



*Matthew 25:14-30 (The Parable of the Talents)*

*Luke 16:11 – If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches?*

Perhaps the most recognized aspect of Christian Stewardship is the final of the “3 T’s”- Treasure. In addition to the stewardship of Time and Talent, managing the financial resources God has placed in our care begins in the same principles listed in the previous articles. Consider the following excerpts from the LCMS stewardship resource “Personal Money Management by Ron Cheuning:

“Christian money management begins with the conviction that we want to become faithful and good managers of money entrusted to us by God. When we acknowledge God as owner of our resources, we understand our obligation and responsibility to be faithful caretakers. As God’s stewards, we realize all things, including our money, are to be used for His purposes. Ask this question: “What is God’s will for the money given me?” The answer to this question is found in the various vocations which God has given to us: the roles He has given us to fill in church, family and society. We understand through the parable of the talents (Matt. 25:14-30) that our heavenly Father is pleased when we manage our money responsibly and displeased when we handle it poorly. Jesus said, *“If then you have not been faithful in unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches?”* (Luke 16:11 ESV). There is a direct connection between our faithful use of money here and now and the “true riches” God wants to entrust to us. Jesus calls us to handle money wisely and prudently as well as have a proper attitude toward money. We live in a money-driven, consumer-oriented society. Many people are shortsighted and unfocused when it comes to managing their money. However, as God’s money managers, we are to think and live differently. As Martin Luther put it, “There are three conversions necessary in the Christian life: the conversion of the heart, the mind and the purse.” The primary issue with money is attitude. While it is important to have a good spending plan, to be wise investors and to control credit, what matters most is the attitude we bring with us to the task of money management. Do we possess possessions or do possessions possess us? Acknowledging God as the Owner of our money and we as the caretakers of what He entrusts to us is a first step toward ensuring that our possessions are tools for our use rather than things that control us. As Christians, we are not honest if we use the disclaimer, “Jesus can have our hearts but not our money.” We can’t compartmentalize the Christian life. Our relationship with Christ impacts everything we think and do, including our money management. Money, more than anything else, can separate us from our heavenly Father. Money can be Satan’s best tool to deceive God’s people. Money has the power to change us and may win the battle for our hearts as we are deceived by the thought that more money (instead of trust in God) is the answer to our financial problems. Having money and possessions can make us proud, crowd out our real God and cause us to place our security in our financial well-being instead of our God (Prov. 30:8-10).”

To God be the Glory!

**Prayer: Almighty God, heavenly Father, You have called us to be Your children and heirs of Your gracious promises in Christ Jesus. Grant us Your Holy Spirit that we may forsake all covetous desires and the inordinate love of riches. Deliver us from the pursuit of passing things that we may seek the kingdom of Your Son and trust in His righteousness and so find blessedness and peace; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen (LSB p. 311)**