**1The Lord and Me, and Money**

**It All Belongs to Him**

Introduction:

1. I was only a teenager but I remember the conversation well. I was discussing with my mother my intention to make a rather large purchase. I said, “It’s my money and I can spend it any way I want.” She promptly replied, “Well, you are mine and everything that you have belongs to me.”

2. Sovereignty! Sometimes I think we don’t fully comprehend what it means to voluntarily submit to the King.

* “The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it, the world, and those who dwell in it” (Psa. 24:1-2).
* “ . . . the land is Mine; for you are but aliens and sojourners with Me” (Lev. 25:23).
* “Whatever is under the whole heaven is Mine” (Job 41:11).
* “Every beast of the forest is Mine, the cattle on a thousand hills. I know every bird of the mountains, and everything that moves in the field is Mine. If I were hungry I would not tell you, for the world is Mine, and all it contains” (Psa. 50:10-12).
* “The silver is Mine and the gold is Mine” (Hag. 2:8).

3. And before you begin to think, “At least I own myself,” He says, “You are not your own; for you have been bought with a price” (1 Cor. 6:19-20) . . . “with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ” (1 Pet. 1:19).

4. God is King! He owns us and everything we have, and that includes our money.

5. This lesson begins a series that I have entitled, “The Lord and Me, and Money.” I hope that it will be beneficial to your understanding of your use of the blessings God has given you and that it will give you perspective on your place as a citizen in the Kingdom of God.

Discussion:

I. Scripture uses the idea of stewardship to describe our relationship to God’s things (Lk. 16:1-13).

 A. The word in the original language is “oikonomia,” (stewardship, management),

 “oikonomos” (steward) meaning the one who manages the house. From “oiko” (house)

 “nemo” (arrange).

 B. Stewardship requires faithful administration (Lk. 12:41-48).

 1. It involves being entrusted with the owner’s goods.

 2. And therefore it is required that one be found trustworthy (1 Cor. 4:2).

 3. There is a responsibility to use the Master’s wealth effectively (Matt. 25:14-30).

 C. Stewardship, while not limited to finances, certainly includes financial responsibilities.

 1. It involves the use of time, opportunities, relationships, etc. Everything that God

 has given us is to be used to His glorification. Stewardship is the way of life of the

 servants of God.

 2. This is no less true regarding our finances.

II. We need to look to the King as our model of good stewardship and thus we can learn what He wants from us.

 A. Giving is one of His chief traits.

 1. Lk. 6:38. Not just about giving financially, but as verse 37 shows it involves being

 gracious in our judgments of others.

 2. He gave us His son. How will He not also with Him freely give us all things (Rom.

 8:32).

 3. God gives generously. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running

 over (Lk. 6:38).

 B. We are not surprised to see generous giving as a prominent trait of the citizens of His

 kingdom.

 1. In the earliest stages of the church (Acts 2:44-45; 4:32-37).

 2. And a widespread practice (1 Cor. 16:1-2).

 3. Founded upon what they had experienced in the King (2 Cor. 8:9) and them having

 given themselves to the Lord (2 Cor. 8:5). It is part of your confession of the gospel

 of Christ (2 Cor. 8:13).

 C. God responds faithfully to those who give (Matt. 25:29-30; 2 Cor. 9:10-11).

 D. The judgment is based upon giving (Matt. 25:31-46).

III. Some believe giving a tenth fulfills our obligation to God so we can do whatever we please with the rest. Some reason that giving a tenth was part of the O.T. law and that now we can give whatever amount we want and do whatever we want with the rest. Some feel they have fulfilled their obligation to God by giving on the first day of the week and sometimes speak of “giving back to God” as if they did not realize that it all belongs to Him already.

 A. The O.T. called on Israel to give a tenth.

 1. Deut. 14:22-26.

 2. By tithing they were reminded that 100 percent belonged to the Lord.

 3. The tithe was not given for the Lord’s benefit, but for their benefit. As a matter fact

 they ate it in the presence of the Lord. Thus, they were reminded that their lives

 depended upon what the Lord gave them. Giving reminds us of the source of our

 income. Read Deut. 8:11-20. In giving we remember the Lord.

 4. Apparently Israel was called on to give ten percent on three different occasions.

 a. For the Levites (Num. 18:21-24).

 b. One in Deut. 14:22-26.

 c. One every third year for the Levite, the alien, the orphan and the widow (Deut.

 14:28-29).

 d. For a yearly average of 23 percent and that does not count free-will offerings.

 B. I read that the average American Christian gives about 2.5% (I do not know how they

 defined “Christian,” nor where these figures came from.). This pales in comparison

 to what the Israelites were doing!

 1. Are we so-called Christians insulting the spirit of grace?

 2. Have we actually restricted giving by proclaiming that the O.T. demanded

 giving a tenth but “free-will offerings” are the teaching of the N.T.? Have we

 actually “restored” the N.T. practice of giving or destroyed it?

 3. Have we missed the point entirely? Are we recognizing that giving is designed to

 remember that God has given us everything and that it all belongs to Him?

 4. Are we expressing our faith in Him as a giver or our lack of faith in His willingness

 to give?

 a. “Give, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good

 measure—pressed down, shaken together, and running over” (Lk. 6:38).

 b. “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; you will

 be enriched in everything for all liberality” (2 Cor. 9:10-11).

 C. I read that 40% of so called American Christians give nothing at all. What? Nothing

 at all? And I realize that we should not restrict our concept of giving to first day of

 the week contributions, but if we are giving nothing at all on the first day of the week

 what are we giving the other six days? Maybe we have nothing left to give because

 we have given it to the “golden calves” of entertainment, pleasure seeking,

 transportation, housing? Maybe we have devoted ourselves to the idolatry of self

 and have nothing left to give.

 D. Giving is not about us helping God out. He does not need our help. Giving is about

 recognizing that we are the recipients of God’s blessings. It is about our recognizing

 that He is the source of those blessings. It is about our faith and dependence upon

 Him as provider.

 E. God purpose is not to entrust us with more so we can just increase our standard of

 living. He is entrusting us with His things so that we may deliver them to where He

 wants them to go.

Conclusion:

1. It all belongs to Him.

2. Are you being a good steward? Or are you like the delivery man who kept all the packages for himself?

3. You see he didn’t recognize that the King did not come to be served but to serve and to give Himself a ransom for him. He did not know that he had been bought with a price, the precious blood of Christ. He did not know that with Him God would freely give him all things (Rom. 8:32).

4. And so, he laid up his treasure on the earth and sacrificed his reward in heaven.