

# Metho-huh? Week 6: Stewardship

## Scripture

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### **2 Corinthians 9:6-15**

The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work. As it is written,

'He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor;  
his righteousness endures for ever.'

He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us; for the rendering of this ministry not only supplies the needs of the saints but also overflows with many thanksgivings to God. Through the testing of this ministry you glorify God by your obedience to the confession of the gospel of Christ and by the generosity of your sharing with them and with all others, while they long for you and pray for you because of the surpassing grace of God that he has given you. Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

### **Mark 4:3-9, 13-20**

'Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seed fell on the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and it sprang up quickly, since it had no depth of soil. And when the sun rose, it was scorched; and since it had no root, it withered away. Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain. Other seed fell into good soil and brought forth grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirty and sixty and a hundredfold.' And he said, 'Let anyone with ears to hear listen!'

And he said to them, 'Do you not understand this parable? Then how will you understand all the parables? The sower sows the word. These are the ones on the path where the word is sown: when they hear, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that is sown in them. And these are the ones sown on rocky ground: when they hear the word, they immediately receive it with joy. But they have no root, and endure only for a while; then, when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away. And others are those sown among the thorns: these are the ones who hear the word, but the cares of the world, and the lure of wealth, and the desire for other things come in and choke the word, and it yields nothing. And these are the ones sown on the good soil: they hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirty and sixty and a hundredfold.'

# Questions

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- 1.) Pastor Sandy gave one of his film reviews for *Margin Call*, a film of a Wall Street company realizing their investments are worth nothing. This company ruined the lives of many people in order to keep their company afloat. Sandy said the film asked this question: Is money worth that much to sell ourselves? Have you seen or experienced personally erring on the side of greed? What was the outcome of that greed?
- 2.) Jesus challenges us with what has been given to us. The seeds thrown about by the Sower in the Mark passage land in a few different places. The trampled seeds represent those who have minimal receptivity to God. The seeds on rocky ground represent those interested but lack a depth of commitment. The choking soil represents the things in life that get in the way, primarily wealth. How can wealth inhibit the work of the Holy Spirit? Is Jesus implying that wealth is bad?
- 3.) Occupy Wall Street has become a movement bringing attention to the increase of class division. What should the church's role be in regards to this movement? Should we stay out of it?
- 4.) Barbara Walters recently interviewed Guy Laliberte, the founder of Cirque du Soleil. With his success, he started the One Drop Foundation. He has a commitment to give \$100 million to this foundation using the arts to bring awareness of the lack of quality water in villages in developing nations. Pastor Sandy noted the joy beaming from deep within Guy Laliberte. Giving can bring immense joy. How have you seen others with this radiating glow by their life of giving back?
- 5.) John Wesley grew up in poverty, with a father who landed in debtor's prison and a family with 19 kids. When he became a professor of Latin at Oxford, he had the habit of giving away his income. When asked by Oxford for a refund of his pay, he said that all he had was a silver spoon in London and a silver spoon in Bristol.

Wesley taught us that:

- a.) We are stewards of everything given to us; and
- b.) Gain all you can. Save all you can. Give all you can.

How can this enrich our spiritual lives? What are our hesitations with this discipline?

*Prayer: God, we are grateful for what you do give us. Many of us continue to struggle in this strained economic climate. Illumine to us what the wealth is in our lives. Open our hearts to commit to giving back more. Open our eyes to your treasures in heaven as we hold our earthly treasures in open hands for the use of your Kingdom. In Jesus' name, Amen.*