

FBC POWELL, 1-8-17 AM NOTES  
"The Issue Is Ownership"  
Various Scriptures  
#1 in Series, "Living with an Eternal Perspective"

**Ecclesiastes 3:11b (ESV)** "...He has put eternity into man's heart..."

**Ephesians 2:8-9** "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; **not as a result of works**, so that no one may boast."

**Ephesians 2:10** "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus **for good works**, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them."

**1 Corinthians 3:11-15** "For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire."

"It becomes us to spend this life only as a journey toward heaven... to which we should subordinate all other concerns of life."  
- Jonathan Edwards

**Colossians 3:2** "Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth."

**Deuteronomy 10:14** "Behold, to the Lord your God belong heaven and the highest heavens, the earth and all that is in it."

**1 Chronicles 29:11a (ESV)** "Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours."

**Psalms 24:1** "The earth is the Lord's, and all it contains, the world, and those who dwell in it."

**Job 41:11b** "Whatever is under the whole heaven is Mine."

**Haggai 2:8** "'The silver is Mine and the gold is Mine,' declares the Lord of hosts."

I. God Owns All Money and Possessions

**1 Timothy 6:7 (NKJV)** "For we brought nothing into *this* world, *and it is* certain we can carry nothing out."

**Matthew 25:21 (ESV)** "His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.'"

## II. God Owns Time

**Psalms 90:12 (NIV)** “Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.”

**Ephesians 5:15-16** “Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil.”

## III. God Owns Our Bodies

**Psalms 139:13-14 (ESV)** “<sup>13</sup> For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother’s womb. <sup>14</sup> I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well.”

**Corinthians 6:19-20** “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.”

## IV. God Owns Our Children

**Psalms 127:3 (ESV)** “Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb a reward.”

### A. Teach Your Children

**Deuteronomy 6:4-7** “Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall **teach them diligently** to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.”

### B. Train Your Children

**Proverbs 22:6** “Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it.”

## **First Baptist Church Powell 01 08 2017 AM**

### **Sermon 1: The Issue Is Ownership**

#### **Various Scriptures**

There was a time when you were not; there will never be a time you will not be. If that truth ever sinks in it will change the way you look at things. I think most people give mental assent to that opening statement, but I’m not sure that most people have let it really sink in. At the moment of your conception in your mother’s womb, you became a human being, a person, and even if you had died in the womb, you would still exist forever into the future. That’s some *heavy* truth. According to the Bible, you will have a

conscious existence forever in one of two places – a place the Bible calls hell or the place that the Bible calls heaven. I suspect that most who are listening to this message would agree with what I have said thus far. I don't believe that I have to convince anyone that there is conscious existence after death. God has put that in the heart of every person. Ecclesiastes 3:11b (ESV): "...He has put eternity into man's heart..." That is why in most every known people group there is some concept of an afterlife.

The same Bible that tells us there is an eternal conscious existence in either heaven or hell, also tells us that for those who go to heaven, there are differences in reward. While all in heaven will be in eternal joy and fulfillment, some will have a greater capacity to enjoy heaven and a greater capacity to glorify God (which is the reason we were created in the first place).

In 1 Corinthians 3, the Apostle Paul is writing to Christians about a place where each Christian's works will be judged – not for the purpose of determining if they have worked hard enough to make it into heaven, but for rewards as they move into eternity. You see, our works have nothing to do with our salvation. Ephesians 2:8-9: "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast." The Bible, however, does not teach that good works offered with the correct motive of glorifying God are not important and valuable. The next verse after Ephesians 2:8-9 is Ephesians 2:10: "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them."

Let's take a moment to look at the passage I referenced earlier about the believer's works being judged. 1 Corinthians 3:11-15:

For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

There are several things that are obviously taught in this passage. First, it is referring to true believers who are going to spend eternity in Heaven. The foundation for their life and their hope for heaven is in Jesus Christ (v 11). Second, our life here on earth is our opportunity to build on that grace given foundation with one of two kinds of materials. A believer has the opportunity to build on the grace foundation with grace empowered permanent materials that will come through God's testing fires unscathed (gold, silver, precious stones). A believer who has been saved by grace may choose to build on that grace foundation with materials that are not pleasing to God. They (their works) will be burned up at this time of testing. They are illustrated as flammable building materials of "wood, hay, [and] straw."

It is not my intent, in this message, to examine in depth what makes our works gold, silver, and precious stones, and what makes the perishable works that are illustrated as wood, hay, and straw. I've done that multiple times in other messages. The short explanation is that works done in the power of the Holy Spirit for the glory of God bring reward and everything else is burned up. In the last message in this series, we will look at the subject of rewards in heaven, but for now, I simply want us to see that our lives here impact *how* we will spend eternity, not *where* we will spend eternity. Until we live with that eternal perspective, our priorities are going to be out of order here on earth and that affects eternity.

