

INTRODCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **2Corinthians 4:1-10.**
- B. By way of introduction, turn to Mt. 24:45-51 and take a look at this parable delivered by Jesus.
- C. Here we see that the master left his possessions to his servants. They were to steward these items.
- D. Today, in the church we are stewards of God's possessions. As we talk about stewardship in the church may we focus on three possessions; the gospel, the gifts and souls.

I. THE GOSPEL.

- A. Scripture text: 2Corinthians 4:7; 5:18-20.
- B. The gospel of X is to be obeyed initially and continually (Mt. 11:28-30; Gal. 5:7).
- C. We have this truth in our earthly vessels and must live by it as well as preaching it to others.
- D. Know what the Bible says; a good steward will not be ignorant of the Scriptures (2Tim. 2:15).
- E. Some practical admonitions:
 - 1. Have a set time to study the Bible daily.
 - 2. Look for new things in the scriptures, new areas of obedience.
 - 3. Preach to gospel "as you go", it takes very little time.
 - 4. Encourage others to begin the Bible study habit.

II. THE GIFTS GIVEN.

- A. This discussion has nothing to do with the miraculous gifts that were used in the first century. They have all passed away and we now have the gifts of Romans, chapter 12 to use.
- B. These gifts (Rom. 12) and the gifts of Eph. 4 were given to the church to edify itself. The church is to build itself up by using it's gifts (talents and abilities) so that it can better convert the world.
- C. Christians must do be willing to do three things if they desire to be good stewards in the church:
 - 1. Know your gifts (everyone has gifts, see Rom. 12:6).
 - 2. Be willing to grow in your gifts (the Bible teaches excellence not just getting by with the common or mundane).
 - 3. Make gift utilization a priority. Doing things for the church should not be something done only when we "find some time".
- D. May we never be just hearers of the word only (Jas. 1:22).

III. THE SOULS OF THE EARTH.

- A. God has stated unequivocally that all souls belong to Him. That does not mean He will save all souls but every human comes from God and belongs to God (Ezek. 18:4).
- B. The worth of a soul cannot be measured on worldly scales. One soul is worth more than the entire wealth of the world (Mt. 16:26).
- C. Heaven rejoices over one soul that repents of sin (Lk. 15:7).
- D. There is a great amount of work to be done among the souls of the earth. We need to get busy as stewards in helping souls that will accept our aid (Mt. 9:36-38; Jn. 4:35).
- E. Here is what you can do for the souls of the earth and be a good steward in the church:
 - 1. Bake a cake.
 - 2. Distribute tracts.
 - 3. Do WBS.
 - 4. Invite to Sun. school.
 - 5. Visit neighbors.
 - 6. Go to hospitals.
 - 7. Invite someone for dinner.
 - 8. Babysit while others evangelize.
 - 9. Refuse to cheat on tests, the IRS, etc.
 - 10. Raise godly children.
 - 11. Pray without ceasing for lost souls.
 - 12. Be benevolent w/material things.
 - 13. Teach Bible classes at church.
 - 14. Be a servant in all things.

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. The master will someday return and what will He find (Mt. 24:48-52)?
- B. Be a good steward of:
 - 1. The gospel by obeying and preaching it.
 - 2. Your gifts by using and growing in them.
 - 3. Souls by finding ways to serve others.
- C. Plan of salvation for non-Xians; erring Xians.