

Psalm 24; Lord's Day 42

PROPER ATTITUDE TOWARD POSSESSIONS

- I. Stewardship.
 - A. Scripture teaches that all things belong to God: the earth and its fulness (Psalm 24:1,2; 50:11,12).
 1. Originally, in Eden, man managed himself and the creation as a steward, serving God and consecrating all to Him.
 2. The purpose of man's dominion was to subdue and rule earthly creation, not exploit it.
 - B. This makes man a steward, a tenant by God's kind permission, having precarious tenure, liable to ejection.
 1. The parable of the talents teaches that God entrusts us with some of His wealth, in order to increase His wealth.
 2. Everything (life, possessions, or talents) must return to God in the sense of giving Him praise (cf. I Cor. 10:31).
- II. The violation of our God-given relationship to possessions is called stealing.
 - A. Sin makes all men thieves (stealers), proudly claiming things as our own, here for us and our happiness.
 - B. We steal from God (Malachi 3:8-10).
 - C. We steal from our neighbor when we take advantage of him so he has a loss.
- III. The duty required in this commandment is that it calls us to serve God with our all, all the time.
 - A. Jesus is the perfect steward.
 - B. Only those united to Christ by faith can live by faith as true stewards.
 - C. This commandment is not a taskmaster, which we have to fulfill in order to receive grace.
 1. In gratitude engage in honest labor or in some lawful calling; do not be idle or lazy (Ephesians 4:28).
 2. Give to God first, indicating your trust in Him and in His care.
 3. In gratitude, strive against the spirit of selfishness by seeking the welfare of others.
 4. Cultivate the grace of contentment.