

God's Treasure Principles
Part 1 – Ownership vs. Stewardship
May 20, 2012
KGF Church

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www.kgfchurch.com

Treasure Hunt:

- It's the long weekend, and the unofficial start to summer, so I've done something that I hope will be a fun family activity, but also a great kickoff to our new series, "God's Treasure Principles"
- I've hidden a treasure box somewhere in Kelowna, and I want you to find it!
- Some of you may have heard of geo-caching. . .
- Popular sport this past dozen or so years with the rise of GPS, Global Positioning Systems.
- Basically what happens is someone goes and hides a box or a cache, and then publishes the GPS coordinates for others to go and discover.
- So this week I went and planted a treasure box (*show photo*) filled with goodies for those adventurous types.
- The GPS coordinates are located at the bottom of your bulletin, along with one hint.
 - *It's in a mountain-top park over-looking a golf course and cemetery*
- Encourage you to go find it, use the disposable camera inside to take a picture of yourself, write your name in the booklet, and take one of the "treasures" that you'll find inside.
- Next week, want to show photos of those who discovered this treasure.

Lure of Treasure:

- The reason I'm starting with that activity is because the lure of treasure is great in our lives.
- Some of you want to leave church right now to start looking!
- If I said there was a million dollars inside that box (and I'm not saying there isn't!) many of you would be out the door right now.
- Because treasure and money and possessions have a huge draw on our lives.
- And the question we want to tackle over the next three weeks is does God have anything to say on the issue of earthly treasures?
- What are God's Treasure Principles?

Open Bibles:

- Invite you to open your Bibles to Matthew 6, open to message outline in bulletin, go online to www.kgfchurch.com/live to join in with our live event through YouVersion.

2350 Verses:

- Here's the bottom line.
- When it comes to issues of money, possessions, treasures, and how we handle them properly, God has a lot to say!
- In fact, there are 2350 verses in scripture that deal with how we handle money, and possessions and treasures.
- And I want to read them all today 😊
- More verses than prayer, faith, heaven, hell, put together.
- Apart from the identity of God himself, we learn more in the Bible on this topic than any other.

Why So Many?

- The sheer enormity of Scripture's teaching on this subject screams for our attention.
- Why does God give us all this instruction on money and possessions?
- With so much to be said, so much he could tell us that we really need and want to know, why did the Savior of the world spend a full 15 percent of his recorded words on this one subject?
- Almost half of the parables and one out of ten verses in the Gospel deal directly with the subject of money.
- Why did he say more about how we are to view and handle money and possessions than about any other single thing?

Spiritual Connection:

- Here's the timeless principle – there is a powerful relationship between a person's true spiritual condition and his attitude and actions concerning money and possessions.
- How you handle money is a strong indicator of your walk with God.
- That's why Jesus said, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."
- If you want to know what someone treasures, look at where they spend their money.

- You want to know what is important to me?
- Find out where my money goes.
- This may be a harsh statement, but if people claim God is important in their lives, and yet their financial decisions show no evidence of that, their claim of God's importance is definitely up for grabs.
- Money is an index of our spiritual life.

God Cares!

- Maybe you didn't know God cared that much about this area.
- Maybe you're frustrated that He cares so much about this area.
- Why?
- He cares about this area because it is incredibly relevant to our daily life.
- People are shipwrecking their lives as they pursue the "small g" god of money, possessions & stuff.

God Knows This:

- So if God cares so much about this area, and has said so much about this area of our lives, I think it's worth taking time to hear His heart.
- This is why we're going to spend three weeks at KGF on God's treasure principles.

Volunteers:

- I need two strong men to volunteer to help me with an on-stage demonstration

Volunteer A - big sign "Mind & Heart of God"

Volunteer B - big sign "Culture"

Daily Tug of War:

- You and I are engaged daily in a cosmic tug of war.
- Every day we are faced with two opposing perspectives when it comes to the treasures of our heart.
- On one side is the pull of the "Culture" and the other, "Mind and Heart of God"

- Which side should we put the stronger person on?
- Depends on which side you want to win, doesn't it!

