

Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church



Weekly Sermon Series

Generosity...Management 1 Chronicles 29:14–17; Matt. 25:14–30

The scriptures are clear. Everything comes from God. At best we are managers, not owners, of anything on earth. King David, addressing the people at the time of receiving offerings for the building of the Temple, made that point when he said, "...all things come from you (God), and of your own have we given you" (1 Chronicles 29:14b).

The parable of the talents told by Jesus makes the same point (Matthew 25:14–30). Each person is a steward, responsible for the management of what has been given. Good management is rewarded according to what each has done with what was given. Each person had to make account. Those who returned the talents with increase to the owner were rewarded. The person who hid the talent, not using it, was chastised and punished. His management was lacking.

So we also are stewards and managers of what God has given us. How are we doing with our management of money, property, the environment, and the natural world? Does it matter how we treat the earth, our property, our money? What are your values about stewardship, care of the earth, property, and resources?

In our society “private property” is a concept that leads us to believe that we “own” property. Yet scripture contradicts this idea by reminding us that it all comes from God and we are simply temporary managers. Property passes to us and through us on the way to the next generations. We are but a short stretch along the road of time. We have a relatively short time to be accountable for what we receive. So what are we doing with what we have received?

Here’s a difficult personal question: How do you think you will be judged when you are asked to give an accounting for what you have been responsible?

Remembering the parable by Jesus about the talents, what will you tell the Master when he returns?

A famous poem called “Success,” carries the line that to be successful one “leaves the world better than he found it.” Being good managers of God’s world surely includes this goal. Generosity is rooted in the fact that everything we have has come from God. So we cheerfully give back what was given to us. Lord, we seek to be generous and good managers of your creation. Give us wisdom and strength to take care of what is our responsibility. Amen.

-- Week of November 9, 2008