Jonathan Edwards said, "It becomes us to spend this life only as a journey toward heaven... to which we should subordinate all other concerns of life." [Jonathan Edwards quoted by Randy Alcorn, *Heaven*, page 5] What we are really talking about is what Paul spoke of in Colossians 3:2: "Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth."

What we have focused on thus far in this message is a summary of what we will be expounding on these four weeks in the series entitled, *Living with an Eternal Perspective*. Let's shift gears to this specific message. The starting place for a Christian who desires to live with an eternal perspective is to settle the

issue of *ownership*. Until you see that God is the owner of everything and we are the owner of nothing, you are just going to (at best) give lip service to this “eternal perspective” I’ve been talking about. The Scripture is full of reminders for us that in reality we own nothing and that God is truly the owner of everything. But this has to be more than just *lip service* for believers. Listen to a few of the many verses that deal with God’s ownership.

Deuteronomy 10:14: “Behold, to the Lord your God belong heaven and the highest heavens, the earth and all that is in it.”

1 Chronicles 29:11a (ESV): “Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours.”

Psalms 24:1: “The earth is the Lord’s, and all it contains, the world, and those who dwell in it.”

In Job 41:11b God says, “Whatever is under the whole heaven is Mine.”

Haggai 2:8: “‘The silver is Mine and the gold is Mine,’ declares the Lord of hosts.”

It is dangerous to act like an owner when in reality you are only a steward or a manager of God’s assets that He has allowed you to invest for His glory and His causes. What I am about to say will sound harsh, but I believe it is true. What do we call someone who is entrusted with another person’s assets to invest those assets where the owner tells him, and the one who is entrusted with the owner’s assets uses them to purchase things for themselves without the owner’s permission? I believe that the commonly accepted word for that person is an “embezzler.” When the truth of God’s ownership sinks in, it changes the way we view everything! It means that one of our most important tasks is to seek God for what He desires for us to do with His assets.

For the balance of this message, I want to set up what we will be talking about over the next three messages. Remember that an eternal perspective starts with settling the fact that God is the owner and we are simply His servants who are given the task of managing His assets according to His guidance.

## I. God Owns All Money and Possessions

I suspect that most believers, when they think of God’s ownership, think only in terms of money and stuff. As we will see, He is the owner of what we call *our money and stuff*, but the realm of God’s ownership is way wider than that.

Never have so many Christians believed the lie that if they come by it honestly, it is theirs to do with as they please. Even some people who give regularly to the church and Christian causes have not understood the “ownership principle” that we are talking about. I remember some twenty or twenty-five years ago, a godly man, who I am sure loved the Lord and probably gave very generously to the Lord’s work, prayed a prayer something like this before the offering was taken up. He said, “Lord thank You for how you have blessed us financially. Lord, you have said, if we will just give you 10% of what we make, we can spend the other 90% however we wish.” I almost choked right there on the front pew.

There are some popular financial advisors that give some really great counsel about getting out of debt and reigning in our desires for things that we cannot afford. However, they imply (and some clearly state) that if you are out of debt and give generously, it’s okay to spend your money on whatever you choose. It’s okay to live wherever you desire, drive whatever you desire, and go on vacation wherever you desire. I have a real problem with that. No matter how well you manage what God has given you and no matter if you are spending within your means; the fact is that it is not your money! You are still to seek Him on how He wants His money spent. I would quickly add that God has not appointed any of us as His special messengers to tell others what is appropriate and what is not. He may want to place a person in a neighborhood filled with empty people who have found that affluence doesn’t fill the void in their lives and are open to the Gospel from the neighbor that has loved and prayed for them.

When you were born, you were not wearing designer clothes; you were naked. When you die you’ll have clothes on, but it will only be because someone at the funeral home dressed you. 1 Timothy 6:7 (NKJV): “For we brought nothing into *this* world, *and it is* certain we can carry nothing out.” All that we use from birth to death belongs to God and it is by His mercy and common grace that we have it to use. The air you

breathe is His; the space you take up on planet earth is His. The food you eat is His. The money you have was made from trees that He grew and metal that He put in the ground. The house you live in was made from wood, bricks, and concrete that was taken from His creation. The car that you drive was made from metal (and a lot of plastic) that came from His earth. I could go on and on, but hopefully you get the picture. When the fact of His ownership sinks in, it changes how you look at everything.

