



“Proverbs / Wisdom for Life”
Wk. 9 God’s Design for Stewardship
By Pastor Jody May 04/03/2022

Proverbs 3:5-8, 13 ESV

- ⁵ Trust in the LORD with all your heart,
and do not lean on your own understanding.
- ⁶ In all your ways acknowledge him,
and he will make straight your paths.
- ⁷ Be not wise in your own eyes;
fear the LORD, and turn away from evil.
- ⁸ It will be healing to your flesh
and refreshment to your bones.

Blessed Is the One Who Finds Wisdom

- ¹³ Blessed is the one who finds wisdom,
and the one who gets understanding,

Proverbs 16:4 ESV

- ⁴ The LORD has made everything for its purpose,

even the wicked for the day of trouble.

Proverbs 3: 9-10 ESV

- Honor the LORD with your wealth
and with the firstfruits of all your produce;
- ¹⁰ then your barns will be filled with plenty,
and your vats will be bursting with wine.

Proverbs 23: 4-5 ESV

- ⁴ Do not toil to acquire wealth;
be discerning enough to desist.
- ⁵ When your eyes light on it, it is gone,
for suddenly it sprouts wings,
flying like an eagle toward heaven.

Proverbs 13:22 ESV

- A good man leaves an inheritance to his children’s children,
but the sinner’s wealth is laid up for the righteous.
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[INTRO]

I believe we all have an innate feeling about stewardship and personal responsibility for creation, and that’s visible any time we talk about the global state of the planet. I actually believe that people have to work really hard at not wanting to take responsibility for what they see. When people say they



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don't care I think it means they *choose not to look at it, so they don't have to think about it*. Because of that innate desire to preserve and steward well people can become confused and misguided though when they have misinformation or have been intentionally led astray.

There is an old American Indian Proverb that says, “We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children.”

let me read you a 9-year-old article showing you how this works:¹

Perhaps the most inconvenient fact is the lack of global warming for well over 10 years now. This is known to the warming establishment, as one can see from the 2009 “Climategate” email of climate scientist Kevin Trenberth: “The fact is that we can't account for the lack of warming at the moment and it is a travesty that we can't.” But the warming is only missing if one believes computer models where so-called feedbacks involving water vapor and clouds greatly amplify the small effect of CO2.

The lack of warming for more than a decade—indeed, the smaller-than-predicted warming over the 22 years since the U.N.'s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) began issuing projections—suggests that computer models have greatly exaggerated how much warming additional CO2 can cause. Faced with this embarrassment, those promoting alarm have shifted their drumbeat from warming to weather extremes, to enable anything unusual that happens in our chaotic climate to be ascribed to CO2.

Even though climate science is muddy water just like the scientific data surrounding COVID, people still feel compelled to do something and will look for ways to take action, to steward, **even if it doesn't make sense**. Politically motivated people listen to scientific verbiage and continue to say things like, “for the sake of our environment, for the sake of our children, for the sake of humanity!”

Because of that, people WILL pay more for food, gas, taxes, will wear masks two years too long, will call themselves a racist or agree with others that say they are without much thought, without proper evidence or proof of causes, because generally they want to do what's right!

• The Wall street Journal - Wednesday, August 21, 2013



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While all at the same time some politicians practice great hypocrisy knowing that desire to Steward well and declare that they care about the future generations too, while enslaving our children to debt for the proposal of emotionally driven solutions. That is not caring and that is neglect of our most precious resource, our future generations.

The issue I think though, is that secular culture is offering us a new way to be holy and righteous by using our innate desire to steward a thing well, to work out our righteousness. They are offering us a new way to tally up works, just another form of Phariseeism. It’s why activism is so attractive! AND if you don’t buy into the New Religion of Social Activism then you can be labelled a traitor.

