

“Making My Life A Ministry”
A Study in the Practical Meaning of Ephesians 2:10

10 “Faithful Stewardship”

Ephesians 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Thesis: Ministry is no more, but no less, than serving others for the sake of Christ by doing them good. It is a living out of the second Great Commandment (as we pursue the Great Commission).

Ministry Priority #2– A Progressive Commitment to the body of Christ, in the first instance to one’s family and then to the larger body of believers.

Key Idea: The Development of *Stewardship within the Body*. That all believer would be trained in the biblical principles and practices of life-style stewardship, so all of our personal resources of time, talent and treasure are under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and dedicated to kingdom service.

Biblical Perspectives on Worldly Resources:

A. Jesus Instructing His Disciples:

Matthew 6:19-21; 24; 31-33 19 "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. . . 24 "No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money. . . 31 So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' 32 For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. 33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Teachings: All Priorities, Including Financial Priorities, Designated By God

A. Vs 19-21: Spiritual investments should take precedence over earthy ones. Earthly wealth gives not real security.

B. Vs 24: Money must never become your God. Never serve money.

C. Vs 31-32: Trust God for the basics of life, even when circumstances would tempt you to be anxious.

D. Vs 33: Set the Kingdom of God as your first priority in life.

B. Jesus Confronting the Pharisees:

Luke 16:10-15 10 "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. 11 So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? 12 And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own?"

13 "No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money."

14 The Pharisees, who loved money, heard all this and were sneering at Jesus. 15 He said to them, "You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of men, but God knows your hearts. What is highly valued among men is detestable in God's sight."

1. God views our financial stewardship quite seriously – how we manage earthly assets seems indicative of how well we would handle even more significant assets of God's kingdom.
2. God despises hearts that love money. The disciple must rather see money to be used for the stewardship of life and the Kingdom.

C. Using Money According to God's Design. The Four Factors of Stewardship.

1. Earning – through diligent labor. Pro 10:4; 12:24; 13:4
 - a. God's part: Dt 8:18, Pro 10:22
 - b. Man's part: Pro 24:27; 22:29; 21:25; 18:9, I Tim 5:8, 2 Thes 3:10, - all endorsing the biblical work ethic.
2. Spending – wisely and with godly motives. Pro 31:16-18; James 4:3
3. Saving and Investing – to have an available reserve. Pro 6:6-11; 21:20.
4. Giving – To God and His Work. Pro 3:9-10
 - a. Tithing – Mal 3:10 – note that the blessings are conditional on our obedient commitment to total stewardship – the main income for Jesus' Great Commission comes from this source.
 - b. Offerings – Pro 19:17 and 2 Cor 8:1-5 and 9:6-8. Self-sacrificial giving is always beyond the tithe, and normally for the purposes of fellow believers who are in dire financial straits.

Budgeting: any faithful steward can account for his master's property. Budgeting money is the principle tool for faithful stewardship.