

John Ross

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Spiritual Formation 505

RR: Stewardship & The Kingdom of God

Stewardship, “in short, a steward is a person who takes care of someone else’s property.”<sup>1</sup> In reading *Stewardship & The Kingdom of God*, I learned that stewardship was not only material or wealth related but actually more of a managing responsibility of God’s resources. The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof, so according to scripture everything I have is from the Lord. How I manage His resources, His property that will determine my loyalty or trustworthiness of stewardship.

From the reading I learned that: “1) God is the owner of everything. 2) God’s covenant people are held responsible for their management of God’s resources. 3) Giving is a worshipful response to God’s ownership of all things.”<sup>2</sup> Our stewardship of God’s resources was more than material goods, it was a matter of worship as I mentioned earlier. “Our stewardship consists in more than just material things...Paul says Christian workers are stewards (plural: *oikonomoi*) of “the mysteries of God.” “Related to this is his use of the word “stewardship” (*oikonomia*) to describe his preaching of the gospel (1 Corinthians 9:16,17).”<sup>3</sup>

The author described how we steward our bodies as an act of worship and careful management of God’s resources. We are God’s resources. So how I take care of my body is directly related to how I steward what He gave me. Paul spoke about this in 1 Corinthians in describing our temples (bodies) of the Holy Spirit and that our homes are to be for the

1 Ronald Walborn, Frank Chen. *Stewardship and the Kingdom of God* (2001): 7.

2 Ronald Walborn, Frank Chen. *Stewardship* (2001): 10.

3 Ibid:12.

welcoming in of others for hospitality purposes. This was in complete reference to the people of Israel in the Hebrew scriptures of the OT.

The second part of the article on *Stewardship & The Kingdom of God* was related to spiritual warfare and challenges to stewardship. The author spoke of the warfare of selfishness and greed, but also the neglect of honoring the Lord with the tenth of the whole that He has trusted us with. The heart of the Lord toward the Israelites was to give them everything and in return out of gratitude to give back to God the best of resources as a tithe offering. We have hindered this offering by claiming these resources as our own and not the Lord's. When tithing is looked at from this lens, I understand that it's important for me to grow in an understanding of Kingdom stewardship/finances. It's not about giving God 10% it's about being aware that God is sole 100% responsible for everything I have. I owe and obedience give Him back 10% of that 100% He graciously has given me.

In doing this we are waging war on the enemy. We are denying ourselves and I'm being a leader for my congregants/followers etc that money is not my God. But that money is a vehicle for God to do even greater things than we have ever seen. He will do this as we show Him our gratitude with a life of generosity, faithfulness, hospitality and joy in worship. Our giving, our stewardship is an act of worship. That is a phenomenal truth!