

# Newness of Life Lesson 10

## The Faithful Steward

*Matthew 6:33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*

### I. Review/Introduction

#### A. Review

#### B. Introduction

1. We will begin with some definitions. A parable of Jesus helps us see what is involved in stewardship:

*Luke 16:1-2*

*16 And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods.*

*2 And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? **give an***

***account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward.***

2. The parable goes on to describe how the steward had responsibility over the rich man's business dealings, including selling his farm produce like oil and wheat, as well as the business's accounting records.
3. And we see that the steward must give an account for how they manage. The question we need to ask is, **[slide] As God's steward, how am I handling God's business?**
4. The word translated as steward comes from the Greek word **[definition]**, **oik-o-no-mos**, which is made of two words: **oikos**, meaning house; and **no-mos** which has one definition to divide among or parcel out a possession, and the other definition usage, custom, law, the body of law.
5. So the person who has the job of the **[slide] oikonomos**, or **steward, is the manager of a household or estate, treasurer, administrator, an overseer.**

6. From the beginning of creation, God gave mankind the job of being stewards of His creation: the earth, animals, our bodies, souls, time, family, job, finances, and belongings. So, **How am I handling God's business?**
  7. These things are lent to us by the Lord and we must take responsible and grateful care of them as God's steward.
  8. We consider ourselves as the owners of things with all the rights ascribed thereto, but in reality, we are really stewards. Everything we have we received from God: *1 Cor 4:7 For who maketh thee to differ from another? and **what hast thou that thou didst not receive?** [What do you have that God hasn't given you?] *now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?**
- II. My attitude toward His kingdom
    - A. The attitude of gratitude

1. As a steward, my driving attitude should be The attitude of gratitude. The word “gratuity” is a form of that word and reflects how that attitude leads to giving back with gratitude.
2. **[slide-principle #1] Because what I have comes from God, I give to His kingdom purposefully and cheerfully:**  
*2 Cor 9:7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.*
3. That verse speaks of giving purposefully. That means our giving should be done in a planned and prioritized way by budgeting for giving.
4. And although our giving is planned ahead of time, we can still give it out of the abundance of gratitude and cheerfulness. A steward’s giving is purposeful and cheerful.
5. Another second principle regarding giving is that **[slide-principle #2] God allows us to**

## **reap blessings in proportion to our giving:**

*2 Cor 9:6 But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.*

6. Jesus used a word picture in Matthew 7:2 regarding what we give out: the size of measuring cup that we use to dish it out, will be the same size cup that will be used to dish it back.
7. If you sow a little, you will grow a little, if you sow a lot, you will grow a lot.
8. This helps introduce a third principle that reveals something about another thing God prioritizes: **[slide-principle #3] God uses people to bless those who give liberally:**  
*Luke 6:38 Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall **men** give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.*

9. Summarizing these principles related to gratitude: Gratitude toward God expressed by planned and cheerful giving, yields blessings in proportion to our giving, and God often uses others to give that blessing.
- B. The privilege of participating
  1. Another attitude we express when we give, is: **[slide-principle #4] Consider it a privilege to use God's blessings to participate (invest) in God's kingdom.**
  2. In other words, getting ready for heaven and helping others do the same are among the most important things we can do on earth.
  3. What do you treasure on earth? Jesus discussed that question in Matthew 6 and mentioned **laying up treasures in heaven.**
  4. He said Gentiles focus on building up earthly possessions. But for His followers, He summed up our attitude this way:  
*Matthew 6:33 But seek ye first the kingdom*

*of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*

5. God promised He will take care of our needs when we invest our priorities in the kingdom of God, so that when we take care of God's business, He will take care of our business.

6. Church gatherings are a place where many if not most people are saved. The church does not save them—that's God work. But the church provides regular opportunities for people to hear the gospel. And how can they hear without a preacher?

*Rom 10:14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?*

7. So we count it a privilege to be able to participate in God's plan of emptying hell and populating heaven. Keeping the doors of the church open and keeping the gospel

message proclaimed is part of seeking first the kingdom.

8. Participating in giving then, is an investment in the kingdom of God that assures that the ministry of the kingdom of God continues here, which also yields eternal rewards there.

### III. The Basic Plan – The Tithe

#### A. What is the tithe?

1. The plan for giving that is laid out in scripture is quite simple. Those who benefit from ministry can help sustain that ministry.
2. In the book of beginnings, Genesis, we are introduced to the concept of giving “tithes of all.”

*Gen 14:20 And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.*

3. **[slide] Tithe:** from the Hebrew word, ma`aser; and the Greek word dekate, which both simply mean a "tenth", so with regard



to giving tithes of all, it means to give a 10<sup>th</sup>, or 10% of all.

4. And “all” refers to the first 10% of the yield that the farmer brought in from the field (Deut 14:22-23) and included the firstlings of the herds and flocks (2 Chron 31:5).
  5. People who earn little or people who earn more give in proportion to their ability.
- B. Abram and Jacob
1. We just mentioned the first time *giving tithes of all* is mentioned in the Bible, and that was written about Abraham. The first tithe giver.
  2. Following a victorious battle, Abram met a priest named Melchizedek, and as we read in Genesis 14:20, Abraham gave him tithes of all he had received.
  3. The principle established here in the Book of Beginnings, is that when God blesses us, we should return to God a percentage of that blessing.

4. Abraham's grandson also pledged to give a tithe:

*Gen 28:22 And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and **of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.***

5. Jacob was lonely, broke, and fleeing for his life at this point. But he was likely aware of the example of his grandfather and chose to honor God like Papaw Abraham had done.
  6. And notice again the principle restated of giving tithes of all.
- c. Jesus on tithes
1. Tithing was still being practiced into Jesus' day, and Jesus spoke in support of giving the tithe.
  2. Jesus made note of their carefulness toward tithing of all, and commended them for it. However, He pointed out how they were neglecting something more difficult (weightier) to give than money, and that is

mercy:

*Matt 23:23 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: **these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.** [You should tithe, yes, but do not neglect the more important things.]*

3. So from Father Abraham who became the father of the Hebrews, to Jacob who became the head of all the tribes of Israel, and on down through Jesus, our High Priest and example, each recommending tithing of all.
  4. Consider tithing as our starting point.
- D. Special offerings
1. Another kind of giving spoken about in the New Testament is receiving special offerings for special needs. Like for the poor

saints in Jerusalem that we read about in Romans 15:26-27 and 1 Corinthians 16:1-2.

2. So these special offerings, like those for building repairs, are not given instead of the tithe, but are given over and above the tithe as God has prospered.
3. But even though my part may be small compared to someone else's part, it is the proportionate generosity of all that help us keep going ahead on this journey.

#### IV. Conclusion

1. When we participate in God's financial plan, we reap God's blessings on our finances.

1. Again, it all boils down to the verse we began with:

*Matthew 6:33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*

2. We no doubt remember Malachi's warning to those who fell away from the practice of tithing:

*Malachi 3:8-9*

*8 Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.*

*9 Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.*

3. We would not think of holding up our neighbor and robbing from him because “thou shalt not steal” is still the 8th commandment. And we need to consider robbing God in that same way.
4. Notice that same passage in Malachi continues by revealing the blessings God has in store for those who do bring the tithe. And notice the challenge here:

*Malachi 3:10-12*

*10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room*

*enough to receive it.*

*11 And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts.*

*12 And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts.*

5. When we take care of God's business, God takes care of our business.