In the little book, *The Treasure Principle*, Randy Alcorn relates the dramatic way that he saw this ownership principle illustrated. While visiting friends in Cairo, Egypt he was taken to a very run down cemetery. It was a cemetery for American missionaries. Inside the gates of that cemetery, they took him to a worn tombstone that said, “William Borden 1887-1913.”

Let me give you a little of the story of William Borden. He was into the Borden family that owned Borden Foods. He graduated from Yale and had the possibility of joining the family business and to be wealthy.

Instead, William Borden obeyed the calling of God to become a missionary to the Muslims in Egypt.

Borden gave away almost all his money (a small fortune) to missions, and after just four months of zealous evangelism and discipleship in Cairo, he contracted spinal meningitis and died at age twenty-five.

The epitaph on Borden’s tombstone spoke of his sacrifice and his love for the Muslim people, but there was also an inscription that read, “Apart from faith in Christ there is no explanation for such a life.”

From that unkempt missionary graveyard, Alcorn’s friends then took him to the Egyptian National Museum where they saw the King Tut exhibit. Randy Alcorn described it as “mind-boggling.”

Tutankhamen (Tut) the boy king, like William Borden died young (seventeen years of age). At his burial site, it was discovered that he was buried with solid gold chariots and thousands of gold artifacts. His gold coffin was found within gold tombs within gold tombs. The Egyptians believed that these could be taken to the afterlife with him. However, when Howard Carter discovered the tombs in 1922, the golden artifacts were right there where they were put more than 3,000 years earlier.

What a contrast between the two tombs! One died in opulence and the other died with very few earthly assets. Randy Alcorn summarized it with these words, “Tut’s life was tragic because of an awful truth discovered too late – he couldn’t take his treasures with him. William Borden’s life was triumphant.

Why? Because instead of leaving behind his treasures, he sent them on ahead.” [Randy Alcorn, *The Treasure Principle*, page 36]

I would add that William Borden understood that his part in the “family fortune” was not his. He sought the true owner’s will and spent it where the owner wanted it spent and now he is with the Lord and has heard those words every Christian should long to hear in Matthew 25:21 (ESV): “His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’”

## **II. God Owns Time**

In reality, all time is God’s time. Time belongs to God by right of creation. God created the time dimension. The time that we have control over here on God’s earth is allotted to us by God and ultimately, we are responsible to Him alone for how we spend or invest His time. Psalm 90:12 (NIV): “Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.” God has given us instruction as to how we are to use His time. Ephesians 5:15-16: “Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil.” In this series, we will examine how we are to make the most of the time that belongs to God, but has been placed in our hands to be a manager of it.

## **III. God Owns Our Bodies**

This one will certainly get me in trouble. In reality, it is His body and not ours. Psalms 139:13-14 (ESV): “For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well.”

The whole so called “pro-choice movement” is standing on a faulty foundation. The foundation of this satanically inspired movement is that a woman’s body is her own and therefore she has the right to decide if she wants to give birth or abort the baby inside her body. The problem is that it is not her body. Your body belongs to God. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20: “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.”

If you are a believer, there is a sense that your body doubly belongs to the Lord. He created you and when you were a slave of Satan and sin, He bought you back through the blood of His Son. It is a sin to abuse your body, because in reality it is not your body. It belongs to Him.

#### **IV. God Owns Our Children**

Maybe you never thought of it this way, but while you may have been a means God used to bring your child into the world, or though you may have adopted a child, or children, that child belongs to the Lord. We read in Psalm 127:3 (ESV): “Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb a reward.” The Hebrew word translated “heritage” can mean gift or possession. The sense is that the child is a possession of the Lord and He has given them to you as a gift to raise for His honor and glory. That sweet little girl you love and cherish is a possession of the Lord. That cute little guy belongs to the Lord. As a parent, your task is raise the children God gave you according to the owner’s manual. We call the owner’s manual the Bible. The task of the steward of the child can be summarized by two words – teach and train.

##### **A. Teach Your Children**

Deuteronomy 6:4-7: “Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.”

##### **B. Train Your Children**

Proverbs 22:6: “Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it.” Teaching your children simply involves imparting instructions to them. Training them involves working those truths into his or her life, modeling what is taught, and disciplining them when they don’t walk in the paths they have been taught.

#### **Conclusion**

The first step in living with an eternal perspective and building a life of gold, silver, and precious stones, as opposed to wood, hay, and straw, is to settle the issue of ownership. In future messages in this series, we will attempt to balance all of these commands with the amazing joy and peace that comes when we acknowledge God as the owner – the owner of our money and possessions, the owner of our time, the owner of our bodies, and the owner of our children. When you surrender to the owner and trust Him, He will guide you and that takes the worry, the anxiety away from you. Your task is to simply consult the owner’s manual, the owner’s direction and then obey.