



NEW LIFE

BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

44 Salusbury Road, London NW6 6NN

Charity No. 1060655

Tel: 020 7328 0869 (Manse); 020 7372 6858 (Office)

Email: newlifeblondon@yahoo.co.uk

Website: www.newlifebpc.co.uk

Administrator: Mok Chee Cheong 07921 929515

"For the Word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev 1:9)

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Dear Readers,

CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP & HEAVENLY INVESTMENT

Introduction

All Christians are called to be stewards. Stewardship is our thankful witness to God's benevolence. The right order is God giving to us followed by our response. We love God because He first loved us (1 John 4:19 and Rom 5:8). We did not have the ability to respond to His love until He gave the ultimate gift of love when Christ died for us to redeem us (Rom 5:1,8). As we know God's benevolence and grace for us is free and undeserved, our response in the practice of stewardship is gratitude and service. We give because we are thankful. Stewardship is the practical expression of **appreciation** to the Giver of every good and perfect gift and our humble service to Him. We give because we love God and because God give and we are thankful for His generosity.

Obedient Witness to God's Sovereignty. Stewardship is our obedient witness to God's sovereignty. It is the child of God in action, doing deeds that prove belief in God (see Acts 26:20; Jas 2:14-18). Stewardship is action that flows from the acceptance of the lordship of Jesus Christ in our management of the **treasure, time, talent and tabernacle** (that is, our bodies and the Church).

The theology of stewardship starts with the acknowledgment **that God is sovereign over our lives**. Therefore, we acknowledge Him as the ultimate authority. It is the **practical expression of our yielding to the divine revelation** – *I am the LORD your God* (Exod 6:7). Stewardship is the consecration of one's self and possessions to the service of the King. It acknowledges in practice that we do not have the right of control but are under the constant orders of our Lord. As faithful stewards we realise that we are not our own, but we belong to Christ and we are to surrender ourselves as a living sacrifice to Christ (Rom 12:1,2).

Faithful Response to God's Commission. We have been chosen and commissioned to preach Jesus Christ to the people of His world (Matt 28:18-20). It is the expression of our incorporation into the body of Christ. The whole Church is called to share in the ministry of our Lord in the gospel ministry. The mission of the Church is to be a witness to the world of God's great act of reconciliation through Jesus. Stewardship is our responsibility to share the message of hope to a lost world. It is our highest service to mankind. At its best, stewardship is self-sacrificial giving. It began with Christ giving Himself on the cross and culminates as we give ourselves away in order to give Christ to a lost and dying world.

Heavenly Investments Determine Our Assets. Our Christian values are different from those of the world. True wealth, in the spiritual sense, is not determined by our net worth, but by our heavenly investments. Jesus in Matt 6:19-21 *Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*

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Jesus says that our heavenly investments determine our assets in eternity. It literally reads, Do not treasure up treasures upon earth. Jesus deliberately avoided the word money so we would not limit this idea to wealth. We are often caught up with the wealth trap, in a get-rich quick schemes. Treasure describes what is important to us or what we value and esteem. It can be money, a pet, a car, home, leisure or self. The things of value in our lives are not to be earthly items but also the eternal things of heaven. We are to invest our lives in eternal possessions we can take to heaven. Col 3:1,2 say, *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.*

The 3rd pre-requisite is the financial and physical requirements of the home. Lk 14:28-30 tells the story of one who began to build a home but ran out of money and could not complete the job. Building a strong and vibrant Christian family will cost you time, energy and resources. The key word is sacrifice and commitment. There is no family unity and joy without every member of the family committed to the relationship to Christ and to one another. You need to spend quality.

The fortunes we amass on the earth are subject to destruction by moths, rust and thieves. In Jesus' day, material wealth usually consisted of clothing and coins. Especially valuable was wool material which was susceptible to moths. Coins and metals were vulnerable to rust. The term 'break' in literally means to dig and picture a thief digging through the mud bricks of a home to steal the treasures. In contrast, heavenly treasures cannot be eaten by moths, destroyed by rust, nor stolen by thieves (Matt 6:19) and is imperishable and everlasting.

The location of our treasures reveals the time condition of our heart. This statement of Jesus can be understood in two ways. In one sense, it says an examination of our treasures will reveal our hearts, someone examines our kitchen cabinets and refrigerator, she can easily determine our food tastes. In the same way, if we examine things we treasure, we can determine our hearts' desires and intents. The things we value expose our true spiritual condition. The phrase says our heart will soon find itself in the same place as the continuing investment as our treasures. If a life's savings and energy are invested in a new business, so that business begins to consume all of the investor's time, attention and energy. God, family and Church may be neglected in the process of health acquisition. Our heart will turn right to the place where our treasure is.

