

Stewardship Series, pt.2, 5.7.06
Core Values of Christian Giving
1 Chron. 29

Man bringing a gift to wife...How about perfume...\$75, \$50 \$20...I'd like to see something really cheap...the saleslady reached into the cabinet and gave them man a mirror.

If you love someone, you want to show, tell & do for them. One of the ways we demonstrate our love to God is by giving.

1 Chron.29 – prayer by David...he wanted to build, but God didn't...David granted to raise the money...great story of the OT. David brought of his own resources & then others did...the offerings are finished and David expressed his heart

Read – 29.10 – 18

3 heavenly core values

1. God is the originator of everything – 29.14. Everything has its origin in God. John 1.3 – 3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. Acts 17.24 – "The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands. Rev.4.11 – 11 "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.". He originator of everything. Ps.100.3 – 3 Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his ; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.;

At Sagamore Hill, Theodore Roosevelt and I used to play a little game together. After an evening of talk, we would go out on the lawn and search the skies until we found the faint spot of light-mist beyond the lower left-hand corner of the Great Square of Pegasus. Then one or the other of us would recite: "That is the Spiral Galaxy in Andromeda. It is as large as our Milky Way. It is one of a hundred million galaxies. It consists of one billion suns, each larger than our sun."

Then Roosevelt would grin and say: "Now I think we are small enough! Let's go to bed." *William Beebe in Leadership, Vol. 1, no. 3.*

2. God also owns it - 29.10f. Ps.24.1 - the earth is the Lord's...; God own us twice over...by creation (Rom 14.8 - If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.) & recreation (1 Cor.6). Jack Taylor's comments on God's ownership - God doesn't put a no trespassing sign on the mountains; or a fence around every meadow ; or collect a toll every time the space station circles the globe; he doesn't gather royalties on the songs of birds; or make us pay when flowers sprout around our house. And he doesn't send a notice to us saying, "Rent due" but we're camping on his property; breathing his air and spending his time. Hymn by Maltby - "This is my Father's world"...reminding us God originate & owne
3. God is over all things - 29.11, 12. The one with all the wealth has all the power...if he's bad then that's not good...but the perfect Son of God has all the wealth & power and He's asked us to be partners and manage it...and we'll manage his property after His return...We'll return the planet to its original beauty...he wants to employ us as His managers...we can't forget it's his...sometimes we forget...

3 Earthly Core Values

1. Since God owns everything, we don't own anything - 29.12, 14; 1 Cor.4.2 - we have been given a trust; Mt.25.21 - the Parable of the Talents. There can't be two owners.

This is especially hard for the rich. Jesus word to the rich man - **Mk.10.17-31**;

What about being rich? 10% is probably not enough. You give proportionately. The question isn't how much do I give God, but how much do I give myself? Yet, it's so difficult

Story about rich man, who meets with the pastor and says "I could never tithe I make too much money." Pastor said let me pray for you. "Father, I ask that you reduce this man's income so he can afford to tithe."

There is something that happens the more money we make. Statistics prove that those that make less give a far higher % of their income to the church than those that make more. Even those living in the poorest states in America (MS & AL) give a greater % of income to their church.

Patricia Heaton may soon lose her job. For eight seasons, she has starred on CBS's hit sitcom *Everybody Loves Raymond*, and it looks like the show is nearing its end. Not that we're crying for the double Emmy award-winning actress, who has reportedly been pulling down over \$6 million a year. But how often do you hear a Hollywood star say things like this?

I struggle to keep it simple. Obedience, sacrifice, and modesty are not real popular buzzwords out here. An issue I'm dealing with lately is, "Do I have too much money, and am I being a good steward of it?" In fact, I was talking to a friend about tithing—just giving your 10 percent as opposed to giving until it actually starts costing you something, which is what I think tithing is all about.

Dan Ewald, "It's Not About Me," Christian Reader (January/February 2004)

If giving becomes boring/not challenging it might be b/c you aren't giving enough to be really challenged

2. God gives us what we have and He makes us responsible for it - 29.14.

David says, "I gave an offering from the money you gave me." All we do is manage. The tithe is the Lord...we don't give the tithe (iow, it's my money); you owe it...it's not an option...who would you rather owe - God or the credit card first. Put God first and you'll get out of debt quicker.

3. Only by letting go do we become free - 1 Tim.6.17-19:Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. 18Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. 19In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

In her book *9 Steps to Financial Freedom*, Suze Orman writes about a time when she was in Mexico. There was a merchant who was selling parrots: they weren't in cages, and they didn't fly away. Orman was fascinated by this.

She asked the merchant, "Do these birds just love you so much they have no desire to fly away?"

He laughed. "No" he said, "I train them to think their perches mean safety and security. When they come to think this, they naturally wrap their claws tightly around the perch and don't want to release it. They keep themselves confined, as if they've forgotten they know how to fly."

Was this hard to do? she asked.

"With little birds it's very hard, sometimes even impossible," he said. "It's easy with the large birds."

In her book, she writes:

Suddenly a lightbulb went off in my head. We are just like those poor parrots. We have been taught to clutch our money as tightly as we can, as if our money is the perch of our safety and security. Just like those parrots, we have all forgotten how free we really are—with or without the perch. The more afraid we are, the tighter we hold on, and the more we have trapped ourselves.

When she realized this she asked the merchant how he would go about "unteaching" this behavior. "Easy," he said, "You just show them how to release their grip, and then they can fly as free as they want."

Suze Orman, 9 Steps to Financial Freedom (Three Rivers Press, 2000), p. 262; submitted by Gino Grunberg, Gig Harbor, Washington

This is at the core of so many issues: We become the people that we are thru the disadvantage and conflicts we prefer to more comfortable alternatives.

I have 5 children & I love my children. As a parent, you're always disadvantaging yourself so that you can demonstrate your love to your kids. Early marriage, it's easy...you have kids and all of sudden you change your desires and needs to meet theirs.

You disadvantage yourself to live at a higher level (economically, spiritually, emotionally) This is really obvious with people who have addictions. They don't want to sacrifice too much to live at a higher level...I went to college & seminary to pastor (6-7 years of my life I disadvantaged myself to be where I am today.) You can choose to stay in bed, watch TV and do your own thing, but don't complain if you need money. You choose not disadvantage yourself. You can't live at a higher level.

Do you want God's blessings? I'm not going to say tithing is easy and there aren't any sacrifices when you do it. The thing you disadvantage yourself for is the thing that makes you what you are.

You're going to miss out if you don't get these values established in your life...God gives you promises of security, protection and provision.

Phil. 4.19 – God will supply all you need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus...

Golfer Arnold Palmer once played a series of exhibition matches in Saudi Arabia. The king was so impressed that he proposed to give Palmer a gift. Palmer demurred; "It really isn't necessary, Your Highness. I'm honored to have been invited."

"I would be deeply upset," replied the king, "if you would not allow me to give you a gift."

Palmer thought for a moment and said, "All right. How about a golf club? That would be a beautiful memento of my visit to your country."

The next day, delivered to Palmer's hotel, was the title to a golf club. Thousands of acres, trees, lakes, clubhouse, and so forth.

Brennan Manning, Lion and Lamb: The Relentless Tenderness of Jesus (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker, 1986), p. 165; submitted by B

If he'd given Arnold Palmer a Ping golf club he would have given out of his riches, but giving him a golf club he gave according to his riches...God gives us according to His riches...the King of Saudia Ariabia is nothing compared to the great King of Heaven & Earth