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"Steward Our Finances"

Review - Series "We were made for these days"

Ephesians 2:8-10 (ESV) For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

- When we received salvation through faith, we were saved from something for something. Our lives are no longer our own. (Galatians 2:20)
- This week we will tackle stewarding our finances. While finances are only one aspect of stewardship, they are an important aspect because of their connection to the heart.

We are not owners, just stewards.

Stewardship - the act of taking care of or managing something for someone else, for example property, an organization, money or valuable objects. Oxford Dictionary

Deuteronomy 10:14 (NIV) To the Lord your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it.

- The Lord owns it all, including us! (Psalm 24:1)

Genesis 2:15 (ESV) The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.

- To keep - To guard, observe, protect

As stewards we have been given responsibility within the Kingdom.

Matthew 25:14-15 (NIV) "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.

- Entrust - to hand over, to deliver over with a sense of close (personal) involvement.

God created a system for meeting the needs of people.

- His system of provision is rooted in love and generosity.

John 3:16 (ESV) "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life".

- The tithe - means a 10th. We tithe off our gross income. (Exodus 23:19, 1 Corinthians 16:1-2)

RLM Doctrinal statement - Steward and Generosity

We believe our whole lives; our time, talents and treasures, are to be given obediently and generously in response to God's grace, mercy and love for us. We believe that giving 10% of our income is defined as a "tithe", the Biblical starting point of giving to the local church (the storehouse). We believe that any giving over 10% is an "offering" of gratitude for the great things God does for us daily and can be directed at the giver's discretion to any worthwhile ministry, church or organization. We believe that generosity and stewardship are essential to maturity and the accomplishment of Christ's mission.

- We will cover O.T. vs N.T. tithing misunderstandings in our overtime podcast.

- God has always used the tithe for very important purposes.

- God's reasons for the tithe

- The tithe reminds us that all we have belongs to God. It is an act of worship, thankfulness and gratitude for His caring provision.
- God instituted the tithe to prove who His people trust in. Keeping God first is both commanded but also best for us. (Exodus 20:3-4, Deuteronomy 14:23)

Matthew 6:33 (NIV) But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

- The tithe is to support the ongoing work of God's Church.

Malachi 3:10-11 (NIV) 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.

- We see the local church as the local storehouse.
- There is a promise of blessing attached to tithing.

Proverbs 3:9-10 (ESV) Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce; 10 then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine.

- Tithing impacts your witness. It demonstrates what you value and what the priorities are in your life.
- The tithe reminds us that materialism can't buy peace nor love nor self protection.

Matthew 6:19-21 (ESV) "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

- Tithing is an antidote to the world system that tries to pull us away from God.
- Tithing keeps our heart focused on eternity.

Small Group Discussion Questions:

1. What does your bank account say about what you value most? People, things, comfort, God's Kingdom?
2. Do you honestly view God as the owner of your children, home, car, health and bank account? How does believing God owns it all make you feel?
3. Share a time when you gave away something you truly valued to someone in need. How did you feel letting it go? How did the other person respond?
4. Do those who know you best see you as a giver or a keeper?

To watch the Sermon Team on The Overtime Podcast, go to: <https://bit.ly/RLOvertime>



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