

“The Door of Trust”
The Rev. S. Shane Nanney ~ October 20, 2024
Proverbs 3:5-6, Mark 10:35-45

Have you ever done a trust fall? It is basically trusting that a person or a group of people will catch you as you fall backwards. You are totally helpless in the fall and these people must do their best to save you from getting hurt. I have had some experiences where they did not catch me. Now you know why I have a cynical view of humanity. But trusting God is an invitation to deeper faith and the path to peace. Through stewardship, we unlock the door to the abundant life He offers.

We begin today with a focus on trust—specifically, how our trust in God impacts the way we manage the resources that He has given us. Proverbs 3:5-6 teaches us: “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to Him, and He will make your paths straight.” This passage is not just about trusting God in spiritual matters but also in how we handle the everyday gifts of time, talent, and treasure. Stewardship invites us to walk through the open door of trust, where we will experience God’s faithfulness and provision.

If you wish to be a better steward with what God has given to you, it starts with recognizing that everything we have belongs to God. Our money, abilities, and even the time we have each day are resources that God has entrusted to us. We are managers of these resources, and one day, we will be called to account for how we used them.

Think about the Parable of the Talents in Matthew 25:14-30. Each servant was entrusted with a sum of money, and the master expected them to use it wisely. The ones who invested and multiplied their resources were rewarded, while the one who hid his talent out of fear faced judgment. This parable shows us that God expects us to actively use what He has given us—not hoard it but invest it wisely in His kingdom.

Stewardship is more than just managing resources, it’s a spiritual discipline. It goes along with the other spiritual disciplines like prayer, meditation, worship, sacrifice, and study to name a few. It’s about intentionally aligning our time, talents, and treasure with God’s purposes. When we make stewardship a priority, we acknowledge that everything belongs to God, and we get to play a part in God’s greater plan.

Stewardship also opens the door to participating in something larger than ourselves. God invites us to support ministries that excite and inspire us, from feeding the hungry to spreading the gospel around the world. Whether it's through financial giving, volunteering, or offering our skills to a cause we believe in, we have the opportunity to be part of something that makes an eternal impact.

Time is a resource we often take for granted, but it's something we can never get back once it's gone. The Bible encourages us to be wise with our time. Ephesians 5:15-16 says, "Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity." Stewardship of time means prioritizing what really matters. Are we using our time to serve others, to deepen our relationship with God, and to invest in causes that reflect His love?

One of the greatest ways we can be stewards our time is by supporting ministries and organizations that serve others. Whether we dedicate time to local charities, global missions, or simply investing in someone's life by mentoring or discipling them, we are making the most of every opportunity for God's kingdom.

God has also given each of us unique abilities and talents. These are not to be hidden or used solely for personal gain. 1 Peter 4:10 tells us, "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace." Stewardship of talents means identifying and using our gifts in ways that build up the body of Christ and serve the world around us.

Perhaps you have a passion for teaching, hospitality, music, or leadership. These talents can be used to support ministries that excite you. For example, if you have a talent for organizing, you might find fulfillment in helping coordinate events or fundraisers for a ministry you care about. If you love children, you could support a local or international ministry that focuses on child education or welfare.

And when it comes to finances, Jesus made it clear that our money is often tied to our hearts. Matthew 6:21 says, "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Stewardship of treasure means using our financial resources to further God's work, not hoarding wealth for ourselves. God calls us to trust Him with our finances, giving generously to support ministries and causes that align with His kingdom.

God's challenge in Malachi 3:10 is a promise: "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse...test me in this," says the Lord, "And see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven." When we trust God with our treasure, we are not only obeying His call to give but also investing in ministries that make a real difference in people's lives—ministries that feed the hungry, care for the sick, support mission work, and spread the gospel.

Giving to ministries that excite us allows us to participate in the joy of seeing God's work in action. It connects our hearts to what God is doing in the world, and it deepens our trust in Him as we release our resources into His hands.

Proverbs 3:5-6 tells us to trust in the Lord with all our hearts and lean not on our own understanding. This applies not only to our spiritual walk but also to how we manage our resources. Trusting God with our time, talents, and treasure means believing that He knows better than we do and that His plans are for our good. It means trusting that when we give our resources to support ministries or people in need, God will meet our needs in return.

Many of us struggle with the idea of giving away our time or money. We fear we won't have enough for ourselves or our families. But stewardship is about letting go of that fear and trusting that God will provide. Giving to ministries that excite us can be a joyful way to practice this trust. Whether we are supporting a local food bank, relief efforts in natural disaster areas, or a church outreach program, we can know that God sees our sacrifice and will reward our faith.

Generosity brings freedom. When we give freely—especially to ministries and causes that ignite our passion—we release ourselves from the grip of materialism and fear. There is joy in giving when we know we are part of something that is making a real difference in the world. Supporting ministries that align with our passions, allows us to invest in something eternal, something that brings glory to God and helps others.

I want to challenge each of you to think about the ministries that excite you—ministries that serve others and align with God's heart. How can you support them with your time, your talents, or your treasure? Stewardship is an opportunity to trust God and be part of something greater than ourselves. Today, I invite you to walk through the open door of trust, allowing God to use your resources to bless others and further His kingdom. Amen.