

LESSON SEVEN
NEW PURPOSE
ALL OF LIFE UNDER THE GOSPEL

“Jesus Christ said more about money than about any other single thing because, when it comes to a man’s real nature, money is of first importance. Money is an exact index to a man’s true character. All through Scripture there is an intimate correlation between the development of a man’s character and how he handles his money.

Richard Halverson (former chaplain of the Senate)

“Christian Stewardship is the management of life and all its resources for the glory of God.”

Murray J. Harris

This lesson will speak to how we manage our lives for the glory of God. We will look at the use of our gifts, time, and money to serve Christ.

1, Review

It is important to set the context for our understanding. It all ties back to the big picture.

Creation brought proper use of all things

- Man exercises dominion in selfless submission to the Creator
- Man is manager, not owner
- Time, gifts, resources, energy for the glory of God

Sin brings misuse of all things

- Man uses all of creation for selfish gain
- Time, gifts, resources, energy for the service of self

Gospel brings restoration of all things

- Glorify God in all things

2. All is from God

Here is where we must begin – God owns all.

“Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, O Lord, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all. Wealth and honor come from you; you are the ruler of all things. In your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all.... But who am I, and what is my people that we should be able thus to offer willingly? For all things come from you, and of your own have we given you.” 1Chronicles 29:11,12,14

For who regards you as superior? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?

1 Corinthians 4:7

3. All of life to be managed for the glory of God

The Christian has the honor of serving Christ in every facet of life.

And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth, so that when it fails they may receive you into the eternal dwellings. "One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? And if you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own? No servant can serve two masters, for 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 God and money." Luke 16:9-13

For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands, for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control. 2 Timothy 1:6-7

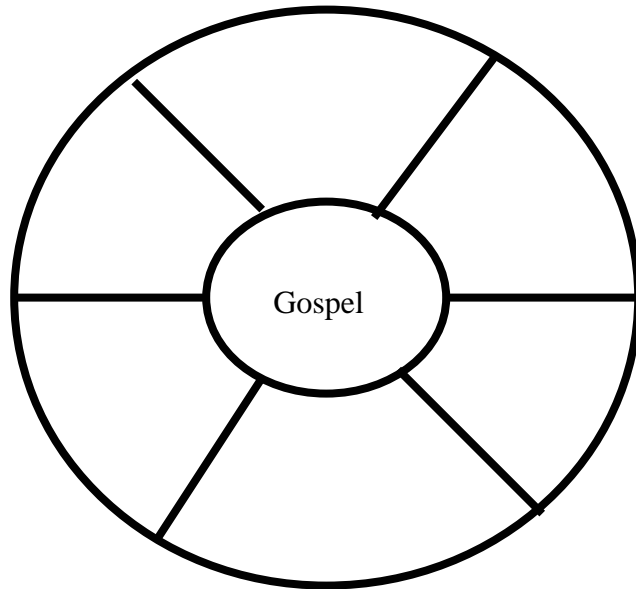
But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. 1 Timothy 5:8

Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed Romans 13:7

The first came before him, saying, 'Lord, your mina has made ten minas more.' And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in a very little, you shall have authority over ten cities.' And the second came, saying, 'Lord, your mina has made five minas.' And he said to him, 'And you are to be over five cities.' Then another came, saying, 'Lord, here is your mina, which I kept laid away in a handkerchief; for I was afraid of you, because you are a severe man. You take what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.' He said to him, 'I will condemn you with your own words, you wicked servant! You knew that I was a severe man, taking what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow? Why then did you not put my money in the bank, and at my coming I might have collected it with interest?' Luke 19:16-23

4. Circle of responsibility: all of life as stewardship/management of God's gifts and commands

It is helpful to see that we cannot neglect one area while being faithful in another. Life is like a circle of responsibility.



5. Serving at Grace Church

We know each member of Grace has a gift and we want to see it used to serve the others in the body.

*To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.
1 Corinthians 12:7*

As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies- in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

1 Peter 4:10-11

And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

Hebrews 10:24-25

6. Giving at Grace Church

Our approach at Grace makes the Gospel the center of our giving as well. We think that the model of tithing no longer makes sense after the cross.

A. OT Giving requirements – more complicated than you think

- Tithe laws: Gen 14:17-20; Lev 27:30-34; Num 18:20-24; Deut 14:22-29. Possibly 3 tithes.
- Sabbath year and Jubilee Laws: Leviticus 25
- Gleanings: Lev 19:9; 23:22
- Interest free loans: Ex 22:25; Lev 25:36-37

B. Purpose of OT giving – many purposes, not one

- Support of Levites
- Care of widow, orphan, poor, sojourner
- Corporate celebrations
- No long term development of class system. God owns the land.
- Tied to covenantal curses and blessings
- Expression of God's ownership of all things

C. Evaluation of OT giving – can it be applied today?

- Clearly more than 10% of income
- Tied to giving of land
- Reflects an agrarian economy
- OT kingdom was a picture of future kingdom
- No one practiced all of this and it is impossible to practice in the church

D. Purpose of NT giving – seems to be more focused

- Support of pastors.

“Do you not know that those who are employed in the temple service get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in the sacrificial offerings? In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel.”
1 Cor. 9:13-14

Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain," and, "The laborer deserves his wages." 1 Timothy 5:17-18

- Care of widow, orphan, poor, sojourner

Only, they asked us to remember the poor, the very thing I was eager to do. Galatians 2:10

And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. Acts 2:44-45

- Expression of God's ownership of all things and future glory

As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life. 1 Timothy 6:17-19

E. NT Giving Pattern: a response to the grace of God in the Gospel

Jesus did not save you by tithing his blood. Jesus did not save you by tithing his glory. And you live by his giving of everything. Jesus' cross means sacrificial giving.

Tim Keller

- The measure of giving is the example of extravagant generosity

We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own free will, begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints. 2 Corinthians 8:1-4

- The root of generosity is the grace of God

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich. 2 Corinthians 8:9

- The pattern of giving is glad and abundant sowing

The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 2 Corinthians 9:6-7

- Giving is an expression of faith

And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all contentment in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. As it is written, "He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever." He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. 2 Corinthians 9:8-10

7. Practicing management at Grace Church

1. making time for worship and relationship
2. making time for service
3. making a plan for giving
 - Assess your current budget- This is important in faithfully stewarding what God has provided for us.
 - Make a plan for regular giving.
 - Give regularly and consistently.
 - Be open for spontaneous giving.
 - Like any area of sanctification, plan to grow in your giving.

GRACE CHURCH SAN DIEGO

NEW LIFE, NEW COMMUNITY, NEW PURPOSE

OUR PURPOSE

BUILDING NEW LIVES AND NEW COMMUNITIES IN THE GOSPEL