

Davenport First Presbyterian Church

NEWSLETTER

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Susan Broadway, editor

TEDBITS

by Pastor Ted

Do you remember all of the bumper stickers Christians had on their cars that said *Honk if you love Jesus*? I saw another one around at that time that stuck with me. It said *Tithe if you love Jesus—anyone can honk*. In these tough economic times I have been thinking about giving and tithing in particular. Many people, businesses and people are facing leaner times. This is especially true of ministries including the local church.

It is sometimes difficult to talk about our wealth, our money, but please be aware that this was no problem for Jesus. Of the 38 parables He told, sixteen dealt with money. That's 42% of His parables. I believe He spoke of money so much because He knew *"where your treasure is there will your heart be also."* (Matthew 6:21) The way in which we handle our finances shows our spiritual commitment to God. It has been said that we can know most about a person's commitment to Christ by looking at their checkbook.

**“ . . . where your treasure is there will your heart be also.”
(Matthew 6:21)**

From the Scriptures we find four great principles concerning wealth:

- The Principle of Divine Ownership;
- The Principle of Stewardship;
- The Principle of the Tithe; and
- The Principle of Reciprocity/
Blessing.

The Principle of Divine Ownership

Psalm 50:10-11 *“For every beast of the forest is Mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills. I know all the birds of the mountains, and the wild beasts of the field are Mine.”*

Haggai 2:8 *“The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine,” says the Lord of hosts.*

Ezekiel 18:4 *“Behold, all souls are Mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is Mine.”*

Based upon these Scriptures and many, many others, it is clear that the entire earth, world—gold, silver, animals, and all people belong to God! The principle of divine ownership teaches us that there is *nothing* that does not belong to God! I believe that this is an important and timely message for our place and time as we live in a world so thoroughly given over to greed, selfishness and pleasure-seeking. All of what we think belongs to us really belongs to God. He owns it all and it is to be used for His purposes and His will and in His way.

The Principle of Stewardship

Genesis 1:26 *Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."*

In the Parable of the Talents found in Matthew 25:14-30, God's Kingdom is likened to a wealthy man with servants (stewards). To each steward the wealthy man entrusted his property—different amounts to each steward. The property was to be used by the stewards on behalf of the master who would eventually require an accounting of the use of that property. The point of the parable is that each of us is a steward and each will one day give an

account to God for what was done with the gifts and resources He gave us. The entire earth is a gift to us as well—for which we must one day make an accounting.

Romans 14:12 *So then each of us shall give an account of himself to God.*

The one using the property of another must account to the owner at some point. Stewardship is measured by faithfulness, not by accumulation. There is a bumper sticker out there that says, *He who dies with the most toys wins.* There's another one that responds with *He who dies with the most toys still dies.* Earthly accumulation results in no gain at the end. It is faithfulness to God that will be reckoned a success in the end. The world may not consider you successful, but that will not matter if God says, "Well done, good and faithful servant." We hold all that we have in trust for God.

The Principle of the Tithe

Malachi 3:10 *"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house."*

Leviticus 27:30 *"A tithe of everything from the land, whether grain from the soil or fruit from the tress, belongs to the Lord; it is holy to the Lord."*

The Old Testament people of God offered God a tenth (10%) of their increase. Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils of war to God's priest Melchizedek. (Genesis 14:20). Jacob offered God a tenth of his wealth if God would protect Him. (Genesis 28:22). Moses was commanded to require a tithe of the people when the Law was given.

When we turn to the New Testament we find it reinforces the *principle* of tithing. God is the same now as He was before Christ came. What it means to be generous toward God has not changed either.

Luke 11:42 *"Woe to you Pharisees, because you give God a tenth of your mint, rue and all other kinds of garden herbs, but you neglect justice and the love of God. You should have practiced the latter without leaving the former undone."*

Clearly Jesus is telling the Pharisees and scribes that they were to tithe on their increases and possessions. Jesus expected people to continue tithing. But I also believe Jesus went way beyond this law.

By applying the same process to this question of tithing that Jesus did with the issues of the Law during His Sermon on the Mount we gain much insight. Time after time Jesus exhorts us *"you have heard it said ... but, I say to you ..."* Jesus cites a commandment from the Law *"you shall not commit adultery"* and expands the commandment from an external observance to a fundamental internal condition of the heart. *"If anyone looks on a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart."* The "heart condition" is what becomes most important. If the heart condition is right, the actions will also be right.

Apply this process to our tithe question and we get this: 10% was in the Old Testament Law. 100% is required in Christ's Kingdom. We have been bought with a price, we are not our own—all we are and all we own belong to God. We need to look at our heart attitude toward money. Our measure goes far beyond our finances and its standard is based on the condition of our heart.

