

Generosity Is The Gateway For Living Close To God

Sunday night July 24, 2011

Introduction: The true story of the amazing John Saville!

• Their “Secret Pact”

- John had a desire!
- Chip had an opportunity!
- They made a deal

• Three things happened in Chip’s life as a result

1. Rarely a day went by that Chip didn’t think of John. Every need raised the question - “What would John want him to do?”
2. Chip strangely became far more meticulous about balancing “John’s checkbook” than his own.
3. John and Chip became best friends as John bought extravagant lunches and Chip told extraordinary stories of how he had helped others with John’s money at their quarterly celebrations.

The genius behind the in-depth relationship Chip enjoyed with John Saville is breakthrough concept #2. . .

Generosity Breakthrough Concept #2:

• God owns everything. I am His money manager.

"The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it."

Psalm 24:1

"The silver is Mine and the gold is Mine,' declares the Lord Almighty."

Haggai 2:8

"But remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you the ability to produce wealth..."

Deuteronomy 8:18

"You are not your own; you were bought at a price." 1 Corinthians 6:19b-20a

• Summary – The “Oikonomia” Principle – All that we are, and all that we have belongs to God and has been temporarily entrusted to us to manage according to His wishes.

1Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.

2In this case, moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy.

1 Corinthians 4:1-2 (NASB)

Jesus teaches us how to become wise stewards:

• The Setting – Correction of the Pharisees and instruction of His disciples concerning wealth.

• The Story Luke 16:1-11

- Mismanagement occurs and dismissal soon follows.

- Two options considered and a third taken.
- A commendation by the owner – a good lesson from a bad example – “He was shrewd.”
 - The dishonest manager used his present temporal opportunities (stewardship) with a view of receiving future rewards. This made good business sense and according to Jesus, makes good spiritual sense as well.
- **The Teaching** – Faithfulness with material wealth is a prerequisite to being entrusted with spiritual wealth and rewards.

10"He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much. 11"Therefore if you have not been faithful in the use of unrighteous wealth, who will entrust the true riches (eternal riches) to you?

Luke 16:10-11 (NASB)

Application: Three questions wise stewards regularly ask

1. Am I using the money entrusted to me in accordance with the **Owner's** wishes?
2. Am I carefully keeping account of where all the **Owner's** funds are going?
3. Am I becoming “best friends” with the **Owner** by the privilege and opportunity of managing His resources?

Epilogue:

I _____ want to develop a deep, personal relationship with You, dear God. Today, I recognize that all I have and all I am belongs to You. I commit today to discover, by Your grace, where and how to invest the time, talent, and treasure entrusted to me. Amen!