Yet we Christians know we have to do something when it comes to the world, to STEWARD well, and yes you are right we are called to do something, but just like last week there is a guide on how to do it. Again, we begin with TRUST, we take in God’s Word, and we apply it dutifully to our lives. Then by demonstrating the principles of Christian living to our neighbors the gospel spreads and the community changes. First, we need to start today with a proper definition of what we are talking about:

Key thought for the day:

“Biblical Stewardship is Proper View & Management of God’s Resources with Future Implications.”

It’s not only you, that you should be thinking of, but you are thinking of others, and it is not just about the consequences of now, but it is about what lays in stored for years to come.

This principle of Stewardship also applies to all resources: money, property, creative thoughts and ideas, and the will of people, it is an ALL of life thing.



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I believe that we can view Stewardship of Creation, the physical world, in one of three ways. I think that all of us in here today are going to fall into one of these three categories we'll list here:

Views of Creation Stewardship:

- 1. It's all yours baby!**
- 2. It's ours! – Common Possession which leads us to have compassion for one another but does not allow for a lot of agreement on what to do.**
- 3. It's all God's! We love God and want to please Him in the stewardship of the world.**

This morning I want to point us to the 3rd position so we can learn what is pleasing to His sight and what brings real relief to this sick world. (3 points on Godly Stewardship)

1. Biblical Stewardship begins with understanding it's all God's.

Proverbs 16:4 ESV

**⁴The LORD has made everything for its purpose,
even the wicked for the day of trouble.**

The Lord has made all for the purpose that it was made for. You may be like leeches, mosquitos, the IRS!?! Seriously! Yes, it says even the wicked for the day of trouble. God has provided the agent by which His wrath is carried out in this world to demonstrate His glory and goodness. All is His and all is under His control. All of that which we steward was made by God for God and remains all His.

Psalm 24:1-2 ESV

**The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof,
the world and those who dwell therein,**



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2 for he has founded it upon the seas
and established it upon the rivers.

It all belongs to Him because it was created through Him. **The creator maintains His ownership over the created property.** Not a speck of dust on your floor can you claim as your own, it is God’s.

Haggai 2:8 ESV

And I will shake all nations, so that the treasures of all nations shall come in, and I will fill this house with glory, says the Lord of hosts. 8 **The silver is mine, and the gold is mine,** declares the Lord of hosts.

All money and accumulated wealth is based on God’s ownership of the world. If money is based on a Gold and Silver System, then one can say that if you put a monetary value on it then it is God’s! Understanding this basic Truth helps us to love Jesus rightly! Jesus portrays the principle of Biblical Stewardship in a parable He once told demonstrating the fact that God owns it all:

Luke 20:9-10, 13 & 15ESV

“A man planted a vineyard and let it out to tenants and went into another country for a long while. ¹⁰ When the time came, he sent a servant to the tenants, so that they would give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. ¹³ Then the owner of the vineyard said, ‘What shall I do? I will send my beloved son; perhaps they will respect him.’ ¹⁵ And they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them?”

Jesus is the victim in this story, and as the Son not only does He own it all, He has received the payment for our due sin of not giving of the first fruits of our stewardship. The Gospel says you don’t have to payback what you have misspent, what you owe, Jesus through His death paid back that sum.

Then in another parable Jesus teaches about what does a good steward look like that realizes his resources are not His own but God’s:

Matthew 25:28-29 ESV



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²⁸ So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. ²⁹ For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.

Jesus by His obedient life earned back all that was ours and now distributes freely back to His people. True God worshippers don’t give back what they were entrusted with, but they are rewarded with more to steward. The blessing of the gospel is not about growing your own kingdom, your own bankbook, your own wealth, it is about growing kingdom wealth which all God’s people have access to.

So right now, let’s put this misconception to death - **if it’s God’s we always need to think** about how to spend our money, time, and resources. The good news in Biblical Stewardship is that proper stewardship IS how you worship God rightly, it is a physical sign of faith you can perform, **it is a responsive act of obedience and love** that will only strengthen your faith through the years, and this is how:

2. Biblical Stewardship Worships God by bringing Him your firsts not your lasts.

Proverbs 3:9-10 ESV

⁹ Honor the LORD with your wealth
and with the **firstfruits** of all your produce;
¹⁰ then your barns will be filled with plenty,
and your vats will be bursting with wine.

