

Stewardship Lesson 10: Equipping for the Future

Theme Verse for Series: Matthew 22:36-39

“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”

Jesus replied: Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.

This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself.

Stewardship principles: Love God, love your neighbor, spread the Gospel.

1. First thought to consider:
 - a. It is untenable to anticipate every possible stewarding situation and/or opportunity. This is why Jesus focuses on principles (universal truths) as opposed to specific rules like the Pharisees did.
 - b. Consider the lesson series over the Sermon on the Mount:
 - i. You have heard it said... (specific rule), but I say to you (universal principle)
 - ii. Stewardship is the same idea. Jesus teaches us stewarding principles rather than stewarding rules.
 - c. We prayerfully listen to the Holy Spirit as we apply stewarding principles to unique and diverse situations every day. There will always be unknown situations. We foster the principles of stewardship, guided by the Holy Spirit, to effectively steward every-changing situations.
 - d. *Why is it good stewarding to abide by Jesus’ principles, as opposed to focusing on specific rules? (Consider the fact that situations change, but the principles do not)*
2. Everyone has the opportunity to be stewards in something
 - a. Truth and unity
 - b. Talents, spiritual gifts, our responsibility to the Body of Christ
 - c. Deeds, words, thoughts, behavior, and integrity
 - d. Relationships, forgiveness, love
 - e. Intellect, emotions
 - f. Health, physical body
 - g. Resources (time, creation, money)
3. Regardless of age or position, God expects us to be good stewards.
 - a. We should be mindful of affording others the opportunity to participate in stewarding principles
 - i. Children are the church of today, not just the future. They should learn how to be good stewards.
 - ii. People with different economic backgrounds should not be kept from stewardship opportunities in the body of Christ.
 - b. *How can we be good stewards in helping others to apply stewarding principles?*

4. Matthew 5:16 says, “Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify our Father who is in heaven.”
 - a. Applying stewardship principles to this verse suggests that even our good works should be used in an equipping manner.
 - b. To shine “...in such a way...” suggests purpose beyond my own – being mindful of God’s purpose as opposed to self-gratification.

5. Looking toward the future...
 - a. Online presence
 - i. This topic was discussed during a previous lesson, but it bears another mention here because it is ever-changing
 - ii. Social media is an opportunity for stewardship. How can we follow stewardship principles (love God, love others, spread Gospel) with our social media presence?
 - iii. Artificial Intelligence (AI)
 1. AI is something that we will have to consider in the very near future. AI is creating news content, personalities, art, science content, etc. As stewards of God’s resources, we need to consider how we use (or respond to) AI in a godly manner.
 2. How can we use AI in a biblical stewarding way?
 - iv. *How can we equip the church to properly steward online presence? (focus on the three stewarding principles)*

6. *Questions to consider:*
 - a. *Where has the Lord led you to reconsider stewardship principles that may be new to you?*
 - b. *How might your day-to-day life look different when applying the three principles of godly stewardship?*
 - c. *How does focusing on the principles of stewardship change your faith in God?*
 - d. *The overall focus of Hillcrest this past year has been “Faith in Action.” How does proper application of godly stewardship principles fit into this focus?*