

Weapons Of Warfare

The Series Part 10

Stewardship Of God's Blessings

What is the 'world system' cycle of life? Well, it is definitely contrary to our last Weapons of Warfare study of "Sacrificial Faithfulness." Let's see if this sounds familiar. Work hard in school, get a good education, get a job, work to climb the ladder, get promotions and pay raises, rise to the top of your profession, retire, and die. In the middle of this, you get bigger, newer cars, bigger houses, bigger debt, and then live in fear until you die that you will lose what you sacrificed for, and be without all your pleasures and securities. We tell ourselves, "I have worked so hard, I deserve a break and a vacation. Something to distract me from this burden I am under. I need to now spend time with the family I have ignored to attain all of this." We think this gives meaning to the cycle, because "hey, at least I can do this thing I like because I do those things!" So now, the cycle kind of makes sense. Then we slowly build up walls of debt and stuff we no longer use. Then we move on to storing these things in the house and garage, then in storage buildings. We think that when God allows us to prosper, it is to feed the vicious cycle we have bought into. Stewardship in this paradigm to the individual is to steward one's own blessings for one's own well being. Yet, like the saying goes: "He who dies with the most toys in the end, still dies."

But, why does man seek to build diminishing towers of worship to self and wealth? Even in the church, the "prosperity Gospel" teaches a person to focus on the world and the world's goods. Yet, the simple math is this: If we are not our own and we are bought with a price, (**1 Corinthians 6:19-20**) then what you possess is not your own, and God has purchased you. There is no such thing as personal wealth to a Christian. It is all God's wealth. All a Christian has and is allowed to retain does not belong to them, and is not meant to be used to be consumed upon their desires and lusts. This is contrary to the world's cycle of wealth. But it is the truth. We are called to find security in Jesus and God's love, not the numbers in our bank account. Yet, we retain those numbers in an attempt to keep only what God's blessing can truly provide. But the world and the church teach that those digits are the blessing. The church has switched from the love of God to the love of God's blessings.

We are told that "the love of money is the root of all evil" (**1 Timothy 6:10**). What I have seen is a great evil within the western Body. Following the cycle of the world system, the church has instead of (**Hebrews 12:1**) "Therefore let's also, seeing we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let's run with perseverance the race that is set before us," They have been convinced to weigh down their lives with the pursuit and cares of this world, maximizing lifestyle, entangling their blessing with the burden of debt, and suffocated the blessing of what God meant for ministry, to peruse the desires of their corrupted hearts. All the while, the world sinks deeper in sin and rebellion against God.

The entire time our Father God, who gave us His everything in the life of Jesus, sits upon the throne of His grace looking for anyone whose heart is truly His. Not being a part of a timeshare with the cares of this life. If the church could ever return to the book of Acts and focus all their efforts to spreading the gospel, then we will once again see the outpouring of God's blessing upon the work of the gospel. But until then, the majority of western Christianity stands guilty for the souls they could have reached with the blessing of God they devoured in vain pursuits. THAT is what we are talking about: the Weapon of our Warfare of "Stewardship of God's Blessings". This is a weapon that has slipped from the hands of the church and lies in the dust of our own defeat. But we can pick it up again and yield its force and power against the prince of darkness, the god of this world- Satan. And strike him down in the righteous vengeance of God. This will take extreme sacrifice and single-minded purpose for the kingdom of God and His glory.

Purge The World's Way With Truth



Redeem The Time Of God- Your Master!

Ephesians 5:14-17 "Therefore he says, "Awake, you who sleep, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you." (15) Therefore watch carefully how you walk, not as unwise, **but as wise; (16) redeeming the time, because the days are evil.** (17) Therefore don't be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is."



Redeem The Wealth Of God- Your Leader!

Luke 16:10-13 "He who is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much. He who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. (11) **If therefore you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon [Money], who will commit to your trust the true riches?** (12) If you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own? (13) No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to one, and despise the other. **You aren't able to serve God and Mammon [Money].**"



Refocus Your Heart To Jesus- Your Lord!