Honor God with what you have on the front end not with what we have left over. I find people who love to give never cry about not having enough to give. God blesses a person who likes to give from a heart that understands that it all belongs to Him, and they are appreciative to have anything.

Paul puts it this way beautifully in 2 Corinthians.

The Cheerful Giver – 2 Corinthians 9:6-12 ESV



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6 The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. **7 Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.** 8 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. 9 As it is written, “He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever.” 10 He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. 11 You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God. 12 **For the ministry of this service is not only supplying the needs of the saints but is also overflowing in many thanksgivings to God.**

It is a privilege to be able to give an offering to God not a senseless, non-emotional duty. When we receive an offering, it is an opportunity for you to love God in a tangible way and be glad for it. BTW 2 second *speal* on tithing: Tithing a 10% gift off the top – our firstfruits...

First - Yes it’s biblical, it’s in scripture, we are told Jesus obeyed all the law, and the OT was His Bible that He taught from.

Secondly - the tithe is not taught in the NT not because it did not happen but that the **Mission** of the **Gospel takes more** than a **tithe**. It took extraordinary amounts of money, time, and resources to plant churches. We need to be a church like this for it is our calling! So perhaps you are not giving yet here at HCC? Start please, because I want you to receive this glad heart that God is talking about and because it does fulfill our ministry here! For God’s people a tithe is merely a suggested starting point AND the ending is the **desire and capacity by US to give it all away!** Now that’s hard, especially IF we are viewing the world as ours and not God’s at this moment.

Many of us find it hard to give to God because we don’t think He’s done much for us lately. That’s backwards for we worship **THROUGH** our **GIVING** because HE has ALREADY done everything for us!

- Our worship is a reflection, of understanding the Gospel in us,
- Our generosity is an image of His grace towards us,
- Our zeal in stewardship reflects God’s passion for us.



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You may not be a cheerful giver yet but family I have never seen cheerful giving happen without a little practice. Are you willing to trust Him with the little you have today? That feeling of cheer will follow the action giving, and the action becomes easier when we're other focused, not self-focused:

3. Biblical Stewardship Flourishes when we promote God not our own welfare.

Remember that definition, thinking of others not just you, and the biggest 'other' we have in our lives is God!

Proverbs 23: 4-5 ESV

- ⁴ Do not toil to acquire wealth;
 be discerning enough to desist.
- ⁵ When your eyes light on it, it is gone,
 for suddenly it sprouts wings,
 flying like an eagle toward heaven.

If you focus too much on the money and what it gets you now, you miss the big picture, **learn to live on less so you can give more**. There is this weird phenomenon that I have found in ministry and that is when God's people are focused on what God is doing **shown by their generosity**, God will usually take the devotion and stretch it WAY beyond what you thought it could do. God can move in any time and in any place and make things happen with no resources whatsoever, so what may seem a little to us **God stretches** it so that faith grows.

The other side of that coin is Stinginess which is not necessarily good Stewardship. Just means your cheap. Jesus taught a whole story on that. Matthew 25:14-30 - 5 talents, 2 talents and the 1 talent. Stewarding in the right Kingdom mindset not only blesses God's people in the now but it has a future effect as well.

Proverbs 13:22 ESV



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A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children, but the sinner's wealth is laid up for the righteous.

If no one is good in the world then who is this "good man"? It is He, that has found wisdom. Who is our true personified wisdom today? Jesus... The good man is good **because** He has been made righteous by Jesus and what this man **leaves behind** for His family is the ability to keep being stewards for God, to keep serving in the kingdom! The Christian leaves behind for His family the ability to have Kingdom Impact!

