

NOVEMBER 11th & 14th, 2021

Review

- Competing views of reality (the garden) and today
- The discipleship story – the visual aid – journey towards maturity
- The five spheres – finances affect every part which is why the enemy works so hard

Last week: God's Word tells us to worship Him only

- The ten commandments start with having no other gods (Idols)
- The Lord put together a pattern designed to remind us over and over again
- His Spirit – His church – His people
- Finances are spoken of the most because it is the tool of the enemy to help us build idols on this earth

Exodus 20:3-4 (NIV)

We may not create idols like they did in history but we still struggle with idols

- Context – there were idols (physical) and internal
- God's word speaks about money and finances because it is a means to pursue our idols

Ezekiel 14:1-5 (NIV)

Ephesians 5:5 (NIV)

Colossians 3:5 (NIV)

God has designed a way of living that helps us stay grounded in Him

- The habit of abiding personally – His Spirit/presence -- His Word -- His church/people
- Remember we are taught to obey all that Jesus commanded
- He has a design for how we live so we can counter our sin nature – and the devil's schemes

God speaks most about finances because it is a means to set up our idols

Proverbs 4:23 (NIV) – 23 Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.

- God put together a way of living that protects and provides for us
1. First fruits/tithing makes us God centered in the beginning – it is the antidote
 - We must work – but it can also become an idol – we must relate with others but people must not be loved more than Jesus – we must deal with money but we cannot serve both God and money
 - A way for us to work with it without it becoming our master
 - Tithing sets the terms for how I use His money in every way

Genesis 14:18-20 (NIV), Exodus 23:16 (NIV), Leviticus 27:30 (NIV), Deuteronomy 14:22 (NIV), Deuteronomy 14:28-29 (NIV)

Tithing's purposes: Malachi 3:6-13 (NIV) – 6 “I the LORD do not change. So you, the descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed. 7 Ever since the time of your ancestors you have turned away from my decrees and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you,” says the LORD Almighty. “But you ask, ‘How are we to return?’ 8 “Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob me. “But you ask, ‘How are we robbing you?’ “In tithes and offerings. 9 You are under a curse—your whole nation—because you are robbing me. 10 Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the LORD Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it. 11 I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not drop their fruit before it is ripe,” says the LORD Almighty. 12 “Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land,” says the LORD Almighty.

- A. Tithing is an antidote for greed but also a means to bring God glory
 - The temple built by the Jews revealed how important God was to His people

- B. God tells us to bring the whole tithe to the storehouse (food in my house)-
- Old Testament – temple, New Testament - household of God
 - Every part of the life of a believer was centered around loving God by loving others
 - God built a system that ministered to others – the leaders and the poor

Ephesians 2:19 (NIV) – 19 Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household,

1 Peter 2:5 (NIV) – 5 you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

- C. God tells us that He desires there to be food in His house
- Spiritual food is taught through the leadership He designed the church to have
 - Food for the hurting –widow and orphan Leviticus 19:10 (NIV)
- D. Being obedient to God and His purposes brings blessing –in this life and the next 1 Timothy 6:17-19

2. Disciplined giving (Tithing) is a New Testament idea as well
- A starting point

Matthew 23:23 (NIV) – 23 “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former.

1 Corinthians 16:1-2 (NIV) – 1 Now about the collection for the Lord’s people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. 2 On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.

Acts 2:42-45 (NIV) – 42 They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. 43 Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. 44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need.

- A. We still struggle with pride and greed so tithing reminds us we are stewards rather than owners

Matthew 25:14-16 (NIV) – 14 “Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. 15 To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. 16 The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more.

- B. The work of God is not completed so we still tithe because it gives us the ability to join God in His purposes and reveals what we care about. Matthew 6:9-13 (NIV)

In your small groups ask, what command are we to obey from this message today?

- Share your answer with your closest relationships and groups honestly where appropriate
- Follow up next week to see how everyone did

Small Group Discussion Scriptures to consider: Haggai 1:1-11, Malachi 3:8-10, 2 Chronicles 31:1-10

Questions

1. How did you do last week, putting God first in your life?
2. What is the most foolish thing you’ve spent time or money on?
3. Read Leviticus 27:30. What does God say about tithing? Why do you think God instituted the giving of a tithe?
4. Read Genesis 4:4 & Exodus 23:16. What priority should our giving be? Out of your time, talent, resources, or relationships, what haven’t you prioritized well?
5. In what area of your life do you tend to give God your leftovers?
6. Share about a discipline in your life that you initially resisted but are now thankful you have.
7. What is God convicting you to do that you are resisting?

You can find resources and watch **Jim Putman, Blake Whiteman and Gabe Cleave** go deeper on this topic at:

<https://realliferesources.org/current-series/first/>

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