

You Are Not Your Own: Stewardship and Spiritual Gifts

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January 26-27, 2014

Vineyard Core Series

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

INTERACTING WITH THE SERMON

SYNOPSIS OF THE SERMON

Jonathan begins by illustrating the nature of gifts and gift giving. He explains that generally when someone is given a gift, they own the gift. It is their prerogative to do with the gift what they like. Giving and loaning are categorically different. John 3:16 tells us "For God so loved the world that he gave His only son, that whosoever believes in Him shall have eternal life." Jesus was a gift to us from God. The benefits given to us because of Jesus are gifts (grace and salvation).

We often treat Jesus as though He is something that we own. When we are in trial or need, we take Jesus off the shelf and use Him at our convenience. But the reality of the gift of Jesus is that we do not own Him, rather He owns us. The church of Corinth had trouble differentiating using Jesus as though they owned Him. They would continue to practice "sacrificial" sexual acts at the pagan temples.

Paul, in his letter to the Corinthians, tells the church, and us, that when we received the gift of Jesus, we transferred our ownership over to God. Paul asks in 1 Corinthians 4:7b "What do you have that you did not receive?" And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?" Given that we had nothing to do with our creation/conception, that we cannot make others love us, and the cultural/historical circumstances into which we were born do we have little to brag about.

For those of us who have accepted the gift of Jesus as our Savior, we have been bought at a price. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 "Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; ²⁰you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies." And because God now owns our lives, we are now stewards of God's possession here on earth. The gifts that we are given on earth must not simply be used to obtain earthly things for ourselves.

Jonathan then tells the parable of the 3 servants found in Mt 25:14-30. Having been given the least amount of bags of silver (one as opposed to 5 and 3), the third servant reported to his returned master "Master, I knew you were a harsh man, harvesting crops you didn't plant and gathering crops you didn't cultivate. ²⁵ I was afraid I would lose your money, so I hid it in the earth. Look, here is your money back"(NLT). The master rebukes his servant for being wicked and lazy having done nothing but nothing to grow that which he was left to steward. And such expected of us from our God. We are asked to not only accept the gifts of God, but to use and to grow them through the course of our lives, so that we can be called "good and faithful servants".

In 5 minutes or less, briefly give a synopsis of this week's sermon. What insight, principle, or observation from this weekend's message did you find to be most helpful, eye-opening, or troubling? Explain.

GETTING THE CONVERSATION STARTED

These questions can be used as ice-breakers in the beginning OR interwoven between the questions below to draw the group into the discussion.

- What is the best or most meaningful gift you've ever been given by someone else?
- What about yourself would you consider a gift from God? Is there anything you can do or continue to do to use this gift for Kingdom work?

SCRIPTURE STUDY

God gives gifts to us freely. And because He has so abundantly gives to us, He takes pleasure in our giving away to others.

Read: 2 Corinthians 9:6-15

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. 13 By their approval of this service, they will glorify God because of your submission that comes from your confession of the gospel of Christ, and the generosity of your contribution for them and for all others, 14 while they long for you and pray for you, because of the surpassing grace of God upon you. 15 Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift!

1. Based on this passage, why are we enriched “in every way” (v.11)?
2. What does cheerful giving (particularly of our confession of the Gospel) result in? (v.13)
3. What does this say about God’s character?

Connection with the Sermon

4. What does it look like to be a disgruntled giver? What does it look like to be a joyful giver (internally and externally)?
5. How is cheerful giving related to being good stewards of our lives?
6. What does it look like to withhold giving away the gifts we have been given? How can we avoid being selfish or lazy servants to our Master?

MINISTRY APPLICATION

Below you’ll see some options for ministry time with your group. We always encourage you to reserve time in your group to pray for one another and wait on the Holy Spirit.

- Ask God to highlight some of the gifts he has given you as an individual. Consider any of these gifts that you are either not giving away or desire for God to increase so that you have more to give away.
- Take time to remember a time or season when you gave away the gifts God gave you. Ask God to use your past gifts to continue His good work in the lives of others.
- If you feel as though you are unaware gifts that God has placed in your life, honestly share your desire to see your life the way that God sees it. Ask Him that He would show you yourself through His eyes.