From this understanding of heavenly assets, we shall have principles that will enable us to reap a rich spiritual dividend in the future (Col 3:1,2). The danger as Christians is that we will invest our resources in a world that is only temporal. Our investments should be made in the place of our residence. The final residence of a Christian is not on the earth, it is heaven (see 1 Pet 2:11; Heb 11:9-10,13). Therefore, we should be making our investments in the place of our eternal citizenship. Eternity is a long time, **do we choose to enjoy our rewards for a few years on earth, or do we choose to enjoy our rewards for eternity in heaven?**

Principle of Ownership. No matter how large the earthly treasure, the Christian is always aware that he owns nothing but is a trustee and custodian (1 Cor 4:2). Our role is that of a steward. A steward is a manager or an administrator. **A steward simply manages the property of another and does not own it** (that is, like a fund manager).

In this life, we own nothing; we are merely stewards of God's possessions and do not own it. Regardless of how much worldly wealth we can accumulate in our lifetime, none of it truly belongs to us. This is the principle which must be grasped by anyone wishing to store up heavenly treasures rather than earthly treasures. No matter how much of this world we accumulate, we are never really owners, simply stewards of the property of another. 1 Pet 4:10,11 say, *As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

Principle of Relationship. A third principle to guide our investments for eternity is the principle of relationship. The question of relationship is simple. How devastating would it be if I lost this treasure one day? What possessions do we have that would cause us to feel worthless and...

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helpless if lost? If the loss of any possession would cause us to greatly alter our life, then we have invested too much in that item. Something to think about.

Heavenly Investments Determine Our Attitude. The way we look at life, in its entirety, will be determined by the way we invest in earthly or heavenly treasures for our hearts will be there too. Matt 6:22-23 *The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!*

These words speak about our attitude concerning the things of this world and the things of heaven. The term lamp describes a light or a candle; it is a source of light and illumination. The principle is simply that the eye is the lamp or illumination for the whole body. We live with this truth every day. How many of us wear glasses or contact lenses? Our eyesight affects the complete operation of our body. We desire things because of their appearance and we accomplish tasks with the help of our vision. Spiritually our vision controls our entire body and we need to guard our eyes from corruption.

Jesus enlightens us on the possibility of two different perceptions of the world. The word translated good is a significant word. However, often it means “generous” or “liberal” (see Jas 1:5). Remember, Jesus is teaching about storing up heavenly treasures. A means of making such an eternal investments is earthly generosity in giving to God and his Church/missions. When the eye is good (generous), our whole being will be full of light and what a blessing it is.

The person who is greedy or covetous for the things of the world is looking through a blurred window and distorts reality. However, the person with a right eye sight is piling up investments in heaven. We must raise the question of our vision: What are our eyes focused on? Are our eyes on the material things of the world or the things of heaven? Do we desire just earthly treasures or heavenly treasures? We need to make up our minds, for we cannot have both.

Heavenly Investments Determine Our Priorities. Everyone has priorities in life, that which is the defining and controlling influence in life. Matt 6:24 *No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.* This verse presents an indisputable truth: it is impossible to serve two masters. Some relationships are mutually exclusive. The term used by JESUS identifies a bond slave. He is not describing a man with two jobs. We cannot have more than one master because being a servant or slave requires an exclusive attachment to one person only. “Either he will hate the one and love the other” indicates the impossibility of being exclusively attached to two masters. He will be devoted to one and despise the other” speaks about obedience and commitment. We cannot obey two masters. What can be done when their commands conflict? The servant must choose to obey one master and forsake the commands of the other.

There are two masters who are in competition and conflict for our lives; God and Gold, the Word or the World. The term money or God means property or material possessions. It describes the things we possess. If we are storing up treasures on the earth, then Money is our Lord. Our heartfelt investments determine who our master is. Matt 6:21 says, *For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*

Paul in 1 Tim 6:6,10 say, *But godliness with contentment is great gain. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.* In the ancient world, when an invading army conquered a land, slaves and masters alike were taken off into slavery. If our master is God, then we will experience eternal freedom and joy in heaven, the place of our everlasting abode with Christ.

