

Generosity

ALL TO *Jesus* | SURRENDER

OWNERSHIP

Generosity | Devan Bumstead
Psalm 24:1, Matt. 6:22-23, Mk. 14:3-9

THE AMERICAN DREAM – OWNERSHIP

1st Century Philosophies of Wealth

- **Non-Ownership** (Greek / Plato)
- **Ownership** (Roman / Western)
- **Stewardship** (Jesus)

THE STEWARDSHIP LENS

THEOLOGY OF STEWARDSHIP

Verses throughout the Bible that communicate God is the owner and we are the caretakers

- **Genesis 1:1, Genesis 2:7, Genesis 2:15, Leviticus 25:23, Deuteronomy 8:18, 1 Chronicles 29:9-16, Psalm 24:1, Psalm 50:9-12, Matthew 10:8, 1 Corinthians 4:7, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, Philippians 3:20, 1 Peter 2:11, Colossians 1:16**

STEWARDSHIP – The active and responsible management of God’s creation for God’s purposes

STEWARDSHIP PARABLES

MANAGER

Luke 16:1-13, Luke 12:42-48

- ***oikonomos*** – House manager, steward

TALENTS

Matthew 25:14-40, Luke 19:12-27

- ***dulos*** – slave, servant

TENANTS

Matthew 21:33-46, Mark 12:1-12, Luke 20:9-19

- ***geōrgos*** – farmer, tenant farmer, share cropper

Matthew 6:22-23 – Lens of generosity lights the whole body.

“I’ve learned to hold all things loosely, because it hurts when God pries my fingers open.”
Corrie ten Boom

Mark 14:3-9 – Woman and the alabaster jar

SERMON SUMMARY

Feel free to read this message summary to the group before your discussion to refresh their memory on its central themes.

The main idea was that we need to exchange our cultural lens of ownership for God's lens of stewardship. American culture teaches us that ownership equals security and success, but Scripture consistently tells us that God owns everything—from the earth itself to our very breath—and we're simply caretakers or managers of His resources. Jesus taught extensively through parables that we're stewards who should invest 100% of what God has given us, not just 10%. The sermon challenged us to adopt a Kingdom perspective where our security comes from belonging to God rather than possessing things, and closed with the story of the woman who broke her alabaster jar and poured expensive perfume on Jesus—a powerful picture of surrendering everything back to the One who gave it all for us.

LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS

Question 1: (Read Psalm 24:1 and 1 Chronicles 29:14)

What's one possession, resource, or area of your life where you've been living as an "owner" rather than a "steward"? What would it look like practically to shift your perspective in that area?

CONTEXT: The pastor shared how King David, after gathering massive resources for the temple, prayed: "Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand." David understood that even his generous giving was simply returning to God what already belonged to Him. The sermon emphasized that everything—our homes, jobs, time, bodies, and money—belongs to the Lord, and we're called to be faithful managers of it all.

Question 2: (Read Matthew 6:22-23)

Jesus says that if our eyes are generous, our whole body will be full of light, but if our eyes are stingy, our whole body will be full of darkness. How have you experienced this truth—either the freedom of generosity or the darkness of holding tightly to your possessions?

CONTEXT: The pastor explained that God wants us to put on the "stewardship lens" because He loves us and wants to fill our whole bodies with light. Neuroscience confirms that giving brings more happiness than receiving, activating our brain's reward and pleasure centers. God designed us to experience joy through generosity, not through accumulation.

Question 3: (Read Genesis 2:15 and Genesis 3:6)

The sermon explained that stewardship was God's plan A from the beginning—not a redemptive measure after sin. How does understanding that we were created to be co-rulers and caretakers with God (rather than independent owners) change your view of your daily work and responsibilities?

CONTEXT: In the Garden, God entrusted humanity to care for and co-rule the earth with Him in a dynamic partnership of love, trust, and creativity. But when Eve "saw" and "took" the fruit, we discarded our dependence on God and assumed His role as provider. Nearly every sin begins with being uncomfortable depending on God alone, so we try to fill with counterfeits what only God can fill completely.

Question 4: (Read Luke 16:10 and Matthew 25:14-30)

Jesus' parables about stewardship show that "whoever can be trusted with little can be trusted with much." What "little" has God currently entrusted to you, and how are you investing it for Kingdom purposes? Where might you be "hiding" resources out of fear like the servant with one talent?

CONTEXT: The pastor walked through Jesus' stewardship parables, emphasizing that the faithful servants invested ALL of what the master gave them—five bags, three bags—not just a portion. The unfaithful servant hid his one bag out of fear. Jesus has high expectations for stewards, and those who leverage God's resources well get rewarded with even more, while those who don't face consequences.

Question 5:

The sermon contrasted the American Dream with the Kingdom of God. The American Dream says "acquire more so you can be secure," while the Kingdom says "you are secure because you belong to the Father." Where do you see these competing narratives battling in your own heart and decisions?

CONTEXT: The pastor acknowledged the tension of living as disciples of Jesus in American culture, noting that while we have incredible freedoms to appreciate, there's a great conflict between the American Dream and the Kingdom of God. The American Dream ties ownership to identity—to own is to matter, to be significant, to have arrived. But this cultural attitude is in direct conflict with the Kingdom, where our identity comes from belonging to God, not from what we possess.

Question 6: (Read Mark 14:3-9)

The woman with the alabaster jar broke something extremely valuable and poured it all out on Jesus. What is your "alabaster jar"—the thing you're holding onto that God might be inviting you to break and pour out in radical surrender? What's holding you back?

CONTEXT: The pastor closed with this powerful story, explaining that when this woman's eyes were fully opened to see that Jesus was the Messiah, her only impulse was to take everything she once held dear—her source of security, meaning, and worth—and pour it all out on her Creator. Jesus said this story would be told wherever the gospel is preached because it perfectly demonstrates the response to the good news: giving all you love, all your heart, all your soul, and all you own back to Jesus.

Question 7:

Corrie ten Boom said, "I've learned to hold all things loosely, because it hurts when God pries my fingers open." Share about a time when God had to pry your fingers open. What did you learn about Him and about yourself through that experience?

CONTEXT: The pastor admitted his own struggle with holding onto possessions and finding worth in his stuff, but testified that when he's truly transferred ownership over to God, it's incredibly freeing. When our hearts aren't tethered to our stuff, we can experience loss without being heartbroken—disappointed but not lost—because there's nothing anyone could take from us that would take away the presence of God.