

The Trust Test Proverbs 3:1-10 (Part 3)

Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Sunday, Dec. 1st

Reflection: We've been discussing Trust and its importance to any healthy relationship, particularly the one with our Lord. We've been using an acronym to illustrate this:

T: Take Personal Inventory: Pr. 3:5 *"Trust in the Lord...Lean not to thine own understanding."*

- Have I trusted Jesus as my Savior? (Invited him in?) Rev. 3:19-22
- Am I trusting him as my Lord? (Who's steering my life?)

R: Recognize God. Pr. 3:6 *"In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths."* (Jn 10:9-26)

One way to determine if we're actually following Jesus is to honestly determine if His (Biblical) principles Guide our lives. God's principles are universal. If we understand and operate in harmony with them, we benefit from them. (Dt 11:27) If we violate them, we suffer the consequences. (Dt 11:28) (*Haggai 1:4-11*) This morning we're going to discuss an overview of some of the the principles of Stewardship. According to Gallop Polls, **The More We make in America, the less we give:**

Annual Incomes of <10,000 give an average of 2.8% to charity; >10,000 but < 30,000 ==→ 2.5%
>30,000 but < 50,000 ==→ 2% >50,000 give < 1.5 % of their income to charity.

In ADDITION the more we make, the less we seem to be satisfied with what we have. One of the reasons for this is because we are often violating God's principles. (See Haggai 1:4-11)

U: Understand God's Principles for Stewardship: Matthew 25:14-30

1. The Lordship Principle. (Who's the Boss?) Mt 25:14; 20,22

A. God Is The Source Of Every "Good Gift." (James 1:17; Ps. 24:1)

- 1) Man possesses, but God *Provides*. (Ps. 24:1; Haggai 2:8)
- 2) Man earns, but God *enables*. (Dt. 8:17,18) *"for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth"*
- 3) Man is the "Creature" but God is the "Creator" Ro. 1:25; Ps. 100:3)

B. God graciously allows us to enjoy and trusts us to manage His resources.

- 1) We have a tendency to enjoy the gift, while forgetting the giver. (Deut. 8:11-18)

C. This (Lordship) Is At The Heart Of Stewardship.

- 1) A Steward is someone that manages the resources of another. Mt 25:14 *"delivered them his goods"*
- 2) We will be judged and rewarded in eternity according to our stewardship. 1 Cor 3:9-15)

2. The Proportional Principle. Vs 15; 20-23

A. God Gives Possessions And Abilities In Different Proportions. Mt 25:14,15

"delivered to them (his servants) his goods. Unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one to every man according to his several ability"

B. Our Rewards Are Based On Our Faithfulness: What we do with what we have.

- 1) The two "Faithful" servants received the same commendation from their Lord. Vs 21 and 23
- 2) Many excuse themselves believing that "I'd do more if I had more..."
Remember the poor widow in Mark 12:42-44? Mary in Mark 14 and John 12?

3. The Opportunity Principle. Mt 25:21

A. Time Is A Training Ground for Eternity. Vs 21; Luke 19:13; Rev. 22:12

(Luke 19:13) 'Occupy till I come.' (That's why we're still here!!)

B. God uses money and possessions as:

- 1) A **TOOL**: To train us and accomplish His purposes.
- 2) A **TEST**: To determine the level of our maturity, faith, and faithfulness. (*Luke 16:10-13*)
 - 11 *"If ye've not been faithful in unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?"*
 - 12 *And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another's, who shall give you that which is your own?"*
- a) The Master knew he was going to inherit a "Kingdom" (Luke 19:12)
"A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return."
- b) He was looking for faithful servants who he could promote to help him reign. (Rev. 20:6)
- 3) A **TESTIMONY**: To show the world that Peace comes from the Promises of God, not from possessions. (Mt 5:13-14; Phil. 4:6,7)
 - a) We are called to be "**Salt** and light" (Mt. 5:13-14) Not "better" but different.
 - b) We are called to be "**Servants**" Mark 10:45; Gal. 5:13)
 - (1) Our money and possessions are a significant way in which we can serve others.
 - (2) Who is being served through your resources? (1 Tim. 6:17,18)
 - c) We are called to be "**Stewards**" (Mt. 25:14-30; 1 Cor. 4:1,2)

4. The Investment Principle. (Vs 16; Mt. 6:19-21)

- A. Investments Involve A Trade.** 16 *"Then he that had received the five talents went and traded (ergazomai: worked) with the same..."* (Luke 19:13) *"Occupy till I come."*
- 1) "Occupy" means to busy oneself with trade.
 - 2) We have the opportunity to trade the temporary for the **eternal**. (Lk 16:11; 2 Cor. 4:18; Mt 6:19->)

B. Consider The Compound Interest! 1 Cor 10:9

- 1) The "Faithful" stewards obtained more than 100% increase and an abundant inheritance. (21)

5. The Priority Principle. (Do it Now!)

A. The unfaithful servant was rebuked for his inactivity. (Mt 25:24-30)

- 1) **Faith Requires Action.** (James 1:22; 2:17,20)
 - a) He knew His master's will, but basically ignored it. (He did nothing!) James 4:17; Mk 4:19

B. We Will Be Judge On What We Do. (2 Cor 5:10)

- 1) It's not our intentions, but our applications!
- 2) It's not how many "sermons" we heard, but how many we lived!

C. We Have An Unknown Deadline! (Heb. 3:8,15; Jn 9:4; Eph. 5:16; Ps. 90:12)

Which principles are you struggling with?

1. Lordship (vs 14, 20,22) *Lk 6:46 "why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"*
2. Opportunity Vs 21 Eph. 5:16 *"Redeeming the time..."* (Gal. 6:9-10)
3. Proportional. Vs 15 (2 Cor 8:12) *"it is accepted according to that a man hath..."*
4. Investment. Vs 21, 28 (Gal. 6:6,8; Mt 6:19-21)
5. Priority (vs 24-30) Col. 1:18; Mt. 6:33 *"Seek ye first the Kingdom of God..."*
Rev. 14:13 *"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord ...: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."*

If you were to die today, what "works" will follow you?

What would you have to "live off of" in eternity if you were taken there today? (1 Cor 3:9-15)

What will you change to make preparation for that time? (Eph. 5:16-18; Rev. 19:7,8)