Conclusion

Our temporal resources on earth are subject to moth, rust and destruction but God, is our Provider forever. Ask yourself, what is the eternal destiny of our material possessions? If money is our god, then that will be a bondage to wealth and a great abomination to God. As Christians, let us learn to invest in heaven with eternal dividends and trust the Lord faithfully as we sojourn in this temporal earth.

WELCOME TO NEW LIFE B-P CHURCH LONDON
CHURCH THEME: STRIVING TO LIVE ABOVE OUR SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS
IN CHRIST (Ephesians 1:3)

Our worship services begin promptly at **11.00 am and 4.00 pm**.
 Please stay back for Bible Study and fellowship lunch after the morning worship and for tea after the evening service. Invite your friends to come to Church.

Worship Services			WELCOME	
Morning	Today: 26/03/2006	Next Week: 02/04/2006		
<i>Chairman:</i>	Seetoh Yoong Chiang	Jonathan Kim		
<i>Speaker:</i>	Ken Chan	Mok Chee Cheong	NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS	
<i>Message:</i>	Christian Warfare	Divers Opinion of Christ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evening Service: Westminster Larger Catechism (WLC) This week: Q74: What is adoption? Q75: What is sanctification? Q76: What is repentance unto life? Next week: <i>Q77: Wherein do justification and sanctification differ?</i> <i>Q78: Whence ariseth the imperfection of sanctification in believers?</i> <i>Q79: May not true believers, by reason of their imperfections, and the many temptations and sins they are overtaken with, fall away from the state of grace?</i> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">Do stay back and find out the answers from the Word of God.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10th Anniversary preparations: This will take place on Jun 25. For those interested in helping out, please see Mok or Jonathan. • Easter Camp: The YAF will be organising the church Easter camp, Apr 14-17. The camp theme is "Living for Jesus". For more information, please see the YAF committee. • Church renovations: The church will be making several improvements. Please pray that the renovations will be done properly and in a timely manner. • Mid Week Prayer Meeting: This will convene every Wednesday from Apr 5. For more details, please see Mok. • Mothering Sunday: We would like to wish all mothers a happy mothers day. 	
<i>Text:</i>	Ephesians 6:10-24	John 7:25-53		
<i>Organist:</i>	Anthony	Amanda		
Evening				
<i>Chairman:</i>	Lim Ming Yann	Alvin Chow		
<i>Speaker:</i>	Mok Chee Cheong	Mok Chee Cheong		
<i>Message:</i>	WLC Questions 74-76 See News/Announcement	WLC Questions 77-79 See News/Announcement		
<i>Pianist:</i>	Yanning	Feng Qian		
Other Duties				
	Today	Next Week		
<i>Ushers</i>	Ming Yann/Evelyn	Alvin/Daniel		
<i>Sunday Sch:</i>	Yanning	Esmeralda		
<i>Singspirat'n:</i>	Yoong Chiang/Anthony	Ming Yann/Feng Qian		
<i>Lunch:</i>	Constance	Maureen		
<i>Washing-up:</i>	Prema/Yetta	YAF Group 1		
<i>Bible Study:</i>	DHW – Genesis 21	DHW – Genesis 22		
Appointments of the Week				
Fri 31 Mar	7.00 pm	Young Adults Fellowship: Prayer (led by Feng Qian)		
Sat 1 Apr	4.00 pm	Prayer Meeting & Bible Study: Spkr / C'man: Yoong Chiang		
Last Week's Worship Service Collections				
Offering:	£229.19	YAF: £44.01	Lunch: £25.00	
<u>The Shorter Catechism</u>				
Q.92 What is a sacrament?				
<p style="margin-left: 20px;">Ans: A sacrament is an holy ordinance instituted by CHRIST, wherein – by sensible signs, - Christ, and the benefits of the New Covenant, - are represented, sealed, and applied to believers.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;"><i>Comments: We are here taught that the marks of a sacrament are – 1. That it is appointed by Christ; 2. That it is a way of teaching the gospel by outward signs. Its uses are three in number- 1. To represent the gospel to us, or teach it plainly; 2. To seal the gospel to us, or confirm our faith in it; 3. To apply the gospel to us, or bring it home to our hearts. The word sacrament is derived from a Latin word, which signified the sacred oath of fidelity to his commander, which the soldier took on entering the army for the service of his country. In a Christian sense, it means the vow of fidelity and obedience to Christ which is taken when we enter the Church. This vow was taken for us in Baptism, when we were infants. In the Lord's Supper, we take it upon ourselves.</i></p>				