The Principle of Reciprocity/Blessing

II Corinthians 9:6 *Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.*

Luke 6:38 *Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.*

We do not give to receive. We give out of hearts that belong to God and are committed to His work. It is important that what follows here is read in the context of what I have just said. Sociologists have a “Principle of Reciprocity”. Smile at another person, and he'll probably smile back at you. Give to someone and they are likely to (and maybe even feel obligated to) give you something in return. As you give, you will receive. Give generously, and you'll receive in like measure. I agree that things tend to work that way and this is an accurate principle of human relations. But I see this human principle being lost today. Our world's philosophy is typically just the opposite. It can be described as: *Get all you can. Can all you get. Then sit on your can.*

In any case, there is also a spiritual principle at work in our giving. When we give generously—to fund a mission, to support the church, the pastor, the building, the supplies, to alleviate a person's need or suffering—God smiles on this. We begin living in the realm of His care for us and we tend to prosper. Though we keep less for ourselves we tend to find that what we have goes farther and does more. We tend to receive God's blessing.

A Tale of Two Lakes

When I was in junior high school I lived in Israel with my United Nations Military Observer dad, my mom and my brothers. While we were there, we took a trip to visit to the Dead Sea, a huge lake in which nothing lives. It was dead all right! In contrast to this deadness, our family lived in an apartment near the Sea of Galilee, that great lake in the north of Israel in which Peter, James and John (and Jesus!) fished. Here the water is clean and clear and full of fish—full of life!

What was the difference? Why teeming with life in the Sea of Galilee and stagnation and lifelessness in the Dead Sea? Fresh water flows in from the north of the Sea of Galilee and flows out of the south as the Jordan River. The water abundantly flows in and the water abundantly flows out. For the Dead Sea, the water flows in from the north but it stops there. There is no exit. There is an abundant inflow but not an abundant outflow. The lake is big but the lake is dead. This same dynamic holds true for the use of blessings we receive from God—including financial blessings. We are blessed to be a blessing. That is God's design and desire. When the blessings come in—that is great! Then when we allow the blessings to go out we remain full, clean and alive. If the blessings stop with us we become a Dead Sea.

Our motivation cannot be “to be blessed” or “to get a blessing”. We give because the nature of our Father is to give and to give extravagantly. We are children in God's family and have inherited the same spiritual nature. We give, not to be blessed, but to be a blessing. We are blessed to be a blessing.

Soli Deo Gloria

DEACONS MEETING

June 5, 2011

Submitted by Penny Pankey, Moderator

Deacons present were Rosalie Ressel, Ernie King, Penny Pankey and Debbie Mielke. Ernie gave the Treasurer's Report. We have a balance of \$500.11. Ernie will give Shelly Johnston a monthly report.

Potlucks and Fellowship - **JUNE 12** is the "Birthday Theme" potluck. Set up is at 9 AM. Penny will ask Tina to have tables set up. All deacons will bring about 10 small wrapped empty birthday gifts to use for centerpieces. Debbie will pick up some red balloons, and Glorea or Penny will bring a small birthday cake. **JULY 10** will be "Root Beer Floats" served outside provided by the deacons. Ernie will purchase ice-cream, root beer and straws. Penny and Debbie will bring large plastic cups. **AUGUST 14** will be the Potluck Church Picnic after church at the Mielke's. Ernie will purchase watermelon and soda pop. Encourage everyone to bring lawn chairs. Penny will bring iced-tea. Debbie will provide water, ice chests, tables, basketball, and volleyball. Encourage people to car pool and Ted may take a large van. **SEPTEMBER 18** will be a Potluck (theme will be decided at a later date), **OCTOBER 9** will be a Potluck (theme will be decided at a later date).

Session meetings – Deacon Representative for July 7 and August 4 is Glorea. (September and October is Ernie, and November and December is Rosalie).

Visitations – We need to find a cassette player that can record sermons for Vera Sautter. Debbie will see if she has one.

Next Deacon meeting – will be decided at a later date. Meeting ended with prayer.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

Sunday, July 10 – Root Beer Floats.

Sunday, July 17 – PIONEER DAYS CHURCH
IN THE PARK (County Courthouse lawn)

Wednesday to Sunday, July 20-24 –
Creation Music Fest

Sunday, August 14 - Church Picnic after
church at Mielke's home. Drinks and
watermelon provided.

MISSION SUNDAY will be July 31, 2011. We will be privileged to host Campus Crusade for Christ Missionaries to Asia, Nate and Amy Krupke. It will be wonderful to hear first-hand about their calling and ministry in Asia, and to learn how we can pray for them specifically. We are looking forward to this opportunity to support them through fellowship, prayer and financial gifts. Don't miss this Mission Commission Sponsored event!

