

EPHESIANS 4:1 & 11-16

STEWARDING OUR STEWARDSHIP – PART 2

Walk in a manner that fits our calling:

steward talent, time & treasure to *display Jesus' Kingship*

Cov-Pres

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1 Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called,.... 11 And He gave some...12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. 14 As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; 15 but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all *aspects* into Him who is the head, *even* Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

Introduction: Mark 1:1 & 15 *The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God...* 15 *The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.*

Gospel stewardship is seeking Jesus' kingdom in concrete, practical, daily ways:
utilizing talent, time & treasure to bring praise to God's glory and grace in Christ Jesus. Matt. 6:33

ONE: Stewards of Creation My task is not to convince you to be a steward...
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Genesis 1 & 2: God as Ruler/King/Protector/Provider Genesis 1 & 2: Realms/Spheres and their Rulers/Stewards

Day 1: Light-Day/Darkness-Night **Day 2:** Expanse: Heaven-Sky/Waters below Day 3:
Waters/DryLand + plants

Day 4: Sun/Moon(stars) separate day & night/mark seasons/years **Day 5:** Winged birds/sea creatures multiply Day 6: Living creatures & man (in God's image (male & female) multiply/subdue/rule earth & creatures.

First creation (Gal 1:4: *this present evil age*)

New creation

Broken relationships: with God, self, family, neighbor, creation
My nation, my language, my people: division & often violence
Blood family first (feuds)
Wealth: what I and mine have earned or inherited is mine

Healed/healing of relationships
One new "man"/nation
One new household
Use what I've been entrusted as a steward of the gospel and Christ's church

TWO: Stewards of the New Creation Jesus' death condemns the 1st creation: we are new creation stewards

Reading Ephesians as instructions to stewards (a survey):

see the outline from Part 1, 20120219 online

THREE: Stewarding Talent, Time & Treasure

As new creation stewards we bring praise to Christ's glory & grace from the spheres where he places us.

Who's defining your destination and picking your path?

- 1/ Stewardship is shepherding: elders, husbands/parents, owners, citizens of God's household...
- 2/ *Don't let yourself get side-tracked by nuanced debates on the details of tithing and giving:* the simple reality is you, individually, and the local body, in community, function well only when each part of the body shares talent, time & treasure from hearts stirred to generosity by seeing our King Jesus.

Eph 1: 18-23; 3:13-21

To understand giving we need to see Christ and the task he calls us to support.

a/ Our giving of First fruits & Tithe(*tenth*)/Offerings are to be faith-building remembrances

Giving, fellowshiping and feasting before the Lord are at the heart of God's plan.

b/ NT Implications of First fruits: James 1:18 Romans 8:23 1 Corinthians 15:23

c/ NT Implications of tithe/offerings: Genesis 14:20 Malachi 3:8-12 Matthew 6:19-21 Matthew 23:23

See also: Matthew 25:14-29 Luke 12:16-21 Luke 16:1-13 Acts 2:44-47 Acts 20:35 Romans 12:1-2
1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 16:1-4 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12.15 Philippians 4:10-19

3/ Stewardship of the church by elders is parallel to the priesthood's stewardship of the Temple: radical depravity still demands that elders steward the church re: its workers and its ministries (word, wealth & deeds).

4/ Trusting God 's Gospel with the Present and the Future

a/ As a part of their calling leaders are called (Eph 4) to equip and teach the saints to cover the expenses of their worship and those they deem it wise (because of giftedness and opportunity) to set free to make their living of the church.

b/ Cov Pres' current realities and needs.

The BAD

The GOOD

The OPPORTUNITY to practice Biblical faith: trusting God with the present and the future:

Stewarding our present personal resources...

Stewarding our weaker practices and personal debt...

Taking our part in the local, accountable, visible household of God seriously...

5/ Growing in stewardship of more than money: gospel-centered use of time and spiritual gifts...