Which Side Winning?

- Which side is winning in your life?
 - Every time you turn on the TV, this side picks up the rope.
 - Every time you walk through that electronic's store, this side picks up the rope.
 - Every time you pick up a flyer, open up a new credit card application. . . the culture is pulling
 - Every time you turn to God for perspective.
 - Every time you seek Godly counsel, this side wins
 - Every time you pick up the Bible, this side picks up the rope.
- For the next three weeks, we are going to do whatever we can to help this (GOD) side win in your life.

Three Myths of Culture:

- The Pull of the Culture exerts a tremendous influence on us and through its power we have come to accept as truth the follow myths:

Tape these phrases to the tug of rope.

1) "Things bring happiness."

- We hear the never-ending litany: "Buy me! Wear me! Drive me! Drink me! Put me on your face or in your hair, and you'll find happiness and popularity and fame."
- What a huge lie.
- There are mountains of evidence to the contrary.
- If things brought happiness, our society would be the most blissful society on the planet, since we have more "stuff" than any other.
- Unfortunately, by many measures, we are not a happy nation.

- We need only to look at the current suicide, divorce, and depression statistics to see we are not a happy nation.
- In fact, the data seems to suggest there is often an inverse correlation between our material acquisitions and our happiness.

2) **“Debt is expected and unavoidable.”**

- Debt in our culture is made to appear glamorous by dressing it up in a tuxedo and calling it “credit.”
- Our culture promotes credit as painless and without negative consequences.
- But the truth is there are huge negative consequences to debt, both economic and spiritual.
- People are being crushed by the effect of debt, suffering tremendous anxiety and concern over meeting payments.
- Marriages and relationships are torn apart by the conflict and anxiety created by debt.
- We mortgage our future on depreciating items that will be used up, worn out, and thrown away before they are paid for.
- The spiritual dangers of debt are so huge and include feeding envy and greed, presuming upon a certain future, and denying God the opportunity to teach us through providing in his way (rather than our going into debt) or by denying us something we may want but – for his reasons – would not be in our best interest.

3) **“A little more money will solve your problems.”**

- The truth, of course, is that until we have learned to manage what we currently make and live within our income, making more will simply allow us to spend more and to continue to fuel the need for “just a little bit more.”

Heart & Mind of God:

- Unlike the Pull of the Culture, God doesn’t shout or plead.
- In His ever-quiet voice, He asks us to be faithful to Him.
- He is telling us:

- 1) Things don't bring happiness
- 2) Debt is not the normal
- 3) Money is not the solution

- God is inviting us to put His treasure principles first in our lives.

Volunteers can have a seat

Scripture – Matthew 6

- WE see this tug of war so clearly in Matthew 6, look with me, verses 19 and following

Read Matthew 6:19-34

Unpack 3 Principles:

- Here's what we're going to do.
- We're going to look at one of God's Treasure Principles each week for three weeks.
- If these three treasure principles can take root in each of our lives, I guarantee it you will live a more satisfied and fulfilled life where the tug of war stops.

Treasure Principle #1

- Here's God's Treasure Principle #1
- And it's number one because it's the biggest.
- It influences everything else we are going to talk about.
- If you can really get this, it will change how you view money and possessions.

Steward Not Owner:

- You are a steward not an owner.
- What you have isn't yours, it's Gods.
- He has lent it to you.
- He has entrusted you with it.
- But you are not owners.
- You are stewards of what is his.

Trustee:

- A modern analogy to that of being a steward would be being a trustee.
- If you were incapacitated, and someone was made trustee of your estate, that person would have no rights to those assets that belonged to you, simply the responsibility to manage them in the way that was in your best interest.
- In a similar fashion, the Bible makes clear that in the eternal perspective, we own nothing; God has simply entrusted us with resources that ultimately belong to him.
- Consequently, we are to use them in ways that honor and please him.
- A good steward uses God given resources to accomplish God given goals.

My . . .

