ Hall, Douglas John, the steward: a Biblical symbol come of age, Wif and Stock Publishing, p. 42 and 43-44.