

“Stewardship of Our Material Blessings”
Matthew 6:24-34, page 936/854

Introduction:

1. Reinhold Neibuhr is famous for the following prayer: “God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference. Living one day at a time; enjoying one moment at a time; accepting hardship as the pathway to peace. Taking, as He did, this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it. Trusting that He will make all things right if I surrender to His will; that I may be reasonable happy in this life, and supremely happy with Him forever in the next. Amen.”
2. Stewardship is simply managing what God has given to us.
3. Wise management for the Christian should always have an eye toward ministry!
 - A. How can I use what God has given me to improve the world?
 - B. How can I use this blessing to help another person know more about God?
 - C. How can I serve God and at the same time minister to people?
4. Today we direct these questions toward our material blessings.

I. Begin by taking an inventory of your material blessings.

- A. Many Christians believe they cannot have an effective ministry because of a lack of abilities:
 1. Not a very good singer.
 2. Impossible to see myself as a teacher.
 3. Not trained or educated in any specific ministry.
- B. I believe ministry is simply a life lived for God.
- C. By taking an inventory of our material blessings, we will soon realize all the resources God has given us:
 1. House = coffee.
 2. Automobile = ride to church (Diane).
 3. Computer = email and cards.
 4. Cook stove = pie taken to neighbor.
 5. Boat = trip to Garden Island.
 6. Bow and arrows = archery club (Joel).
 7. Chain saw = helping to provide firewood.
 8. Bicycle = ride with a friend).
 9. Tree swing = activity for children.
 10. Grill = friend over for a cookout.
 11. Golf clubs = time to develop friendships.
 12. Piano = piano lessons.
- D. This is only a partial list of God’s blessings to us.
 1. Thank God for your blessings.
 2. Be content with your blessings.
 3. Accept with thanksgiving what God has given you.

II. Use your material blessings in ministering to others.

- A. Be creative: How can I use my material blessings in ministry?
- B. Let's refer back to our list of material blessings and develop a plan to use these blessings as we serve God and minister to people.

III. Lay up treasures in heaven.

- A. God does not need our houses in heaven.
- B. God has no use for an automobile.
- C. I doubt if God has ever used a chain saw.
- D. All these things are for us and other people in our lives here on earth.
- E. A good steward/manager will develop a game plan to use these special blessings to make a difference in our world.

Conclusion:

1. Remember last week I shared a life-impacting statement with you: "Only one life; it soon will pass. Only what's done for Christ will last."
2. God has equipped us with all the resources we need to effectively serve God and minister to people.
3. You are doing a great job in being good stewards of your blessings.
 - A. You are laying up treasures in heaven.
 - B. You are making a difference in our world.
4. Keep up the good work!