

Discipleship & Stewardship Summary – Résumé de l'Intendance du Disciple

Taken from the 4th and final week of the January 2009 series of preaching and testimonies

The Kingdom of God is

ruled by God in three Persons;

driven by trust in God based in God's love and provident and solicitous care experienced in the personal encounter with God in vicariously through the love and care of others.

The great gift from God the Father is eternal life beginning even now as his children by adoption received in faith through Baptism.

Children of God we are drawn to become disciples of Jesus – the Father points to Him saying “This is my Beloved Son, listen to Him, follow Him.” Mary at Cana also says to us as to the servants “Do whatever He (Jesus) tells you.” In Jesus we have a Master Teacher, Saviour & Lord.

IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD:

we are called to be good Stewards of God's abundant gifts of Time, Talent, & Treasure to receive the abundance of life Jesus offers.

We are called to be good Stewards of God's abundant gifts of:

TIME – past elicits joy to remember God's mercy and forgiveness shown to us, to me

TIME – present elicits awe and wonder that in God the present is unending because my soul is immortal like God and as my body will be after the resurrection....

TIME – future elicits hope in realizing that all time is in God's hands and He is master of the impossible and of time and offers us eternity....

TALENT – realizing all my talent and ability is from God stirs up eagerness to learn more, to try things, and failing to try again, and to experience the satisfaction of putting my gifts at the service of God and others....

The Kingdom of this world is

ruled by the prince of this world, the Devil; driven by fear generated by (1) the devil who stirs up people, groups, and organizations, (2) the world, its people, culture, and institutions, and (3) the flesh weakened by original sin.

Apart from God, in this world we are alone, isolated, though surrounded by people, however close.

Without Jesus to follow, we are driven by trends, overly impressed by bullies, taken with our own opinions or those of others, and become confused, lost in the world, as St Paul said, blown about by the winds of trickery and human deceit.

IN THE KINGDOM OF THIS WORLD:

everything around us is driven by the fear of loss and the impulse to get ahead of others and accumulate to ward off suffering and death.

Economic systems, the stock market, world governments, business...are all driven by fear:

The world torments us over our past....

In the world people become fearful and frantic about the present, which seems ever running out and insufficient....

In the world, realization of our mortality and of the power and domination of others generates fear for the future....

In the world, people obsess about their talent, skills, ability, and hold possessively their accomplishments, leading to fear and sadness over loss and aging....

Discipleship & Stewardship Summary – Résumé de l'Intendance du Disciple

TREASURE – In the Kingdom of God, I remember my parents loved each other, I was conceived in my mother's womb, and 9 months later I was born stark naked. One day I'll die, they will strip me naked and do with my body what needs to be done. There is nothing I can do to prevent it. I will take nothing with me, not even my own body. However, God has designed my soul to contain and conserve every experience I have ever had and the entire person I am becoming and carry me beyond death into God's eternal realm where I will enter into eternal life and await the resurrection of the body when God will remake our bodies with immortal properties like our soul. We will look around 15 years old or whatever is a perfect age for us for all eternity....

TO SUM UP....

For each of these foundational areas of life – time, talent, and treasure – God has provided his solutions to draw us out of the confusion of the world and establish us firmly in his kingdom.

For **TIME** God told Adam and Eve, later his Chosen People through Moses, and now He tells us: "I give you 7 days. You may do all your work and all that you need and want to do during the first 6 days. The 7th day belongs to Me. You must give it back to Me, and then I will free you from preoccupation, worry, and trouble over time.

For **TALENT** God shows us in Jesus that the only remedy from the self-preoccupation of the world is to freely and generously put our talents at the service of others, and our service draws us out of ourselves into self-forgetfulness and the joy and satisfaction of making the lives of others better.

For **TREASURE** God inspired his solution in Abraham and his Chosen People. The only way to be free of preoccupation over money and material goods is to give 10% for the work of God and to the poor and those in need. Do the math and see what percentage of your income you now give and then take what time you need to aim for 10%.

In the world, people obsess, worry, fret, envy, connive, manipulate, extort, and scheme over money, property, and material possessions....

Did you know that as a priest and pastor I am in danger of going to Hell when I die if I do not do as God asks of me and warn you about the dangers to your immortal soul and eternal life and happiness that you face in this world?

Here is an important warning. Did you realize that obsession and worry over money and possessions can make you physically sick and kill you? That's the truth, and this may be one of the hidden causes of cancer in some people. Even if not such behaviour will reduce people to objects and certainly poison your relationships.

TO SUM UP....

The world, the devil, and the flesh conspire to tie us up into knots and drive us to convulsions over our experience of time, talent, and treasure, and the world offers no lasting remedies....

All its strategies and proposed solutions simply drive one further into self-preoccupation over time past, present, and future, about our talents, skills, and accomplishments, and over the future.... The world knows only greed, fear, competitiveness, domination, and seeking after influence, power, and personal gain.

In the world people range from excessive preoccupation with getting credit for one's accomplishments to outright theft of the goods and accomplishments of others. The world cannot conceive of freely giving over to the common good all that can bring personal gain.

When I first heard this teaching about God's proposal that we give back to Him 10% of all our revenue for God's work and for those in need I freaked out. Then I calmed down and had a look at it and decided to aim for it. The key is in that decision to trust in God enough to do as He prescribes and rely on Him to provide.