

Stewardship Message Part 1

“GODS PLAN FOR MAN”

Genesis 1

WELCOME: Good Morning and welcome to Calvary Family Church.

I always count it a joy and a blessing to be able to come and share with you each week.

MESSAGE:

Today were going to start a new series simply called, “Stewardship,” The word stewardship is maybe the most misunderstood word in the Christian church.” If you were to ask most people in the churches today what stewardship means they'd say probably it's about Money, Tithing, Giving so you can pay the pastor and

the other churches bills. But stewardship is not a financial program.

If you're here this morning and you're here to just consider the claims of Christ you maybe think we'll what does stewardship have to do with me. You need to have some understanding of this... because Stewardship is the second greatest theme in the entire Bible. It is taught from the first book, Genesis all the way through to the last book Revelation.

See stewardship is an important topic.../ and we need to understand what God's Word is telling us about it. Jesus talked more about stewardship in the Bible than He did about heaven, then He did about hell, then He did about prayer. Over half of all Jesus' parables in the Bible are about stewardship. In fact, one out of every six

verses in the gospels has to do with stewardship. See Jesus said I have come to set you free and if we are going to be free in Christ we need to know what He is telling us about stewardship.

First of all let's start off by asking this question, "What is the meaning of stewardship anyway?" The Webster's dictionary defined it like this.../ "Stewardship is the responsibility of managing assets, of managing affairs or property of someone else's." So Stewardship is **managing** something that isn't your own. I think the key word, in that definition is the word "management". The word "steward" means "manager".

To understand stewardship we have to go back to the very beginning of time to the book of Genesis 1:1. Stewardship started at the very beginning of time.

Stewardship -- there are tremendous blessings and tremendous benefits when you understand what stewardship is all about with God and apply it in your life. In fact, I would go as far as to say, "stewardship is the key to understanding the true Christian life."

Stewardship is the ingredient that each person here needs to add to their life to be all that God wants them to be.../ That's how important stewardship is in God's Plan for us. I would even say if you don't understand stewardship in your life you don't understand the Christian life in it's fullest. If you don't understand stewardship you don't understand **why** you were put on earth. You don't understand why God made you.

God's Word, the Bible says, "*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth...*" Genesis 1:1

The first principle of stewardship is this from God's word: You need to understand that God owns everything. God owns every plant, every rock, every animal, every person, every thing. The Bible says, "*The heavens declare His glory...*" Psalms 19:1 NKJV "*The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof...*" Psalms 24:1 NKJV God created it -- He made it -- so therefore He has ownership of it. But there is something even more important than He created it.../ and that is He also sustains it. Without Him it would not go on, it would not stay together.../ The Bible tells us that, "*God holds everything together*" Colossians 1. God owns it because He made it.../ and He sustains it.

Fact: God owns everything. He owns you. He owns me. He owns this land. He owns everything, why? Because He made it.

Well then how about you and I. Why did God make you and I? Why did He make man? Why are you here? Why am I here? Why was mankind created? In the Bible, Genesis 1:25, is the creation account it tells us God had created on five of the days. And at the end of the fifth day God looked out over everything that He had made, -- He'd made the earth, He had made the heavens, the sky, the animals, the plants, everything -- and the Bible says and "*God saw that it was good.*" Now let's compare verse 25 that says, -- "*God looked at the world and said it's good*" -- now look at verse 31 there in your notes where God saw all that He had made at the

end of the sixth day and He saw it was "*very good*". On the fifth day God looks at the world and says, "*It's good.*" On the sixth day, He looks at the end of His creation and He says, "*It's very good.*" Well what happened between verse 25 and verse 31 for God to say now, *It's very good.*

Man was created. God looked at the earth and said, "I did a good job on this but there's something lacking." And he made man. And man made the difference.

Why did God make man? How was man different from the animals? Man was made differently from the animals in two different ways.

1. Different in **character**. It said God made man "*... in our own image.*" God said, "I'm going to make man like Myself. In My own image, after

My own likeness." So we're like God in His character. We have the creative ability to make things like our creator. God is a creator and He made us to be creative.

The second way man was made different from the animals is we are:

2. Different in **our job description**. v. 28 "*God blessed them and said to them [talking to man and woman] 'Be fruitful and increase in number. Fill the earth. Subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every creature that moves on the ground.'*"

2:15 continues. The Lord God took man -- after He made him, He put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and to take care of it.

Why did God make man? And what is his purpose? The Bible says that God made man to be the caretaker of the world, to be the **manager**, to be the steward of all the resources of all that God had created.

God spells it out very clearly in (Genesis 2:15)

Fill the earth,

subdue it,

rule over it,

work it,

and take care of it.

All of these five things God expects of man to do, God expects of you and I to do. That's part of God's job description for us. And all of those can be summed up in one word – management. God created man to be the managers of His creation.

We were created, we were made to manage the resources that God put on the earth, to rule over things, to subdue it. God's very first command was stewardship to us. He wants us to manage the earth. God says, "I'm the owner but you're the manager." You're the caretaker. You're the steward.

Man's problem was then and still is today is we forget what we were really created for. We forget our **purpose**. We start thinking it's all ours to do as we please and we start taking ownership.... we start thinking it is ours, we own it. I've earned it. It's all mine because look at what **I have accomplished**.