1 Timothy 6:10 "**For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.** Some have been led astray from the faith in their greed, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

Psalms 62:10 "Don't trust in oppression. Don't become vain in robbery. **If riches increase, don't set your heart on them.**"

Luke 12:15 "He said to them, "Beware! Keep yourselves from covetousness, **for a man's life doesn't consist of the abundance of the things which he possesses.**"



Set Your Heart Upon God And His Ways.

Colossians 3:1-3 "If then you were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God. (2) **Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are on the earth.** (3) For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God."



Realize The Futility Of The World's System.

Matthew 6:19-21 “**Don't lay up treasures for yourselves on the earth**, where moth and rust consume, and where thieves break through and steal; (20) **but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven**, where neither moth nor rust consume, and where thieves don't break through and steal; (21) **for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.**”

Ecclesiastes 1:2-3 + Ecclesiastes 2:18-19 “Vanity of vanities,” says the Preacher; “Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.” (3) What does man gain from all his labor in which he labors under the sun? + I hated all my labor in which I labored under the sun, because I must leave it to the man who comes after me. (19) Who knows whether he will be a wise man or a fool? Yet he will have rule over all of my labor in which I have labored, and in which I have shown myself wise under the sun. This also is vanity.”



Forsake The Path Of Worldly Riches.

1 Timothy 6:9-10 “**But those who are determined to be rich fall into a temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful lusts, such as drown men in ruin and destruction.** (10) For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some have been led astray from the faith in their greed, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows.”

Proverbs 28:22 “The stingy person hastens after riches and does not know that poverty will overtake him.”

Proverbs 23:4-5 “**Do not wear yourself out to become rich**; be wise enough to restrain yourself. (5) When you gaze upon riches, they are gone, for they surely make wings for themselves, and fly off into the sky like an eagle!”



God Can And Will Make You Rich, If He So Desires.

Deuteronomy 8:18 “You must remember the LORD your God, for he is the one who gives ability to get wealth; if you do this he will confirm his covenant that he made by oath to your ancestors, even as he has to this day.”



Come To Terms With The Motives Of Your Heart.

James 4:1-3 “Where do wars and fighting's among you come from? Don't they come from your pleasures that war in your members? (2) You lust, and don't have. You murder and covet, and can't obtain. You fight and make war. You don't have, because you don't ask. (3) **You ask, and don't receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures.**”



Recall What Jesus Said The Priorities Are!

Luke 12:22-34 “He said to his disciples, “Therefore I tell you, **don't be anxious for your life, what you will eat, nor yet for your body, what you will wear.** (23) **Life is more than food, and the body is more than clothing.** (24) Consider the ravens: they don't sow, they don't reap, they have no warehouse or barn, and God feeds them. How much more

valuable are you than birds! (25) Which of you by being anxious can add a cubit to his height? (26) If then you aren't able to do even the least things, why are you anxious about the rest? (27) Consider the lilies, how they grow. They don't toil, neither do they spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. (28) But if this is how God clothes the grass in the field, which today exists, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith? (29) Don't seek what you will eat or what you will drink; neither be anxious. (30) For the nations of the world seek after all of these things, but your Father knows that you need these things. (31) **But seek God's Kingdom, and all these things will be added to you.** (32) Don't be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom. (33) Sell that which you have, and give gifts to the needy. Make for yourselves purses which don't grow old, a treasure in the heavens that doesn't fail, where no thief approaches, neither moth destroys. (34) For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."



Seek The Real Spiritual Blessing Of God.

Isaiah 55:1-2 "Hey, all who are thirsty, come to the water! You who have no money, come! Buy and eat! Come! Buy wine and milk without money and without cost! (2) **Why pay money for something that will not nourish you? Why spend your hard-earned money on something that will not satisfy?** Listen carefully to me and eat what is nourishing! Enjoy fine food!"



Stayed Focused, And Use Your Resources For The Kingdom.

