

The Baptist Faith and Message

Article 13: Stewardship

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others.

According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

I. The Origin of earthly treasures

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual

Often we think the earthly treasures we have are as a result of our hard work, our ingenuity, our diligence. Now it is true, we are to work and be productive. Paul told Timothy this,

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

But we must recognize that God is the source for all we have. He provides jobs, the strength and ability, the talents and aptitudes, the opportunities for education and training.

In Him we live and move and have our being... Acts 17:28

If it's true, and it is, that God is the source of all these things, consider for a moment how God has blessed you – both temporal and spiritual. None of us chose where we were born, what country, what family, economic standing.

A. Consider Your TEMPORAL blessings

If you were born in this country, then you have at your access incredible opportunity for

- **education** (elementary, secondary, college and university, technical/vocational)
- **experience** (the national unemployment rate is 5.5%, why do illegal immigrants risk their lives to come into this country?)
- **vocation** (in most 3rd world/developing countries, you don't have many options as far as what you can do for a living. Most are just trying to survive. The saying, "Find what you love to do and figure out how to make a living at it" isn't an option for most of the people in the world.)
- **entrepreneurial endeavors** – if you don't want to work for someone else, you have incredible opportunity to develop

We, in this room, are among the top 5% of wealth in the world.

B. Consider Your SPIRITUAL Blessings

How many Bibles do you own. Access through media preaching and teaching on TV, internet, through the radio. Educated and experienced pastors. Christian book stores with everything you could imagine. We are sitting on a mountain of spiritual blessings, but yet we often just get fatter and fatter and fatter. Everyone in this room has enough biblical knowledge that they could teach a SS class (children, youth, adults)

Contrasting The Two Mindsets

- ☞ I EARNED it → give GRUDGINGLY
- ☞ God GAVE it → give THANKFULLY

II. The Ownership of earthly treasures

all that we have and are we owe to Him

The earth is the Lord's, and all it contains, the world and those who dwell in it. Psalm 24:1

"The silver is mine and the gold is mine," declares the Lord. Haggai 2:8

Contrasting The Two Mindsets

- ☞ It's MINE → leads to HOARDING
- ☞ It's GOD'S → leads to SHARING

III. The Overseeing of earthly treasures

Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions

But his master answered and said to him, "You wicked, lazy slave, you knew that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I scattered no seed. Then you ought to have put my money in the bank and on my arrival I would have received my money back with interest. Therefore take away the talent from him." Matthew 24:26-28

Contrasting The Two Mindsets

- ☞ I'M in charge → SELFISH Spending
- ☞ GOD'S in charge → KINGDOM spending

IV. The Obligation with earthly treasures

They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others

Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. In this case, moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy.
1 Corinthians 4:1-2

I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. Romans 1:14

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V. The Offering of earthly treasures

According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally

God doesn't bless you financially so that you can raise your standard of living, but so that you can raise your standard of giving.

I hear people say, "I can't afford to tithe." Some of you may have said that, "You know, I would really love to tithe, I just can't afford to do it." Let me ask you a question: If your income were to suddenly be reduced by 10%, would you die?

He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly; and he who sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully. Let each one do just as he has purposed in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver. 2 Corinthians 9:6-7

The greatest deterrent to giving is the illusion that earth is our home.

You can't take it with you, but you can send it on ahead.

VI. The Opportunity of Earthly Treasures

for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth