

5-1-1953

# An Inductive Study of the Principles of Stewardship of Material Goods as Taught in the Four Gospels

Alfred D. Enns

---

## Recommended Citation

Enns, Alfred D., "An Inductive Study of the Principles of Stewardship of Material Goods as Taught in the Four Gospels" (1953). *Western Evangelical Seminary Theses*. 122.  
[http://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/wes\\_theses/122](http://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/wes_theses/122)

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Western Evangelical Seminary at Digital Commons @ George Fox University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Western Evangelical Seminary Theses by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ George Fox University. For more information, please contact [arolf@georgefox.edu](mailto:arolf@georgefox.edu).

APPROVAL SHEET

This thesis has been approved by the following faculty  
committee:

First reader: Eldon Fuhrman Approved May 21, 1953

Second reader: Kenneth P. Wesche Approved May 21, 1953

Form reader: Harv Byrne Approved May 21, 1953

AN INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE PRINCIPLES OF STEWARDSHIP  
OF MATERIAL GOODS AS TAUGHT IN THE FOUR GOSPELS

by

Alfred D. Enns

A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the

Western Evangelical Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

BACHELOR OF DIVINITY

Portland 22, Oregon

May 1953

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED . . . . .	1
The Problem . . . . .	1
Statement of the Problem . . . . .	1
Importance of the Study . . . . .	2
Objective of the Study . . . . .	3
Limitations of the Study . . . . .	3
Definitions of Terms Used . . . . .	3
Steward . . . . .	3
Stewardship . . . . .	4
Acquisition . . . . .	4
Administration . . . . .	4
Giving . . . . .	4
Organization of Material . . . . .	4
II. THE MEANING OF STEWARDSHIP . . . . .	6
Stewardship of the Old Testament Defined . . . . .	6
Stewardship of the New Testament Defined . . . . .	8
Summary . . . . .	12
III. THE STEWARDSHIP OF MATERIAL GOODS IN ACQUISITION . . .	13
The Legitimacy of Acquiring Material Possessions . .	13
Dangers of Covetousness . . . . .	15
Principles of Acquisition . . . . .	17
Honesty and Justice Demanded . . . . .	18
Motive for Acquiring . . . . .	19

CHAPTER	PAGE
Summary . . . . .	21
IV. STEWARDSHIP OF MATERIAL GOODS IN ADMINISTRATION . . . .	22
Possessions to be Used for the Advancement of	
the Kingdom of God . . . . .	22
Different Degrees of Ability . . . . .	22
Faithfulness Rewarded . . . . .	24
Foresight Commended . . . . .	25
A Day of Accounting . . . . .	26
Summary . . . . .	27
V. STEWARDSHIP OF MATERIAL GOODS IN RELATION TO GIVING . .	29
The Basis for Giving . . . . .	29
What is Giving . . . . .	30
Christian Giving Related to Worship . . . . .	31
Motive for Giving . . . . .	33
How Much to Give . . . . .	34
To Whom to Give . . . . .	36
Tithing . . . . .	38
Summary . . . . .	39
VI. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS . . . . .	40
Summary . . . . .	40
Conclusions . . . . .	41
Suggestions for Further Study . . . . .	42
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	44

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

A study of the Scriptures, as well as observing the economic structure of society, reveals that money, or its equivalent in the form of material goods, is vital to the life of every individual.

The problem of wealth is, and has always been, one of the most important ethical problems of the world. Neither religion nor civilization can evade that problem and live.<sup>1</sup>

Money, the most common of temporal things, can be used for good or for evil, depending upon the desire and wish of the individual who has possession of it. For this reason it involves uncommon and eternal consequences.

No wonder, then, that God has given stewardship so important a place in the training of the human race. It is one of the divine kindergarten methods of developing human life. The grace of giving is God's antidote for human selfishness. It has three distinct angles of relation in which to be viewed: upward, in relation to God; inward, in relation to the Individual; outward, in relation to Society.<sup>2</sup>

### THE PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem. Much has already been said and written on the subject of stewardship of material goods. The methods of approach are numerous and varied. Most of the books which this

- 
1. Henry Burton Trimble, The Christian Motive and Method of Stewardship (Nashville, Cokesbury Press, 1930), p. 136.
  2. David McConaughy, Money The Acid Test (Philadelphia, The Westminster Press, 1918), p. x.

investigator was able to examine, made no attempt to present an intensive study or exposition of the New Testament teaching upon this subject. Many parables have often been used to support teachings of stewardship, but upon careful examination the primary purpose of these parables was to teach other truths. The problem is to determine principles of stewardship pertaining to material goods from the teachings of Jesus as found recorded in the Gospels according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

Importance of the Study. Many questions have been asked concerning stewardship of material goods. A few outstanding questions are: (1) What is the prevalent conception of Christian stewardship today in the average man's thinking? (2) Is this conception right? (3) What is the primary purpose of stewardship in the mind of the average person? (4) From what point of view has stewardship been chiefly interpreted and taught? (5) Is this the viewpoint of Jesus?

Julius E. Crawford has said that:

Frank discussion of these and similar questions in personal conversation with many ministers and laymen, with denominational and interdenominational leaders, and in group conferences and meetings of both ministers and laymen, of secretaries of mission boards, boards of education, and other boards, and of stewardship executives, and an investigation of the literature which bears the insignia of stewardship, point to the following conclusions: First, most people think of Christian stewardship in terms of money rather than in terms of life. Second, the primary purpose of stewardship teaching has been financial instead of educational. Third, the bulk of stewardship literature, preaching, and teaching has been from either a legalistic or mixed point of view and has stressed the mechanical observance of a legal requirement supposed to have been laid upon all Christians alike rather than from the viewpoint of Christian liberty and the supremacy of

### Christ in the motives.<sup>3</sup>

Stewardship of material goods or substance is a logical issue because it is impossible for an individual to separate his money from his life and deal with it on a different plane, or in an opposite way, from what he does with his life.

Charles A. Cook has written that:

If a man is a faithful steward of his personality, his talents, his calling, he must necessarily be a faithful steward of his possessions. Personality and possessions cannot be divorced. A man cannot be a true steward for God of the one and not of the other. If a man has not become a faithful steward of property or wealth it is evidence that he has not grasped the meaning of the larger stewardship in its great spiritual applications. . . .<sup>4</sup>

Objective of the Study. It was the purpose of this study, by the inductive English Bible method, to determine principles of Christian stewardship pertaining to material goods as taught by Jesus Christ.

Limitations of the Study. Because of the vastness of the subject and material pertaining to this subject, it was deemed wise to limit this particular study to the teachings of the four Gospels according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

#### DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Steward. The term "steward", as it relates to material goods,

---

3. Julius Earl Crawford, The Stewardship Life (Nashville, Cokesbury Press, 1929), p. 7.

4. Charles A. Cook, The Larger Stewardship (Philadelphia, The Judson Press, 1923), p. 109.

has been interpreted as meaning a person who has been entrusted with the management of estates or affairs not his own. A steward is not the owner but is the individual into whose care and keeping have been placed material goods which he is to acceptably administer for the true and rightful owner.

Stewardship. Throughout the report of this investigation, the term "stewardship" has been interpreted as meaning the tenure of the office as a steward, a position of trust and responsibility in the interest of the one from whom the commission has been received, and for whose exclusive benefit it is administered.

Acquisition. The term "acquisition" in this report has been interpreted as meaning the act of gaining or obtaining possession by one's own physical or intellectual exertions.

Administration. The words "using" and administration" have been used interchangeably and have been interpreted to mean the act of managing and making use of material goods within the individual's care and possession.

Giving. In this study of principles of Christian stewardship as it relates to material goods, the term "giving" has been interpreted to mean the act of conferring gratuitously material goods or money to individuals or agencies whose primary object is the advancement of the Kingdom of God.

#### ORGANIZATION OF MATERIAL

The method used in the presentation of this study has been to

divide the findings into five parts. Chapter two has been devoted to a brief study of the meaning of stewardship in both the Old and the New Testaments. Principles of Christian stewardship in relation to the acquisition of possessions have been presented in chapter three. Chapter four is the division which has been used to present principles of Christian administration of material goods. Chapter five has been devoted to the presentation of principles of Christian giving. A summary of the investigation, with conclusions and recommendations for further study, has been made in chapter six.

The American Standard Edition of the Holy Bible as revised in 1901 has been used as the primary Bible text for this research and, unless otherwise specified, all quotations were taken from this text. Comparisons with the King James and the Standard Revised Versions were made.

## CHAPTER II

### THE MEANING OF STEWARDSHIP

The term "stewardship" has been called a technical term and must therefore first of all be defined.<sup>1</sup> According to Webster's New International Dictionary a steward is a person entrusted with the management of an estate or affairs not his own.<sup>2</sup> The term "trustee" has somewhat the same meaning in that a trustee is an individual to whom has been committed the administration of property or the care of property for the benefit of others. It was, however, the purpose of this investigation to determine a Biblical definition for the term according to its usage in the Scripture. The first part of this chapter has been devoted to a study of stewardship in the Old Testament. The second part of the chapter has been given to a study of the terms steward and stewardship as they are used in the New Testament.

Stewardship of the Old Testament Defined. According to Young, four different Hebrew words in the Old Testament, in four different places, have been translated "steward" in the King James version.<sup>3</sup>

- 
1. Studies in Christian Stewardship (Cincinnati, The Standard Publishing Company, 1922), p. 29.
  2. William Allen Neilson, editor in chief, Webster's New International Dictionary of the English Language (second edition, unabridged; Springfield, Massachusetts, G. and C. Merriam Company, Publishers, 1942), p. 2473.
  3. Robert Young, Analytical Concordance to the Bible (New York, Funk Wagnalls Co., n.d.), p. 934.

In Genesis 15:2, Eliezer of Damascus is spoken of as the steward of Abraham's house. In Genesis 43:19 and 44:4, is found the specific record that Joseph had a "steward of his house" during part of his sojourn in Egypt. In I Chronicles 28:1, is recorded the fact that David assembled his officials which included the stewards who were over all the substance and possessions of the king and of his sons.

In the American Standard Version these same words are translated as follows: (1) Genesis 15:2 reads "possessor of my house"; (2) in Genesis 43:19 and 44:4, the word "steward" is used; and (3) in I Chronicles 28:1, this translation reads "the rulers over all the substance and possession of the king and of his sons, . . ."

The Revised Standard Version uses the word "steward" in all of the above references with the exception of Genesis 15:2 where this translation reads "heir of my house".

From the references where the word "steward" is used, and from their context, it is apparent that these stewards were men who had been placed in a position whereby it became their duty to administer property and affairs of another. They were men who had been entrusted with the management of the household and all that pertained to it. It was an arrangement between men, often a master-slave relationship. None of the references attempt to show the relation of a man and his property to God.

The term "stewardship" in the Old Testament has therefore been interpreted to refer to the office of a steward, whose authority and duty was to receive, care for, and disperse material goods in behalf of his master and for the welfare of his household.

Stewardship in the New Testament Defined. Two Greek words are translated "steward". The word "steward" in Matthew 20:8 and Luke 8:3 comes from ἐπίτροπος [epitropos] which means "one to whose charge or control a thing is left; a steward, bailiff, agent, manager, Matthew 20:8; steward or overseer of the revenue, treasurer, Luke 8:3."<sup>4</sup> George R. Berry in his Greek-English Lexicon has defined ἐπίτροπος to mean one who is intrusted with something, a steward.<sup>5</sup>

The second Greek word translated "steward" is οἰκονόμος [oikonomos] meaning

. . . the manager of a household; a steward, Luke 12:42; 16.1,3,8; I Co. 4.2; a manager, trustee, Gal. 4.2; a public steward, treasurer, Ro. 16.23; a spiritual steward, the holder of a commission in the service of the Gospel, I Co. 4.1; Tit. 1.7; I Pe. 4.10.<sup>6</sup>

Schrevelius Lexicon has given the definition of οἰκονομία [oikonomia] as meaning the managing of a family, management of administration.<sup>7</sup>

Nowhere in the New Testament is the word "stewardship" defined, yet the meaning seems to be taken for granted. It seems evident that the relationship and office of a steward was perfectly familiar to the people in Christ's day. In Luke 8:3 the record states that Herod had a steward by the name of Chuzas, and that his wife, Joanna, was one of the group of women that ministered of their substance to

---

4. The Analytic Greek Lexicon (New York, Harper and Brothers, n.d.), p. 162.

5. George R. Berry, A New Greek-English Lexicon to the New Testament (Chicago, Wilcox and Follett Company, 1944), p. 40.

6. Ibid., p. 284.

7. J. R. Major, ed., Schrevelius Lexicon in Greek and English (London, Simpkin, Marshall, and Company Stationer's Hall Court, 1877), p. 456.

Jesus and the twelve disciples. This indicates that some families of distinction had a steward in charge of their household.

Stewardship, as men think of it today in terms of stewardship to God, is a New Testament conception. While there are only a few references to the office and work of a steward in the Old Testament, these references do not attempt to show the obligation and relationship of man and his material goods to God. However, there are New Testament references which do show this fact, such as the account in Matthew 19:16-22 of the young man who came to Jesus to inquire what he should do that he might have eternal life. Jesus informed him that if he wanted to be perfect, in addition to keeping the commandments, he should sell what he had, give to the poor, and follow Him. The young man went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. He was unwilling to put God before his possessions.

The parable of the rich fool recorded in Luke 12:13-34 also bears out this fact. This particular fool was covetous and indifferent to the fact that man's life does not consist in the abundance of things he had in his possession. He was selfish in the use of his goods and failed to prepare for the future. Possessions had become his master.

In addition to these examples, the parable of the unrighteous steward found in Luke 16:1-13 teaches that a steward's first responsibility is to God. The steward had been unfaithful and his allegiance was diverted. Jesus clearly states that no man can serve two masters; it is impossible to serve God and mammon.

The above examples from the New Testament clearly indicate that possessions and their use have a vital bearing upon man's relationship to God.

C. W. Hatch has said that:

Christ set a perfect example of the kind of person a Christian steward should be. Both by precept and by example he exalted the value of persons. He made it plain that human personality, as created in the image of God, is the real value, and that material wealth should be used for the spiritual well-being and benefit of mankind.<sup>8</sup>

Jesus in his ministry gave to the world a new and broader conception of stewardship than had been taught up to His time. The basis for this thinking is found in the accounts of the good Samaritan, the widow's mite, the rich fool, the rich young ruler, and such references as Matthew 6:33, 22:21, 23:23; Mark 8:36, 10:29,30; Luke 16:10, etc. Through the teaching and life of Jesus is seen the character of God and human life as it ought to be. Christian stewardship, based upon the teachings and example of Christ, must therefore, be in accordance with the spirit and ideals of Christ.

The prophet Jeremiah had an insight into this spirit when he wrote:

Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant . . . I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: . . .<sup>9</sup>

In his comments regarding this passage of Scripture, W. C. Morro has said that instead of a person's conduct being determined by some law, some person, or some external force, it is to be prompted by an impulse and motive from within, out of the heart. Christian conduct is an individual matter to be observed intelligently, faithfully and

---

8. C. W. Hatch, Stewardship Enriches Life (Anderson, Indiana, The Warner Press, 1951), p. 12.

9. Jeremiah 31:31,33.

with respect to God.<sup>10</sup>

A study of the writings of the early followers of Jesus, the men who caught the spirit and broader conception of stewardship as set forth by Jesus, reveals that they enlarge upon this ideal of Christian stewardship. Paul particularly is outstanding in this.<sup>11</sup> The apostle Peter also displayed a broader concept of stewardship when he wrote: "according as each hath received a gift, ministering it among yourselves, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God".<sup>12</sup>

Julius Crawford has given a good definition of Christian stewardship. He says:

It is the recognition and fulfillment of personal privilege and responsibility for the administration of the whole of life--personality, time, talent, influence, material substance, everything--in accordance with the spirit and ideals of Christ.<sup>13</sup>

The above definition is a true reflection of the teachings of Jesus and the apostolic writers. It is based upon the fundamental conception that the earth and all therein belongs to God by the right of creation. God is the Creator, Ruler, and Sustainer of the universe. This conception was familiar and accepted in both the Old and New Testament writings and is the theme of many Scripture

---

10. William Charles Morro, Stewardship (St. Louis, The Bethany Press, 1932), p. 19-20.

11. Romans 14:8, I Corinthians 3:16, 4:1, 6:19, 9:16; II Corinthians 8:1,2,9; Ephesians 5:5.

12. I Peter 4:10.

13. Julius Earl Crawford, The Stewardship Life (Nashville, Cokesbury Press, 1929), p. 32.

passages.<sup>14</sup>

Because God therefore is the absolute owner, and because He has never relinquished ownership, He has the right to set forth the terms and conditions of service to be rendered by all who are subject to Him. Man can never become more than a steward or a temporary possessor. As a true and faithful steward, he looks upon all of life as a trust to be executed for the rightful owner. This is not a menial task but a high office of trust. Stewardship cannot be limited to one area of life nor can it be practiced now and then as the individual pleases. It must be practiced daily and constantly.

In light of the Great Commission given by Jesus, it would seem evident that the Christian's stewardship is primarily that of the Gospel. All else should be regulated and used to fulfill this great command which was given to all Christians.

Summary. A steward was an individual who was placed over possessions, or a household. The usage of the term in the Old Testament does not show what man's relationship to God is, but in the New Testament, especially in the teachings of Jesus, this is set forth. A Christian steward is an individual who recognized that God is the giver of all blessings, both spiritual and material, and that as a follower of Christ it has become his duty to order all of his life in a way which will please God and advance His Kingdom. Possessions that God allows to come into man's possession are merely delegated to him to be used in behalf of the owner.

---

14. Genesis 1:1,21,24,27; Psalms 24:1; 47; 50:10-12; 97; 104; Haggai 2:8; Mark 10:6; 13:19; I Corinthians 15:24,25; etc.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE STEWARDSHIP OF MATERIAL GOODS IN RELATION TO ACQUISITION

Acquisition is the first problem concerning material goods. Stewardship of possessions does not begin with giving but with their acquisition. Many questions have been asked at this point. Is it legitimate to acquire possessions? What methods of acquisition may a Christian employ? How much can a person rightfully acquire? What is the proper motive for the acquisition of property? These are but a few of the basic and vital questions, which if answered in the light of the teachings of Jesus, should help the Christian steward in the solution of the problem of acquiring material goods. This chapter has been devoted to a study of the legitimacy of acquiring, the danger of covetousness, principles of acquisition, and the motive for acquiring material goods.

The Legitimacy of Acquiring Material Possessions. From the standpoint of Scriptural teaching, wealth or property has had a place in the Christian society. The right to acquire and maintain property rights was recognized and held sacred from the early history of the Hebrew people. This is evidenced by the eighth commandment, "Thou shalt not steal", as well as by the various laws given to the Hebrew people by God through Moses.

The investigator has been unable to find any account in the Gospels which indicates that Jesus looked upon possessing wealth or the possession of property as a sin. There is no recorded

statement in the Gospels that Jesus said wealth was evil. The account in Mark 10:17-31 states that a rich man came to Jesus to ask what he must do to inherit eternal life. After the man stated that he had kept the commandments mentioned by Jesus, he received the reply that he lacked one thing. He was to sell all he had, give to the poor, and come, follow Jesus. He wasn't pleased with this saying. His countenance fell and he went away sorrowful for he had great possessions. After he was gone, Jesus said to the disciples that it was hard for those that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God. Jesus did not say it was impossible for the rich to enter the kingdom, but that it would be hard, especially when their trust was in their wealth instead of God.

Nor did Jesus seek to destroy the evils which are sometimes associated with wealth, by the destruction of wealth itself. Instead, Jesus sought to get people to put wealth in its proper place. "Seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33). Matthew 6:19-20 shows that He endeavored to get people to see that heavenly treasures are safer than material goods on earth and that these heavenly treasures are eternal in value. He constantly placed man above money. "For what doth it profit a man, to gain the whole world and forfeit his life?" (Mark 8:36). According to Mark 10:29-30 Jesus told the disciples that no man had left his home, his family, or lands for His and the gospel's sake but that he shall receive a hundredfold of all these things on earth and in the world to come, eternal life.

In the parable of the talents the lord of the steward spoke definitely and clearly that he had expected his stewards to acquire

more with what had already been placed within their control.

But his lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I did not scatter; thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the bankers, and at my coming I should have received back mine own with interest.<sup>1</sup>

The parable of the pounds also substantiates this fact. The nobleman called ten of his servants and gave them ten pounds. His charge to them was, "Trade ye herewith till I come" (Luke 19:13).

Matthew 19:21 and Mark 10:21 give the words Jesus spoke to the man who wanted to have eternal life: "Give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven,". Luke has recorded Jesus as saying, "give, and it shall be given unto you" (Luke 6:38). The apostle Paul in his letter to the Corinthians, praises those who gave liberally of their substance in order to minister to the saints (II Corinthians 8:1-3; 9:1-2). He also added that each man was to do according as he had purposed in his heart. They were not to give grudgingly or to feel that it was a necessity for God loves a cheerful giver.

The above references clearly indicate that Christian stewards are to give. The relationship of acquisition to giving is also evident. It is impossible to give until the individual has acquired. In order to give, the steward must also acquire.

Danger of Covetousness. Because of the power and potentiality which money and material goods possess, grave dangers accompany the acquisition of wealth.

---

1. Matthew 25:26-27.

First, there is the ever present danger, the love of money. The danger of this is that money getting and acquiring possessions can become so engrossing that it becomes the goal of life instead of merely being a means to an end. This is a perversion of its intended purpose and leads to covetousness. Jesus spoke positively concerning covetousness. In Mark 7:22-23 is recorded the statement that God looks upon covetousness as He does upon thefts, murders, adulteries, deceit, foolishness, pride, and others. It also states that these things proceed from the heart of man and defile him.

In Luke 12:15 Jesus told the people to take heed and keep themselves from covetousness. He warned them of the danger that lurks in an undue love of money and an abnormal, unwarranted trust in material things. The desire for wealth for its own sake is to be avoided because true life consists of more than material goods. In Mark 4:19 Jesus also speaks of the deceitfulness of riches.

Charles Cook has said:

. . . increase of wealth begets covetousness, and covetousness like a consuming fever burns out of the heart all love for God, and all sympathy for a needy and perishing humanity. The fever is only fostered, not expelled, by additional possessions.<sup>2</sup>

It is a sin to love money more than one loves God. Matthew 23:37 states that man is to love God with all his heart, all his soul, and with all his mind. Matthew 6:24 and Luke 16:13 are both statements of Jesus in which He said it is impossible to serve God and mammon at the same time because man can only love one at a time.

---

2. Charles A. Cook, Stewardship and Missions (n.p., American Baptist Publication Society, 1908), p. 70.

There is grave danger in being a Mammon worshipper and of allowing money and the devotion of time and energy to crowd God out of the heart and life. "Through the love for money men's hearts became sordid, selfish, grasping, and as hard and indifferent toward God as the gold and silver after which they strive."<sup>3</sup> If this is allowed, it can lead to the eternal damnation of the soul which is indifferent to the commands of God.

Principles of Acquisition. Paul H. Conrad has written that Jesus laid down no laws or principles regarding the acquisition of wealth, but it is not impossible to construct a Christlike code by applying the Spirit and ideals of Christ to this phase of our life.<sup>4</sup>

Both the parable of the pounds (Luke 19:11-27) and the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30) clearly teach that entrusted capital should be increased by legitimate use or investment. The steward was responsible for all the faculties and talent with which he had been entrusted. The stewards of the parable realized that the greater the increase, the more pleased the Master would be. These stewards were to be alert, resourceful, intelligent, and could not afford to be indifferent or careless for the owner had the right, and could demand, an accounting at any time. It was also observed that their faithfulness or unfaithfulness was rewarded according to their deeds. The servant who hid the talent entrusted to him and the servant who hid the pound in a napkin, were alike condemned because they did not

---

3. Ibid., p. 17.

4. Paul H. Conrad, Partnership With Christ (Philadelphia, The Judson Press, 1944), p. 61.

make proper use of their master's money.

A study of the teachings and works of Jesus reveals that He placed a far greater value upon the soul of man than the material things of life. "For what doth it profit a man, to gain the whole world, and forfeit his life?" (Mark 8:36).

In light of this teaching, any acquisition of material goods must be in harmony with the ideal that man and his welfare must be given priority over selfish gain. Stewardship is more than a method of making or raising money. It is a method of using God-given material goods in a way which will develop the character of men.

A Christian steward must be sure his way of earning money is a contribution to wholesome living; otherwise how can he reconcile a major use of his time and abilities outside his professed Christian faith? When we know that God is by our side while we work, we can face every task as God's will for that day in carrying on our partnership.<sup>5</sup>

An old Quaker saint very capably put into words the true stewardship spirit when he said:

Take my hands and use them, take my lips and speak through them, take my heart and use it as a lamp of love by which Thy light may shine in this dark world of selfishness.<sup>6</sup>

Honesty and Justice Demanded. To uphold a kingdom ideal of justice, and to follow the example of Jesus, dealings with fellow-men must be above reproach. The character of God demands justice and truthfulness. To invade the property rights of others or to take an unfair advantage in business transactions in order to acquire

---

5. Ibid., p. 47.

6. Loc. cit.

wealth, violates established ownership rights recognized since early Hebrew history and upheld by Jesus. Luke 19 gives the account which indicates that this truth was burned into the thinking of Zacchaeus. The record states that Jesus had gone to the house of Zacchaeus. Without giving the reason why he said it, the record also states that he told Jesus that he would give half of his goods to the poor and that if he had wrongfully exacted aught of any man, he would restore it fourfold. Jesus commended him in that he said salvation had that day come to the house of Zacchaeus.

Motive for Acquiring. The Christian motive for acquiring wealth must be in full accord with the principles and ideals of the kingdom of God as set forth by Jesus Christ. Making money according to Christian principles of business for the purpose of carrying out God's will is commendable. By doing this the command of Jesus to seek first the kingdom of God is fulfilled. To the true Christian steward, there will be no distinction between what is commonly known as the "sacred" and the "secular" for all in reality belongs to God and is therefore sacred.

The rich fool mentioned in Luke 12:13-21 was covetous and selfish. His ground was producing so plentifully he didn't have room enough to store his goods. His reasoning is expressed as being that of one who was self-centered. By building larger barns, he would have enough room to store his produce. This, he reasoned, would give him security for the future and would enable him to take his ease, eat, drink, and be merry. He had reasoned upon a false premise for God said unto him, "Thou foolish one, this night is thy soul required of thee; and

the things which thou hast prepared, whose shall they be?" (Luke 12: 20).

Jesus then used this parable as a basis to teach the people that those who lay up treasures for themselves are not rich toward God. Instead of laying up earthly treasures, the people were urged to lay up heavenly treasures where values are eternal, where there are no thieves to steal, and where there is no decay or destruction. Where a man had his treasure indicated where his heart was and what meant the most to him.

Jesus also used this parable as a basis to teach the people that they were not to be anxious about laying up great stores of material goods in order to provide for the physical body. Life was more than food. Jesus enjoined the people to trust God and live a life of faith for He knew what they needed and would provide for them even as He had provided for the birds. Because God caused the grass and flowers to grow with all their beauty, and because He placed a greater value on the soul of man than all the material goods of the world, Jesus commanded the people to first of all seek God's kingdom and all these material things needed for the body would be supplied.

In the parable of the unrighteous steward, as found recorded in Luke 16:1-13, Jesus stated that faithfulness in a little was prerequisite to faithfulness in much. By the questions Jesus asked, it was clear that mammon was not true riches and that man had become a servant of mammon. He positively stated that no man could serve two masters. It was impossible to serve God and mammon. The account of the rich man and Lazarus, also recorded in Luke 16, illustrated what

Jesus was trying to teach the people. The rich man had laid up earthly treasures for his own selfish use and was not rich toward God. Lazarus was poor in material goods and received evil things during his lifetime. The account indicated that he had sought the kingdom first and was rewarded for it after death.

Summary. Stewardship of material goods began with their acquisition. From the standpoint of Scriptural teaching, the acquisition of possessions and maintaining property rights was legitimate. However, dangers often accompanied the getting of wealth so Jesus warned the people to beware of covetousness and constantly taught that God placed a greater value upon the soul of man than upon material goods. Acquisition of goods by a Christian steward must be in harmony with the spirit and ideals of the heavenly kingdom. This necessarily meant that the motive for acquiring was to be for the purpose of carrying out the will of God. Doing this would be a means of laying up eternal treasures in heaven.

## CHAPTER IV

### STEWARDSHIP OF MATERIAL GOODS IN ADMINISTRATION

The life of Christian stewardship involves the practice of Christian principles in daily living and conduct of every kind. This includes the administration as well as the acquisition of property. The true steward gives Christ the preeminence in all the affairs of life, including his earning, spending, saving, and giving. The problem of administering material goods naturally follows the problem of acquisition. If these two problems are satisfactorily solved according to Christian principles, the solution to the problem of giving will usually become less complex. This chapter has been devoted to a study of the rightful use of possessions, the degrees of ability in administration, the rewards of faithfulness, the importance of foresight, and the day of accounting.

Crawford has said that:

Possessions are vitally related to personality, not only in point of acquisition and title, but also in their control and use. The right use of possessions means the mastery of self over substance, and therefore the victory over covetousness, growth in personal character, and a ministry of manifold blessings to others.<sup>1</sup>

#### Possessions to be Used for the Advancement of the Kingdom of God.

The words of Jesus in John 15:19 state that Christians are "not of the world". Since this is true, it would appear that in the use

---

1. Julius Earl Crawford, The Stewardship Life (Nashville, Cokesbury Press, 1929), p. 7.

and administration of money, the Christian steward should demonstrate that he is not following the principles and practices of non-Christians. An objective of Christianity is that the Gospel may be preached to every creature. In view of this fact, money is to be used in the best possible way to achieve this objective. The way a man uses his money reveals whether he is really interested in the Kingdom of God and its advancement or not. "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Luke 12:34). It also shows whether the individual is concerned about the welfare of others. Jesus said that even a cup of water given to one of Christ's would not be given without a reward. Acts of kindness and mercy show the outreach of the soul. Cook has said that:

It is a lamentable fact that a large proportion of the money that comes into the hands of professed Christians is worse than thrown away. It is not only that it is wasted in extravagant expenditures for personal pleasure, but alas, even in such expenditures no small portion goes to further the interests of the kingdom of darkness.<sup>2</sup>

Different Degrees of Ability. The parable of the talents, Matthew 25:14-30, clearly teaches that these particular stewards all had goods entrusted to them to be administered for the owner. There is no indication that the owner relinquished his claim of ownership. It does, however, clearly state in Matthew 25:15 that according to his ability, each man was entrusted with property to be managed or put to use. This is in agreement with Luke 12:48 where it says

---

2. Charles A. Cook, Stewardship and Missions (n.p., American Baptist Publication Society, 1908), p. 73.

that "to whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required: and to whom they commit much, of him will they ask more". From Luke 19:13 it is clear that these men realized that the owner expected them to produce an increase for they were enjoined to "trade herewith till I come". The greater the increase, the more pleased the owner would be. Confidence had been placed in them and they were to act on their own initiative to fulfill this trust. Thus it necessarily implied that they were to be resourceful, alert, and intelligent in order to accomplish the greatest gain. They were to conscientiously use it in the best way possible. The stewards who received five and two talents immediately went out and traded, thereby doubling the amount. Because of their faithfulness, they were rewarded.

Faithfulness Rewarded. Though differing in details, the parable of the pounds recorded in Luke 19:11-27 and the parable of the talents in Matthew 25:14-30 teach the same thing. The principle by which each man was judged was whether he had been faithful and could show an increase for the owner. The one to whom much was given, more was required. This is in harmony with Luke 12:48 which teaches that to whomsoever much is given, of him will much be required. If they were faithful over what was placed in their care, their responsibility and trust was enlarged.

In Matthew 25:14-30 the record states that the two servants who had received five and two talents respectively, traded and gained the like amount they had received from their lord. When the lord made a reckoning with them, they were judged faithful over a few

things. Because they had been faithful, both were set over many things. The account of the parable of the pounds in Luke 19:11-27 states that a nobleman called ten of his servants and gave each one a pound which was to be increased by trading. When the nobleman returned, he had the servants called to inquire how much they had gained in trading. One servant had gained ten pounds. Because he had been faithful in very little, he was given authority over ten cities. Another servant had also been faithful and gained five pounds. He was given authority over five cities.

In each parable one servant had been unfaithful. In both cases, that which had been given to the servant to use was taken away. Both servants were called wicked and were punished for their unfaithfulness. Jesus said:

He that is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much: and he that is unrighteous in a very little is unrighteous also in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own?<sup>3</sup>

According to these questions asked by Jesus, there is a grave possibility and likelihood that the stewards who are not faithful with temporal things are not qualified to be entrusted with true riches.

Foresight Commended. When stewards realize that life here on earth is short and temporary, they should be more concerned about the life hereafter. The account in the sixteenth chapter of Luke of the steward who was accused of wasting his master's goods, has been

---

3. Luke 16:10-12.

the subject of various interpretations. The true teaching seems to be that foresight and preparation for the future was commended. Waste and sloth are never held up as characteristics of a Christian steward. In Matthew 25:26 the servant who hid his talent is called wicked and slothful. He was punished for his act. What Jesus was commending was not the steward's waste, but the fact that he made preparations for the future. This steward was aware that his stewardship was to be taken away so he made financial arrangements, while still holding the position as steward, which would cause people to be friendly to him. This was to insure him a degree of comfort and security for the days when he would no longer be a steward.

Jesus was trying to get the disciples to see that preparation for the future was important and must be done when there was still an opportunity. This parable again makes evident the conception which Jesus had of a man's relationship to his property. It belongs to God and man merely manages it. Man is to account for all.

A Day of Accounting. According to the account in Luke 16, the unfaithful steward did not question the right of the owner to demand an accounting of his goods. Matthew 25:19 and Luke 19:15 are also positive in teaching that a day of accounting was to come.

The record in Luke 16:19-21 reads to the effect that a certain man was rich, he was finely clothed, and that he feasted well every day. He was spending freely for himself without apparent concern for the need of the beggar, Lazarus, who desired to be fed with crumbs that fell from his table. The closing of the heart against the need of others was proof of the non-existence of the Christian spirit.

Neither did this man who was rich, seem concerned about the future and its consequences. Despite his unconcern, there was a day of reckoning, and this according to Divine standard. He had been selfish and greedy, even as the rich fool mentioned in Luke 12:16-21. He was indifferent to the people about him when he should have been using God's material goods entrusted to him, to help needy humanity. Nor does it appear that he had learned the truth found in Luke 12:20, that when his soul would be required of him, whatever goods he may have possessed would be out of his control and left for someone else. It was impossible for him to take his material goods with him into the future life.