- Your house. . . . is not yours, you are stewards of it.
- Your car. . . is not yours, you are stewards of it.
- Your paycheck. . . is not yours, you are stewards of it.
- Everything you own has been entrusted to you by God, and is his.
- And he will ask for an account of what you did with what was his.

Parable of Talents:

- One of my life stories of Jesus is the parable of the talents.
- Would you flip ahead there in Matthew 25:14-30

*Unpack parable together.***Stewardship Heart of Scripture:**

- The concept of stewardship versus ownership is at the heart of everything the Bible has to say about money and our proper relationship to it.
- We came into the world with nothing, and we will leave the world with nothing.
- Everything that we have in the interim has been entrusted to us by a loving God who created all things and retained ownership of everything He created.
- We are the trustees of the resources that God has provided to us and we must cultivate a mindset of managing resources rather than owning them.

- We are to use the resources in ways that honor and please Him.

Key Question:

- Want you to ask yourself this question. . .
- If I truly viewed what I had from a “stewardship” perspective instead of an “ownership” perspective, how would my life change?
- I know for me I would be more careful with how I handled what isn’t mine.
- Because in the end, I will be giving an account for what I did with what I was given.

Examples:

- Think of the way you drive a borrowed car, versus your own.
- Think of the way you take care of a friend’s house that invited you to stay there in their absence.

With Church Resources:

- I look at it the same way as the resources our church family gives to this church.
- I am part of a team that stewards those resources to the best of our ability.
- We want to handle ourselves with integrity, transparency, faithfulness, and wisdom.
- And we do that because we have been entrusted with resources that aren’t ours!
- They aren’t even yours.
- They are God’s.
- And in the end, I will be asked to give an account for how I and we stewarded what was entrusted to us.

Owner or Steward?

- Are you handling your God-given treasures the same way?
- Would those who look at your life see you with the mindset of “Owner” or “Steward”?
- Are you doing a good job of stewarding God’s resources?

Spiritual Issue:

- End of the day, God views how you handle money, how I handle money, as a spiritual issue.
- We can either let the pull of our culture win, or the pull of the mind & heart of God win.
- Which is winning in your life?

- There's a reason why the Bible says you can not serve two masters, money or God.
- You will either love one or hate the other.
- For some of you, money is the chief rival god.
- Money is standing in the way of God being first in your life.
- In the US, they still have the slogan "In God We Trust" on their money. . . I find that so interesting, because for many people, it's really "In Money We Trust".
- God has been pushed out of his rightful position as people pursue earthly treasures.
- He can't take first place if first place is already taken.

Restoring God:

- You want to know how we can restore God to his rightful place?
- Stop and ask yourself this question.
- What lasts beyond the grave?

All Goes Back in Box:

- John Ortberg book "It All Goes Back in the Box"
- Book we give out to people who are getting baptized & new members.
- Love it because at the end of the day, everything goes back in the box, and only one thing goes beyond the grave. . .and that is people!
- When you step back and realize that your short time on earth is but a blip in the span of eternity, it really does put things in perspective.

Eternity:

- The real question about how we view our money and possessions is not a question of the immediate but of the eternal.
- Without a doubt, the single greatest contributor in our inability to see money and possessions in their true light is our persistent failure to see our present lives through the lens of eternity.

Interview: Steve & Scott

- I'm going to ask two friends to join me on stage, Steve Klassen & Scott Peckford
 - Let me start with you Scott, tell me what happened when you chose not to live by God's Treasure Principles.

- Steve, why is getting your mind around this stewardship principle so crucial.
- Super Group – what it'll look like, who should attend.

Important Stuff:

- Friends, this is so important to get our hearts and heads around this.
- Because how you handle money is a huge window into what you treasure.
- How you manage your money is not just a financial issue, but a spiritual issue

Next Steps:

- This series can't stay in the abstract, it must get personally, and there are five ways we are going to seek to do that in the coming three weeks.
- Inside your bulletin are these five, also a chance for you to sign up is right there.