1 Timothy 6:6-10 "But godliness with contentment is great gain. (7) For we brought nothing into the world, and we certainly can't carry anything out. (8) **But having food and clothing, we will be content with that.**"

1 Timothy 6:17-19 "Command those who are rich in this world's goods not to be haughty or to set their hope on riches, which are uncertain, but on God who richly provides us with all things for our enjoyment. (18) **Tell them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, to be generous givers, sharing with others.** (19) In this way they will save up a treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the future and so lay hold of what is truly life."

Parables On Stewardship Of God's Blessings



EXPANDING YOUR BANK ACCOUNT

Luke 12:15-21 "He spoke a parable to them, saying, "The ground of a certain rich man produced abundantly. (17) He reasoned within himself, saying, 'What will I do, because I don't have room to store my crops?' (18) He said, 'This is what I will do. I will pull down my barns, and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. (19) I will tell my soul, "**Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years. Take your ease, eat, drink, be merry.**" (20) "But God said to him, 'You foolish one, tonight your soul is required of you. The things which you have prepared—whose will they be?' (21) **So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.**"



BE A READY AND ACTIVE SERVANT OF GOD

Luke 12:35-40 “Let your waist be dressed and your lamps burning. (36) Be like men watching for their lord, when he returns from the marriage feast; that, when he comes and knocks, they may immediately open to him. (37) Blessed are those servants, whom the lord will find watching when he comes. Most certainly I tell you, that he will dress himself, and make them recline, and will come and serve them. (38) They will be blessed if he comes in the second or third watch, and finds them so. (39) But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what hour the thief was coming, he would have watched, and not allowed his house to be broken into. (40) Therefore be ready also, for the Son of Man is coming in an hour that you don’t expect him.”

Explanation:

Luke 12:42-48 “The Lord said, “Who then is the faithful and wise steward, whom his lord will set over his household, to give them their portion of food at the right times? (43) Blessed is that servant whom his lord will find doing so when he comes. (44) Truly I tell you, that he will set him over all that he has. (45) But if that servant says in his heart, ‘**My lord delays his coming,**’ and begins to beat the menservants and the maidservants, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken, (46) then the lord of that servant will come in a day when he isn’t expecting him, and in an hour that he doesn’t know, and will cut him in two, and place his portion with the unfaithful. (47) That servant, who knew his lord’s will, and didn’t prepare, nor do what he wanted, will be beaten with many stripes, (48) but he who didn’t know, and did things worthy of stripes, will be beaten with few stripes. **To whomever much is given, of him will much be required; and to whom much was entrusted, of him more will be asked.**”



PARABLE OF THE TALENTS

Matthew 25:14-30 “For it is like a man, going into another country, who called his own servants, and entrusted his goods to them. (15) To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one; to each according to his own ability. Then he went on his journey. (16) Immediately he who received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. (17) In the same way, he also who got the two gained another two. (18) But he who received the one talent went away and dug in the earth, and hid his lord’s money. (19) “Now after a long time the lord of those servants came, and reconciled accounts with them. (20) He who received the five talents came and brought another five talents, saying, ‘Lord, you delivered to me five talents. Behold, I have gained another five talents in addition to them.’ (21) “His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a few things, I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’ (22) “He also who got the two talents came and said, ‘Lord, you delivered to me two talents. Behold, I have gained another two talents in addition to them.’ (23) “His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a few things, I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’

(24) “He also who had received the one talent came and said, ‘Lord, I knew you that you are a hard man, reaping where you didn’t sow, and gathering where you didn’t scatter. (25) I was afraid, and went away and hid your talent in the earth. Behold, you have what is yours.’ (26) “But his lord answered him, ‘You wicked and slothful servant. You knew that I reap where I didn’t sow, and gather where I didn’t scatter. (27) You ought therefore to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received back my own with interest. (28) Take away therefore the talent from him, and give it to him who has the ten talents. (29) **For to everyone who has will be given, and he will have abundance, but from him who doesn’t have, even that which he has will be taken away. (30) Throw out the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”**