It appears evident, especially when reading other portions of the New Testament, that a man's life of faith may be strengthened by the way he deals with money. If it is used selfishly, the proprietor's interests and honor are not being considered. The wrong use of money dishonors God and therefore, is degrading and can lead to eternal damnation as was the case of the rich fool and the rich man who failed to help Lazarus (Luke 12:16-21; 16:19-31).

Summary. The Christian steward should show by the way he uses his money that he is vitally interested in the advancement of the kingdom of God. By the way Jesus used different parables, it was evident that he regarded stewards as having different degrees of ability in the administration of material goods. Regardless of the degree of ability possessed, the steward was expected to be faithful. If he was faithful he was rewarded. Those that had been unfaithful

were punished. Preparation for the future was commended, especially in view of the fact that a day of accounting was sure to come. To be unprepared to give a good account of his stewardship resulted in damnation and being cast out.

## CHAPTER V

### STEWARDSHIP OF MATERIAL GOODS IN RELATION TO GIVING

Giving of material goods was the third phase of stewardship considered in this study. This chapter has been limited to the presentation of the basis for giving, a study of the meaning of giving, the relationship of giving to worship, the proper motive for giving, how much to give, to whom gifts should be made, and tithing as presented in the four Gospels.

The Basis for Giving. "For God so loved the world, that he gave. . .". (ohn 3:16). Giving is a trait of God. He never buys or sells, but He gives unceasingly. Crawford says:

The ultimate basis of Christian giving is the nature and character of God. He is a beneficent Being; the essence of his nature is love. He is the great Giver. He gives all things both material and spiritual.<sup>1</sup>

Christianity is a giving religion. True stewardship in acquisition and administration will result in true stewardship in giving. Selfishness in money matters lays hold of men long before they come to the question of giving. The sharing of possessions has been a part of God's plan for spiritual enrichment from the beginning. The striving for material gain and the primary concern of gaining material rewards are major dangers to spiritual vitality. For his own good and spiritual health, man needs to share.

---

1. Julius Earl Crawford, The Stewardship Life (Nashville, Cokesbury Press, 1929), p. 131.

Murro has written that:

Giving a sum of money and stewardship are not identical. Stewardship includes giving but giving is only a phase of stewardship. . . . The giving of money is the easiest and the least important part of stewardship. The proper management of the part not given is often a more significant test of stewardship than the act of giving. Further, the character of the life lived by either the one who gives or by the one who is unable to give is the ultimate criterion of his stewardship. When Jesus spoke of stewardship he always referred to life and never to giving alone.<sup>2</sup>

Giving is not for God's benefit but for the good of the one giving. David McConaughy has said that giving is not to be considered a duty. It is a privilege whereby it is possible for man to have an active part with God in the plans for redeeming the world.<sup>3</sup> It enables one to project one's life at will to bring help and blessing into the lives of others. McConaughy also added that "that which distinguishes giving from all other forms of expenditure is the motive. It is not so much what follows after the giving, but that which goes before."<sup>4</sup>

What is Giving? The word "give" can be used in many different ways with different meanings. Much that is commonly called "giving" is in actuality not giving at all. Murro said:

Exchanging presents . . . is not giving. Parting with property for the sake of merit or favor . . .

- 
2. W. C. Morro, Stewardship (St. Louis, The Bethany Press, 1932), pp. 113, 114.
  3. David McConaughy, Money the Acid Test (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1918), p. 103.
  4. Ibid., p. 104

is not giving. Making a contribution for the purpose of self-advancement or with the expectation of a full equivalent in return is not giving. It is true that a contribution may bring a return whether it is sought or not, but it is the motive of the contributor rather than the result that determines the moral quality of the act.<sup>5</sup>

In view of the fact that money cannot be separated from personality, giving is the unselfish outpouring of one's self in substance. Giving is the willing and voluntary conferring of one's own possessions without expecting anything in return. When a gift is given in that spirit, it carries with it the giver's good will, a real part of his very self. No amount of money given can take the place of giving oneself. God wants the giver above the gift.

The question has been asked, "If all that we are and have belongs to God who is the true Owner, how can we give to God the things which are His?" "And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me" (Matthew 25:40). Giving to God is entering into his labors. This means the steward must give himself to God before he can acceptably give anything to Him. It is possible to give to God indirectly, and that is by ministering to the needs of His children.

Christian Giving Related to Worship. Conrad has pointed out that throughout the Bible, worship and giving are closely related. Giving is related to the affections and love. The bringing of tithes and offerings were always an act of worship. Christ's

---

5. Murro, op. cit., pp. 113,114.

giving of Himself was His supreme act of worship.<sup>6</sup> The prophet Malachi pointed out that the Israelites had turned aside from God's ordinances and not kept them. They had robbed God in tithes and offerings and one of the first steps to be taken was to bring the whole tithe into the storehouse. If they would do this God promised to bless them (Malachi 3:7-12). To the poor widow who gave her two mites, giving was an act of worship. McConaughy says that giving was ordained by God to be an integral part of worship.<sup>7</sup>

John E. Simpson has written that:

You cannot regulate your spending by worldly standards and at the same time make rapid progress toward heaven. Your soul and your money will always move in the same direction. When you are a child of God, your money as well as your life and lips must reveal to whom you belong. Money is a thermometer. It tells the temperature of the soul. When the soul burns with ardent love for God, the money goes heavenward in generous amounts; but when the soul is cold in covetousness and ignorance, the money drops into the low places of selfishness and worldly endeavour.<sup>8</sup>

The words of Matthew 6:21 that where a man's treasure is, there will his heart also be, bears out the fact that giving is related to worship. Giving is one of the choicest means of grace. It marks a continuous fellowship with God which constantly evidences man's total surrender to God and is proof of the earnestness of his heart to walk before God in self-denial, faith and love. Giving

---

6. Paul H. Conrad, Partnership With Christ (Philadelphia, The Judson Press, 1944), p. 72.

7. McConaughy, op. cit., p. 129.

8. John E. Simpson, This World's Goods (New York, Fleming H. Revell Co., 1939), p. 31.

is a sure test of character. It is evidence of a Christian spirit.

Motive for Giving. The motive of giving is vitally important. There is a difference between the spirit of giving in the New Testament and the spirit of giving in the Old Testament. Burton Trimble has stated this difference "consists in the fact that stronger emphasis is placed on motivation in the former, as is characteristic of the whole New Testament approach to life."<sup>9</sup> The answer Jesus gave to certain of the Pharisees and Herodians when they asked about the matter of tribute, was a positive command: "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's" (Mark 12:17). Other than this there appears to be no suggestion of compulsion to enforce giving. Instead of compulsion from without, the motive of love for the Kingdom of God was relied upon to create a proper attitude toward the giving of material goods.

Jesus urged people to seek the kingdom before other things (Matthew 6:33). It was to be first, and there cannot be two firsts. In all the teachings of Jesus, the Kingdom of God was given priority over other things. To follow this principle is sufficient motive for all kinds of good works. Trimble said:

The marvelous generosity of the early Christians can be accounted for only by Christian experience. These apostolic Christians were absorbed by the great passion of their religion for fellowship and for the evangelization of the world. They gave because they loved. They loved because they had tasted of the good

---

9. Henry Burton Trimble, The Christian Motive and Method of Stewardship (Nashville, Cokesbury Press, 1930), p. 132.

things of the Kingdom themselves.<sup>10</sup>

Giving may be systematic and proportionate but if it is not given in a spirit of love, it is not Christian giving. The Pharisee of the parable found in Luke 18:9-14, is represented as one who paid his tithes, but he was devoid of love. He failed to comply with the Kingdom ideal and its principles in that he had omitted the more important part of true worship and service. It availed him little, if anything, besides being seen of men. According to Matthew 6:3,4 God prefers the individual to give without a show or flourish. The heavenly Father will see the act and motive and reward accordingly. Giving secretly or quietly may be necessary in order that the giver will not be hindered from doing what God wants him to do.

How Much to Give. As far as the ordinary man is concerned, gifts have value and will benefit others according to their size and the cause to which they are directed, irrespective of the character of the giver. This was not the case with God. The words of Jesus to the disciples when he saw the poor widow cast her two mites into the treasury portrays this very clearly. He looked upon the motive instead of the amount given. It is possible for a man to give any amount, large or small, and yet not please God with his gift. Society will be benefited, but not the man himself, unless the prerequisites of acceptable giving have been met.

After reading the two accounts in Mark 12:14-44 and Luke 21:1-4 of the widow casting her two mites into the treasury, and observing

---

10. Ibid., p. 157.

the words of Jesus, only one conclusion can be reached. Jesus did not seem to be concerned about the amount given. He looked upon those giving and their motives and commended the poor widow's action and gift because it was a sacrifice. She gave willingly, and in the light of her circumstances, she gave liberally. The fact that Jesus commended her action is proof that He believed in the spiritual values of unlimited generosity, as contrasted with the miserly giving of those who could afford to give more. Andrew Murray wrote:

The world asks, what does a man own? Christ, how does he use it? The world thinks more about money getting; Christ about money giving. And when a man gives, the world still asks, what does he give? Christ asks how does he give? The world looks at the money and its amount, Christ at the man and his motive.

.....  
How different our standard and Christ's. We ask how much a man gives. Christ asks, how much he keeps. We look at the gift. Christ asks whether the gift was a sacrifice. The widow kept nothing over, she gave all; the gift won His heart and approval, for it was in the spirit of His own self-sacrifice, who being rich, became poor for our own sakes.<sup>11</sup>

The teaching of the parables of the pounds and of the talents is that God expects a return from His stewards. As Christians, men and women are His stewards and are therefore under an obligation to Him for all they have has been delegated to them by God. The accounts of the poor widow's giving also teach that liberality in giving is not evidence of stewardship. Men have prospered and amassed great fortunes, they have given large amounts to the cause of Christ, but if they and their goods were not consecrated to God,

---

11. Andrew Murray, Money: Thoughts for God's Stewards (New York, Fleming H. Revell Company, 1897) pp. 10, 12.

they failed in their stewardship. They may be seeking praise of men, influence over others, or trying to ease a troubled conscience by an act to make up for something else left undone.

On the other hand, money given in the spirit of self-sacrifice, love, and faith in Christ, pays a rich and eternal reward. It all belongs to God. Christian stewards are to use it intelligently and wisely to promote His interests. In speaking about sacrificial giving, Cook said:

A true stewardship of substance reaches its highest expression in sacrificial giving, a giving that catches its inspiration at the cross of Christ where infinite love gave its utmost for us. . . . When the love of the cross constrains no offering will be counted too great to make for Christ.<sup>12</sup>

To Whom to Give. Giving is too important a transaction to be done carelessly or according to one's own thoughts and feelings. "What is this I hear of thee? render the account of thy stewardship; . . ." (Luke 16:2). The standard or conditions of man's stewardship are set forth by God. It was observed from Luke 19:14 that the stewards were told to trade with the pounds committed to them; they were given freedom of action subject to the best interests of the owner. Stewardship giving must be done intelligently and conscientiously. In order to do this, the steward must become informed as to where his giving will accomplish the most to promote the cause of Christ, which according to the Great Commission, Matthew 28:18-20, is the Christian's duty. The faithful and wise steward cannot give indiscriminately.

---

12. Charles A. Cook, The Larger Stewardship (Philadelphia, The Judson Press, 1923), p. 114.

Cook was also of this opinion and wrote that:

The faithful steward will give intelligently. How unwise many are in their giving, unwise because they are thoughtless. They do not carefully inform themselves concerning the objects to which they give. They do not find out the needs and magnitude of those objects, nor do they know very fully what good is being accomplished by what is given. A steward should attend to the duties of his stewardship in a business-like manner.<sup>13</sup>

In order to give wisely, it is necessary for the steward to inform himself of the different phases of the Lord's work to find out what is being accomplished and what still needs to be done. When an agency has not been putting the Kingdom of God first as Jesus taught in Matthew 6:33, there are times when it is the duty of a steward not to give, particularly when the giving will not promote the cause and work of the Kingdom of God.

McConaughy stressed the necessity of giving intelligently.

The very fact that one may be at a loss to know where the needs are greatest and how most wisely to distribute his gifts involves the necessity of the giver informing himself. It is just here that the process of education is necessitated. Let a man first face the fact of his own ignorance; then let him proceed to learn the facts which will obviate that ignorance. This is involved necessarily in his stewardship. It was for this very purpose, in part, that he was entrusted with money, so that in the very giving of it the giver may himself grow in the grace and in the knowledge of his Lord. He has no right to evade that responsibility, relegating it to any other.<sup>14</sup>

Christian stewardship is therefore two-fold in purpose:

---

13. Charles A. Cook, Stewardship and Missions (n.p., American Baptist Publication Society, 1908), p. 101.

14. McConaughy, op. cit., pp. 105, 106.

(1) providing a means of blessing to the giver, and (2) accomplishing the Christian purpose of preaching the Gospel throughout the whole world.

Tithing. Tithing is mentioned in three places in the four Gospels. The self-righteous Pharisee mentioned in Luke 18:9-14, stood and prayed with himself to the effect that he considered himself better than the publican who had also come to the temple to pray. The fact that he fasted twice a week and gave tithes of all that he got gave him a feeling of superiority. But Jesus said the publican went away justified rather than the Pharisee because the Pharisee exalted himself. He had not honored God.

The other two references are Matthew 23:23 and Luke 11:42. The context of these references deals with the hypocrisy and iniquity of the Pharisees. Jesus acknowledged that they had tithed even of such things as mint, anise, and cummin. He also stated that they were right in observing the tithe and that it should not be left undone. But while they had strictly paid their tithe, they were censured because they had left undone the weightier matters of the law: justice, mercy, and faith. Luke records that they had passed over justice and the love of God. They were scrupulous in the rites and ceremonies of religion, but had not given themselves to God. They had neglected the spirit and purpose which the giving of the tithe was to accomplish, namely that of honoring and serving God.