1. Four Week “Super Group” Steve & Scott starting this Wednesday Night

2. Website resources, www.kgfchurch.com

Survey this week online, can access through today's YouVersion event

3. Books available - Treasure Principle & Fields of Gold, \$10 each, 2 for \$20

4. Personal booklet, Getting A Grip on their Resources

5. Al Thiessen Seminar – Saturday June 3rd based on booklet , 9am – noon, free childcare included

Survey in Bulletin:

Going to give you a moment to complete that little survey.

1. I view myself as a “Steward” of God's Treasures as opposed to an “Owner”
 - a. Absolutely b. Sometimes c. Not often d. Never
2. Those who look at my life would see that God is important by how I handle finances
 - a. Absolutely b. Sometimes c. Not often d. Never
3. One thing I need God to help me with in this area is:
 - a. _____
4. My next step in this series is to:
 - a. Sign up for the Four Week Super Group
 - b. Attend the Getting a Godly Grip Financial Seminar June 3rd
 - c. Buy the book “Treasure Principle” or “Fields of Gold”
 - d. Begin working through free booklet on stewardship principles

Stand & Close:

- Invite you to stand with me as we close.
- Want you to tear that off and keep it with you for this series, a reminder of what you're asking God to do in you.
- Want to pray for you today.

Next Steps:

Scott & Steve, at Resource Table, taking sign ups for Super Group starting Wednesday night

Booklets available

KGF ONE Service, response cards & sign up for help that day.

KGF Family Camping Weekend – Kettle River, Sign up Fireside Room

Go Treasure Hunting! Coordinates & Clue in Bulletin

Benediction:

“And this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus. Now all glory to God our Father forever and ever! Amen.”

Philippians 4:19,20

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Matthew 6 & 25
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Treasure Hunt! Geocaching (GPS)

- North 49° 53' 33.78", West 119° 26' 44.28"
- *Mountain-top park over-looking a golf course and cemetery*

Scripture on Money, Possessions & Treasures

- There are _____ verses in scripture that deal with how we handle money, and possessions and treasures.
- Why so Many?
- There is a powerful relationship between a person's true _____ condition and his attitude and actions concerning _____ and _____.
- Money is an index of our spiritual life.

Tug of War – Pull of Culture vs. Heart & Mind of God.

Three Myths of Culture:

- 1) "_____ bring happiness."
- 2) "_____ is expected and unavoidable."
- 3) "A little more _____ will solve your problems."

Matthew 6:19-34 – Store Up...

Treasure Principle #1

I am a _____ not an _____
 Idea of "trustee"

***Matthew 25:14-30* Parable of Talents:**

In View of Eternity:

Personal Testimony – Steve & Scott

"Jesus said more about money than any other single thing because, when it comes to a person's real nature, money is of first importance." Richard Halverson

God's Treasure Principles
Personal Next Steps:

1. Four Week "Super Group" Steve & Scott starting this Wednesday Night

May 23rd – Budgeting - What is financial planning, budgeting basics, why will power doesn't work, how to overcome psychological barriers

May 30th – Debt and Liabilities - Questions about debt (mortgages and interest rates), the true cost of debt, paying off debt versus increasing savings, do Christians need life insurance

June 6th Saving & Investing - What savings tools are available, how much to save, the time value of money, what is a mutual fund, what is an RRSP, ethical investing

June 13th - Retirement for Christians - How much do you need, how should you spend it, income tax issues before and after retirement, charitable giving

2. Website resources, www.kgfchurch.com

Survey this week online

3. Books Available – "Treasure Principle" & "Fields of Gold", \$10 each

4. Personal Workbook, "Getting A Grip – Putting Christian Stewardship Principles Into Practice"

Provided by BC MB Conference, fantastic free resource

5. Half-Day Practical Seminar (based on above booklet) with MB Conference Stewardship Leader, Al Thiessen from Abbotsford – Saturday June 3rd, 9am – noon, free childcare included

Personal Reflection Survey:

1. I view myself as a "Steward" of God's Treasures as opposed to an "Owner"
 - e. Absolutely b. Sometimes c. Not often d. Never
2. Those who look at my life would see that God is important by how I handle finances
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