EXPANDING OF THE TALENTS PARABLES TEACHING

Matthew 25:31-46 “But when the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. (32) Before him all the nations will be gathered, and he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. (33) He will set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. (34) Then the King will tell those on his right hand, ‘Come, blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; (35) for I was hungry, and you gave me food to eat. I was thirsty, and you gave me drink. I was a stranger, and you took me in. (36) I was naked, and you clothed me. I was sick, and you visited me. I was in prison, and you came to me.’ (37) “Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry, and feed you; or thirsty, and give you a drink? (38) When did we see you as a stranger, and take you in; or naked, and clothe you? (39) When did we see you sick, or in prison, and come to you?’ (40) **“The King will answer them, ‘Most certainly I tell you, because you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’** (41) Then he will say also to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels; (42) for I was hungry, and you didn’t give me food to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me no drink; (43) I was a stranger, and you didn’t take me in; naked, and you didn’t clothe me; sick, and in prison, and you didn’t visit me.’ (44) “Then they will also answer, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and didn’t help you?’ (45) “Then he will answer them, saying, **‘Most certainly I tell you, because you didn’t do it to one of the least of these, you didn’t do it to me.’** (46) These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”



PARABLE OF THE SEEDS

Luke 8:4-15 “When a great multitude came together, and people from every city were coming to him, he spoke by a parable. (5) “The farmer went out to sow his seed. As he sowed, some fell along the road, and it was trampled under foot, and the birds of the sky devoured it. (6) Other seed fell on the rock, and as soon as it grew, it withered away, because it had no moisture. (7) Other fell amid the thorns, and the thorns grew with it, and choked it.

(8) Other fell into the good ground, and grew, and produced one hundred times as much fruit.” As he said these things, he called out, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear!” (9) Then his disciples asked him, “What does this parable mean?” (10) He said, “To you it is given to know the mysteries of God’s Kingdom, but to the rest in parables; that ‘seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.’ (11) Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. (12) Those along the road are those who hear, then the devil comes, and takes away the word from their heart, that they may not believe and be saved. (13) Those on the rock are they who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; but these have no root, who believe for a while, then fall away in time of temptation. (14) That which fell among the thorns, these are those who have heard, and as they go on their way they are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity. (15) Those in the good ground, these are those who with an honest and good heart, having heard the word, hold it tightly, and produce fruit with perseverance.”

A COMPARISON

➤ *The Temptations Of Jesus*

Matthew 4:8-11 “Again, **the devil took him to a very high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their grandeur. (9) And he said to him, “I will give you all these things if you throw yourself to the ground and worship me.”** (10) Then Jesus said to him, “Go away, Satan! For it is written: **‘You are to worship the Lord your God and serve only him.’**” (11) Then the devil left him, and angels came and began ministering to his needs.”

Luke 16:13 “No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to one, and despise the other. You aren’t able to serve God and Mammon [**Money**].”

You are a servant to whatever you devote your time and effort towards. This is based upon the foundation of your heart. Whatever you try to find comfort, security, and help in for this life. This is exposed in Christians if they remain committed to the Godly principles of God’s Word. If they do not and try it the world’s way, they are no longer serving God, but self and Satan.

➤ *The Seeds Amongst Thorns*

Luke 8:7-14 “Other fell amid the thorns, and the thorns grew with it, and choked it. 14) That which fell among the thorns, these are those who have heard, **and as they go on their way they are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity.**”

➤ *The Prosperity Gospel*

God is going to give you everything without restraint. He wants you to have ever increasing power, pleasure, and blessing. Just receive the amplified pleasure of this life as a sign of God’s love.

1 Timothy 6:3-5 “If anyone teaches a different doctrine, and doesn’t consent to sound words, the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, (4) he is conceited, knowing nothing, but obsessed with arguments, disputes, and word battles, from which come envy, strife, insulting, evil suspicions, (5) constant friction of people of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, **who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. Withdraw yourself from such.**”



THE PRODIGAL SON

Even the Parable of The Prodigal Son was a story of not only redemption, but stewardship and handling the Father’s possessions wisely. The Prodigal Son wants pleasure and ease, above the presence of his Father. Not realizing that he had both as long as he remained with his Father.