The only definite teaching concerning the tithe as found in the Gospels, were the statements of Jesus commending the Pharisees for

giving the tithe and the admonition that they were not to leave it undone. To determine the relationship of the tithe to the Christian steward of today, would require a detailed study of the New Testament Scriptures as a whole.

Summary. Giving was defined as meaning the willing and voluntary conferring of one's possessions without expecting anything in return. Anything given in such an attitude, was accompanied with the giver's good will, a part of his personality. For this reason, giving throughout the Bible was related to worship and was intended to be used as a means of promoting spiritual growth. Giving was to be motivated by love in the heart. When love motivated the giving, no gift or sacrifice was considered too great. In order for the Christian steward to determine where to give, necessity demanded that he acquaint himself with the various phases of Christian work and determine where the most good was being accomplished and where the need was the most pressing. Tithing was a systematic method of giving used by the Pharisees. Jesus commended them for giving the tithe and told them not to leave it undone.

## CHAPTER VI

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary. The efforts of this study have been directed to make a study of the teachings of Jesus as recorded in the four Gospels to determine stewardship principles relating to material goods.

A steward was an individual who was placed over possessions or a household. The office of a steward, as commonly thought of today, is a New Testament conception. Jesus used the terms "steward" and "stewardship" when teaching about the kingdom of heaven in a way whereby He taught the people of man's relationship and responsibility to God. The Christian steward is duty bound to obey his Master and His instructions. The commission by Jesus for Christians to spread the Gospel to all nations indicates that the Christian's stewardship is primarily that of the Gospel.

Scriptural teaching is that acquisition of possessions is legitimate although accompanied by the dangers of greed and covetousness. Jesus constantly endeavored to get people to put first things first. He taught that the value of a man's soul exceeds the value of all the wealth in this world. For this reason, He gave the imperative command to evangelize the people of all the nations. Material wealth is a means necessary to carry out this Divine command. Acquisition of wealth by the Christian steward should be for the purpose of carrying out the Great Commission.

From the way Jesus used different parables, it was evident that stewards had different degrees of ability in the administration of

material goods. Regardless of the degree of ability possessed, the steward was expected to be faithful. On the day of accounting, rewards or punishment were not based upon ability but upon the degree of faithfulness.

Throughout the Bible, giving was related to worship and was intended to be used as a means of promoting spiritual growth. Jesus emphasized that giving was to be motivated by love. When love motivated the giving, no gift or sacrifice was considered too great. The Christian steward is responsible for all wealth that comes into his care and what he does with it. Because of this responsibility the steward is obligated to give intelligently. This is possible only after the individual becomes acquainted with the needs and work being done to proclaim the Gospel to every creature.

Conclusions. As a result of this study the following observations and conclusions have been made: (1) Material goods have a great potential which can be used for good or evil, and this potential is determined by the possessor. (2) What the individual does with material goods affects his personality and shows where his interests are. (3) To possess material goods entails responsibility. (4) Jesus was more interested in the giver than in the gift. (5) The Christian steward needs to acquaint himself with the work being accomplished by the different individuals or agencies, as well as the prevailing need, in order to give intelligently. (6) Christian giving is an act of worship. (7) In view of the fact that all Christians are under obligation and command of the Great Commission, everything that comes into the possession of a Christian is to be

used to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Suggestions for Further Study. This investigator recognizes that this has not been a complete and exhaustive treatment of the subject due to the vastness of the subject material and the limitation of time. Further study of these and related principles and their practical applications, as found in the other books of the New Testament, would be interesting as well as helpful.

Because so many people have asked about the matter of tithing, an inductive study of both the Old and New Testaments to determine the place of tithing in the life of present day Christians would be interesting and helpful.

A third area of stewardship that would be a profitable study would be to make a survey of current stewardship literature of a particular denomination or group of denominations.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### A. BOOKS

- Andrews, Samuel J., The Life of our Lord (New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1891), 639 pp.
- Berry, George Ricker, A New Greek-English Lexicon to the New Testament (Chicago, Wilcox and Follett Company, 1944), 137 pp.
- Bible. English. 1611. Authorized Version., The Holy Bible.
- Bible. English. 1901. American Standard Version., The Holy Bible.
- Bible. English. 1952. Revised Standard Version., The Holy Bible.
- Conrad, Paul H., Partnership With Christ (Philadelphia, The Judson Press, 1944), 87 pp.
- Cook, Charles A., Stewardship and Missions (American Baptist Publication Society, 1908), 170 pp.
- , The Larger Stewardship (Philadelphia, The Judson Press, 1923), 118 pp.
- Crawford, Julius E., The Stewardship Life (Nashville, Cokesbury Press, 1929), 174 pp.
- Cushman, Ralph S., and Martha F. Bellinger, Adventures in Stewardship (New York, The Abingdon Press, 1919), 158 pp.
- Hatch, C. W., Stewardship Enriches Life (Anderson, Indiana, The Warner Press, 1951), 105 pp.
- Lansdell, Henry, The Tithe in Scripture (London, Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1908), 148 pp.
- Lovejoy, Luther E., Stewardship for All of Life (New York, The Methodist Book Concern, 1924), 144 pp.
- Major, J. R., ed., Schrevelius Lexicon in Greek and English (London, Simpkin, Marshall, and Company Stationer's Hall Court, 1877)
- McConaughy, David, Money The Acid Test (Philadelphia, The Westminster Press, 1918), 187 pp.
- Morro, W. C., Stewardship (St. Louis, The Bethany Press, 1932), 185 pp.

Murray, Andrew, Money: Thoughts for God's Stewards (New York, Fleming H. Revell Co., 1897), 96 pp.

Neilson, William Allen, editor in chief, Webster's New International Dictionary of the English Language (second edition, unabridged; Springfield, Massachusetts, G. and C. Merriam Company, Publishers, 1942)

Simpson, John E., Great Stewards in the Bible (New York, Fleming H. Revell Co., 1947), 98 pp.

-----, He That Giveth (New York, Fleming H. Revell Co., 1935), 92 pp.

-----, Into My Storehouse (New York, Fleming H. Revell Co., 1940), 192 pp.

-----, This World's Goods (New York, Fleming H. Revell Co., 1939), 96 pp.

Studies in Christian Stewardship (Cincinnati, The Standard Publishing Company, 1922), 163 pp.

Trimble, Henry Burton, The Christian Motive and Method of Stewardship (Nashville, Cokesbury Press, 1930), 227 pp.

Young, Robert, Analytical Concordance to the Bible (New York, Funk and Wagnalls Co., n.d.), 1090 pp.

#### B. PARTS OF SERIES

Clarke, Adam, Clarke's Commentary (New York, Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, n.d.), 5 vols.

Edersheim, Alfred, The Life and Times of Jesus The Messiah (New York, Longmans, Green, and Co., 1910), 2 vols.

Hastings, James, editor, Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels (New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1908), 2 vols.

Orr, James, editor, International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia (Grand Rapids, Wm. B. Erdmans Publishing Co., 1939), 5 vols.

Spence, H. D. M., and Joseph S. Exell, editors, Pulpit Commentary (New York, Funk and Wagnalls Co., n.d.), 52 vols.