Week 6
Living Your Faith Through Stewardship: Your Time, Talent and Treasure

Stewardship of Talent

We have seen that stewardship in the Scriptures always relates to the management of something that does not belong to us, but to someone else. Even our talents and special abilities belong to God. We own nothing that was not first given to us: "And what do you have that you did not receive? But if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?" (1 Cor. 4:7). God has entrusted us with aptitudes and abilities, and as good stewards, we must use them for His glory and not our own. This is true not only of musical, artistic, athletic, academic, business, and persuasive talents, but also of the spiritual gifts we have received.

"And since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let each exercise them accordingly" (Rom. 12:6). Peter specifically relates spiritual gifts to the concept of stewardship: "As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Pet. 4:10). Faithful stewardship of natural talents and spiritual gifts requires that we use them to glorify God and edify others. Our purpose is not to please ourselves, but to serve others. "Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to his edification. For even Christ did not please Himself" (Rom. 15:2-3a). Paul adds in Philippians 2:3-4:Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

Scripture for Reflection
1 Peter 4:10
Romans 12:6
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Another aspect of good stewardship is that we learn to concentrate on the things we can do well and not worry about the things we cannot do. Our calling is to be trustworthy with what we have been given, and not to envy or covet another person's abilities or ministry. Our abilities come from God (see Exod. 31:1-3,6; 35:35; Dan. 1:17; Eph. 4:7; 1 Tim. 4:14-15), and He has equipped us to fulfill the purpose for which He has called us. "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10). Each of us has an arena of influence, whether large or small, and a specific ministry that the Lord has placed in our care. "Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God" (1 Cor. 4:1; Col. 1:25; Titus 1:7a).

Regardless of what we have been given, every steward is tested by the same standard: faithfulness. It is not the size of our ministry that counts, but what we do with what we have been entrusted.

Scripture for Reflection
1 Corinthians 4:1
Colossians 1:25