"ON CALL" NURSERY VOLUNTEERS NEEDED 10:00 TO 11:15 SUNDAY MORNINGS: "On call" means check in with our Nursery Attendant; if no children, then remain alert during the service and assist if children are taken down to the Nursery for care. There is a sign-up clipboard hanging on the wall by the Information Table in the Narthex. A police background check request form is needed—forms are attached to the back of the clipboard (Note: The \$10 fee will be waived). Please help! **Youth volunteers can earn Community Service Hours.**

NEWSLETTER FROM PASTOR GAMA:

Rubén Gamaliel Canul Naal

email: opendoorgama@yahoo.com

www.campjohn316.org

May 2011

Mexico, Merida



Dear friends and brethren, greetings in the Name that is above all names Jesus Christ:

Our family is profoundly grateful for your love showed in your intercession for us as well as your faithful support for the progress of His Heavenly Kingdom here in the land of the Mayan people. It is also our prayer that each of you be blessed and that our Heavenly Father prosper your lives with health, economy and ministry, we also wish this to all those that can read this report.

THANSGIVINGS AND PRAISE

1. Family. We praise our God for the enormous blessing toward us in receiving my daughter Andrea in the United States for 6 months. She came home in March. Your investment in time, love and support for our daughter has been of great blessing for her personal life among you. It has been very useful and she has improved her English 100%, and this is a great tool that will help her in her university studies... thank you for being part of her life.

2. Tomato Project. We thank God for your prayers for this project. This project has helped us for 6 months to give maintenance to Camp John 3:16, pay the salary of the workers that watch over the property, advance in cleaning the land, the planting and the acquisition of tools for the agriculture and irrigation which will continue in Camp John 3:16 and will help us advance in the construction.

3. Camps. Recently we had camps during this Easter week. We held two vacation Bible schools in two new villages, called Thamek and Seye. Our first purpose is to reach children through the Gospel, second to help local churches to contact the families through the children that are participating, and thirdly to help poor churches who don't have the resources with these programs.

In the youth camp there are so many blessings we would like to share, but I will just write some of them. Among them, first I can tell you we had a great number of non believers and more boys than girls, and usually it's the other way. For six days the youth heard the gospel and every day we saw how the teens gave their lives to Christ and trusted in Him for their salvation. It's always a joy for me to observe the youth's faces when they arrive full of hardness, pain and rebellion in their hearts, but at the end of camp days, their faces are different... full of joy and the absence of that heaviness is notorious.

At the end of each camp we always give the youth an opportunity to express how that got to camp and how it has been a blessing those days. It's the time I enjoy the most, for many of them break down and open their hearts to express their change and the emptiness that now has been filled with Jesus Christ. Many of them confess that they lived far from home because of drugs and gangs. And most of them hated their parents. Among the girls some confessed that they used drugs or were pregnant. God has given us the chance to continue helping some of this youth. We have news that others are joining a church. We thank God for reaching the lives of these young people with His Gospel of which many of you already participate.

We also thank the valuable help you gave to the team from Addy community Church. That helps us with the camps and the crafts that they gifted to the kids and teenagers in this activities, your team and their participation its been a huge blessing.

PRAYER REQUESTS

1. Family: we ask for your prayers for our health and protection. For Andrea, as she is beginning her university studies. For wisdom, grace and knowledge in school for our sons Alex and Adrian. For strength, faith and vision and also for our support, some months we have received less than 50% of our support. We trust that our God has the control for He is faithful and He will provide. Philippians 4:17.

2. For the summer camps. Two times a year we have only two evangelistic camps. They are focused on the children and youth of the Mayan villages that are very poor. It's a challenge to count on the funds for each child, and our God has always been faithful through you, these last 10 years, with your donations. For this summer camp we only have \$500 (U.S.) and we need \$4,000 us more. I ask you to pray that God may lift up brethren or churches to help us with this camp. The goal is to bless 150 children and 150 youth with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

3. Camp John 3:16

A. Camp Construction. Since we began the first phase of the construction it stopped May of 2010. We continue to pray and trust that our Lord will provide what we need. We still need to put a roof on the first dormitory. Up until now we haven't reached our goal, and for it we only need \$6,000 (U.S.). In these last months we started an agricultural project planting tomatoes in part of the

property and thank God with the harvest we were able to pay 6 months of the ones that keep and maintain Camp John 3:16 (I should mention that all the finance and support received for this project was done by a person from the city, a non Christian lawyer and friend of ours).

B. Please pray for the second agricultural project: we want to begin planting next month, 2 acres of corn. We will need a help of \$1,000 (U.S.) for this project, and it will be to get the funds to pay the salaries of the Christian brethren that give maintenance to the camp (one that keeps the camp at night and the other waters and cleans the land).

C. Maintenance of Camp John 3:16. My dear brothers and sisters in Christ, I also want to share a special situation. Now that Camp John 3:16 began it's construction since last year, we have been in the need of two people to keep and maintain the Camp. One takes care of the installations during he night and weekends; the other works in the morning doing gardening and cleans. So we don't have the funds for these workers and it's a challenge to get their salaries, that thanks be given to God, He has always provided. But I think it wise to share this with you so you can pray and help us in this situation. Our goal is to have \$825 (U.S.) per month for these brothers that keep the property, for we don't want to abandon the property while we aren't building.

Well, will finish this letter thanking you all for the continuous understanding, love and prayer for us. Sincerely, The Canul Family.