Luke 15:11-24 “He said, “A certain man had two sons. (12) The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of your property.’ He divided his livelihood between them. (13) Not many days after, the younger son gathered all of this together and traveled into a far country. There he wasted his property with riotous living. (14) When he had spent all of it, there arose a severe famine in that country, and he began to be in need. (15) He went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed pigs. (16) He wanted to fill his belly with the husks that the pigs ate, but no one gave him any. (17) But when he came to himself he said, ‘How many hired servants of my father’s have bread enough to spare, and I’m dying with hunger! (18) I will get up and go to my father, and will tell him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight. (19) I am no more worthy to be called your son. Make me as one of your hired servants.”’”

(20) “He arose, and came to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him, and was moved with compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. (21) The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ (22) “But the father said to his servants, ‘Bring out the best robe, and put it on him. Put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. (23) Bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let’s eat, and celebrate; (24) for this, my son, was dead, and is alive again. He was lost, and is found.’ They began to celebrate.”

Much like the parable, there are many prodigal children in the body of Christ who have squandered their father’s blessings on pleasure and desires of this world. Yet, just like this parable, we can all come home and once again handle the things of our Father as good stewards and faithful servants. We cannot receive again what has been lost, but we can from this point, handle with even greater care the blessings of God: Putting to work the blessings of our time, talents, presence, funds, and other gifts, all in the effort to share the love of God with a fallen world. We are employed by God to call His children home. This is the real point of this life. Nothing else is worthy of the Sacrifice of Jesus.

Ephesians 2:10 “For we are his creative work, having been created in Christ Jesus for good works that God prepared beforehand so we can do them.”

Ephesians 4:21-24 “if indeed you heard him, and were taught in him, even as truth is in Jesus: (22) that you put away, as concerning your former way of life, the old man, that grows corrupt after the lusts of deceit; (23) and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, (24) and put on the new man, who in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of truth.”

We can easily make another Bible Study on how we are supposed to work hard, provide for our families and take care of things. Yet, the issue is the foundational reasoning. In the west we have drifted so far to excess and delicacies, we now think this is God’s will. How then do we find the right foundation? We know ministries need funding, materials need to be produced, the poor provided for, and our own families need to be taken care of. This takes money. Therein, we find the answer. If we are trying to get a good education and a good job for the soul desire of seeking service to the kingdom of God, we have a firm foundation. If we are seeking the good life of ease and access, this is sandy foundation. Often in the west, people say it is for God and Family, but their checkbooks, time sheets, hobbies, and interests reveal the truth. Using God’s Name in vain to prop up a selfish desire, calling it God’s will, and often giving God and their families the leftovers of their time, talents, and finances. This is not God’s way. As I said before, the only thing we will be able to take with us to Heaven is people: our loved ones, friends, and family. It is the motives of the heart that reveal the foundation we are standing upon. It is the actions of a person’s life that reveals that foundation. What we have done with the blessings of God is what we will be judged by. Did we give God the best, or the rest? Did we squander our opportunities to save souls for the pleasures of this life? Or, did we seek for the kingdom of God above all else and gave our all to His work in these last days? The truth of this will be known for all eternity, and declared in the gates of Heaven. What will you have God say about you on that great day?

It’s time for the church in the west to re-evaluate their motives and desires. May the church reorder their efforts to the spreading of the Gospel. I pray that families all around America will downsize their lives. Learn to do more with less. Free up their time and funds from all the debt service they must give to sustain the world’s system and its way of doing things. A maxed-out life for pleasure and security is not God’s way. A maxed-out life for the spreading of the gospel of Jesus Christ is exactly what God calls us all to do. We find this in the book of Acts. Imagine if the church world returned to a self sacrifice, self denial, and sold-out love of God and others? This would shake the world! It is possible again, and it must start with each one of us individually. Who among us is truly willing to find the narrow path to life, carry his cross, deny self, and give their all to the God who gave us His all?

Send me Lord, I Will Go!

Isaiah 6:8 “I heard the voice of the Lord say, “Whom will I send? Who will go on our behalf?” I answered, “Here I am, send me!”