Don't we all want that!? Don't we all desire to be good stewards of God's world to leave behind the ability for our family and church to continue on? But when faced with the truth we must admit we have all done a bad job of being stewards of God's creation. Our lives, money, time, children, etc...

So, what if you have blown it in the past, you have not stewarded your resources well. The good news of the Gospel is that God takes your past mistakes, and uses them to make better investments for the future. Good Biblical Stewardship takes in what it has leaned and leverages it for the future generations.

Biblical Stewardship takes into account, of where you have been, your past is no longer a strike against you, against God's Kingdom, but it is a Big Fat Credit...

You may be having arguments about finances in your family, or you are exhibiting fear over money or job security, you may believe that you have no time to do anything outside of work for God, family, and the church BUT our Savior Jesus is THE great steward. He has been rewarded with all the TALENTS and has REAPPOINTED Stewardship to us. It has been promised in His Word that in His stewardship over us not one of us will be forgotten even in light of mistakes. He is for our good!

John 6:39 ESV

*"And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose **nothing** of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day."*



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Through His work in His death on the cross He has increased His Father's Kingdom by millions! His defeat over death brought about a return investment that we were a part of. He bought us, increased our value, and has given us the same opportunity and that is to become a great steward for God just like Him! Our failures over stewardship our now forgiven because of His success!

That means by holding on and keeping our focus on Him in rough times He will pull you through by giving you what you need, not necessarily what you want, increasing your experiences of what to learn from in your past and **NOT** letting it destroy you! This is called Sanctification! **Do not fear an unknown tomorrow your Jesus is already there and has your stewardship plan waiting!** Failure does not mean calamity but success in the future for not just you but for those around you (family, friends, and strangers alike) because you're past helps you wisely steward for tomorrow **AND** teaches others to do the same.

Now let me restate our proposition this morning because it is full of grace:

"Biblical Stewardship is Proper View & Management of God's Resources with Future Implications."

You are forgiven but let others learn from your mistakes, in stewarding our failures well, we wrestle that victory back from Satan and we get to give it to Jesus! Jesus leads you through your valleys in order to show Satan that stewarding broken people is what He's all about!

[CHALLENGES]

This morning you may have been too protective of what you have, like that person with just one talent, and you hate to let it go. You are fearful of losing it, but the truth is that you don't trust God to do with what is rightfully His. Today, you seriously need to release that, perhaps it is giving more money to the church, or volunteering time to a kid's rec club, or helping that neighbor



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out that you don’t want to commit to. Put the talent to work and see if God doesn’t entrust you with more, before you lose it.

Maybe you are ok giving, but it’s never your first fruits it’s only what you have left over. It pains you to give the cream off the top. Practice instead though being a cheerful giver, give out of the heart that understands action comes before trust, that giving must proceed the heart of joy. Practice giving from your paycheck before you look at bills, practice giving to your spouse before thinking about how tired you are, practice loving someone in this church before thinking about your time or the effort required. Give cheerfully for God does love this so.

Lastly, by doing these things your heart will be filled by seeing something grow other than your own bank account or belly, and that is God’s Kingdom. By growing God’s Kingdom, you are not only strengthening your faith, but you are Stewarding this world to bring others to Christ. Put your thoughts not towards what betters you alone but what promotes Kingdom growth, and watch your anxieties about your tomorrows disappear.

Let’s all today commit to practicing Biblical Stewardship for it truly is not just about us, it is about the next generation, and how they too will be able to find joy in their stewardship even going against this crazy world...

[PRAYER]

[COMMUNION]

[BENEDICTION]

Go in the name of the Father, that has given all you need to be successful in your stewardship of His Kingdom, redemption through His Son and second chances.

Go in the name of the Son, that Steward His responsibilities and resources perfectly so we don’t have to worry about our small contributions, God can use them and will.

Go in the name and power of the Holy Spirit, that uses what you have for the Kingdom’s glory, and earns you interest in the future Kingdom of God.