We forget, that you and I are just managing it for God. But we try to trade places with God and become a god ourselves. We start acting like we are the owners, as

if we created the world and all that's in it. We start using words like *my* and *I* and *mine*... this is *my* life, this is *my* plans, these are *my* possessions, *my* money and *my* time. (PAUSE)

But the truth is who gave all that to you? The Bible tells us that God said, "I'm putting you on this earth and you get to use the entire world and you get to manage the world and you get to enjoy it all. But never forget: I own it and I sustain it. I made it and I keep it going."

The ultimate control in any business or anything always resides with the **owner**, not the manager, not the person managing, but the owner.

We get to use it. We get to manage it and we get to enjoy all of life's resources.../ but God owns it. And friend's that is what stewardship is.

Notice what we read Gen. 1:28 where God said, "*I want you to rule over everything.*" Another translation says, "*I want you to have dominion over the fish and the birds and everything that moves.*" God intended originally at creation for man to rule over things. But what happened? We got it all mixed up and reversed it. The things that God intended for us to rule over.../ now rule over us. PAUSE

Why because we are a people who are possessed by possessions. And God says, "It's foolish to make your number one goal in life simply the acquisition of things.../ And why does God say that? Because they

aren't yours, God's just loaning them to you for a short time anyway to manage. I say this all the time you're going to be here for what 60, 70 maybe 90 years. And God says, I'll loan them to you for that time of your life to manage. You can use them. You can enjoy them. But then one day you're going to die and you're going to come into eternity with me and I'm just going to loan them to somebody else after you die." Really, you don't own anything. They're on loan to you.

The Bible teaches that God has delegated some authority to us. He made us in His image and He's put us on earth and He says "Now make the most of what I've given you." Make the most of your life. Make the most of your time. Make the most of your wealth. Make the most of your talents. Make the most of everything that I

have blessed you with. God says, "I will provide the raw materials and I've given you the ability to create. Now do something." God provides the forest and man takes the forest and turns it into homes. Stewardship, when you get down to it, is simply partnership with God. That's all it is. It's why God put you on the earth - to do these five things.

Fill the earth, subdue it, rule over it, work it and take care of it.

The Bible says, "*We are laborers together with God.*" I Corinthians 3:9 We have the honor and the privilege to work with God. We're partners with Him.

Friends, this is so important.../ If you ever get this concept in your heart of what I am speaking on and

really grasp it and put it to practice, it will revolutionize your life and your walk with God.

When you understand that God made it all and He put you here on earth to be the manager of it. And all that you have is not yours.../ but His and you're managing it for Him.

See Friends, your happiness here on earth is in proportion to your **faithfulness** in the stewardship of all the things that God has given you. (REPEAT) The better steward you are the greater your happiness. But also the opposite is true every time we mismanage what God has entrusted to our care, it produces **negative** results. **Stopped Here**

The Bible teaches that the more faithful we are in managing everything that God has blessed us with, the

more.../ He trusts to us. The greater we are found faithful, being wise managers and wise stewards of all of life, the more He can **trust** us with and the more we're blessed with because He says, "*You've been faithful in a few things; I'll make you faithful in more.*" Luke 16:10 So there are immediate benefits to stewardship in your life here on earth.

But there are also future benefits to stewardship in your life. The Bible teaches that our rewards in eternity, will be based on how we managed what God trusted us with **here** on earth. If you're faithful here on earth, God says you'll be faithful and I will give you more in eternity.

In a sense, your lives right now are kind of a trial run for greater rewards to come and greater

responsibility. God looks at us and says, "You've been faithful with what you did on earth. You were faithful with your life, your time, your talents, your finances. So I'm going to trust you more." Our stewardship on earth is really just a **preparation** for greater partnership with God in Heaven.

The Bible says in Romans 14:12 *"One day every one of us will give an account before God of our stewardship"* -- our management, how we handle all of the things that God blessed us with. At that point God will look at us and if we've been faithful and used it wisely, we will be rewarded proportionally.

You are to be a steward of absolutely **everything** that God has entrusted to you. Everything! Did God give you this environment to live in? Then stewardship

involves ecology, taking care of the earth. Did God give you a physical body? Then stewardship involves physical fitness, nutrition. Did God give you every single day of your life? Then stewardship involves time management. Did God give you your wealth, your material possessions? Then stewardship involves money management, financial planning. Everything. Did God give you a position of authority? Has He allowed you to be in a place of prominence and responsibility? Then God says stewardship involves using your influence for good. Every area. Did God give you a new beginning? Did God give you a new life in Christ? Then stewardship involves the responsibility of sharing your faith with other people.

What I'm talking about this morning is not a trivial issue my friends. It is the reason that we were created and put on earth, to be managers of everything that God has given to us. It starts from Genesis 1:1 and you find the theme all through the Bible. Stewardship is the basic principle of a Christians life. It's foundational. It's understanding why you're here on earth and how you should go about living it here on earth. It's fulfilling the purpose for which God made you. It involves managing every area of life -- my time, my money, my family, my home, my business, my resources, my friends, every area of my life comes under the concept of stewardship. God owns it and I manage it I am the steward of it.

So why did we start this year talking about stewardship at The Calvary Family church? Because if

you don't grasp this concept I'm taking about, you will end the year next December having wasted a great portion of it not fulfilling your purpose here on earth

See God intends for His resources to be used. Not wasted, but used. Stewardship involves using it wisely. That's what stewardship is all about.

Let us Prayer: