



The Federated Church of Hyannis

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Weekly Message from the Pastor and Sermon Notes for October 24, 2021

This week please read the Stewardship Letter I have sent through the weekly news. Next week you will receive a letter from the Stewardship Committee.

Sermon: “Make Me A Steward of Your Treasure, Part 2”

Scripture: John 6:2-12

And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased. And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples. And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh. When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do. Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little. One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him, there is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many? And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would. When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.

Introduction

A young man came to his Pastor after graduating college and asked the church to pray that he would get a good job. The church prayed, and he got a good job. The young man told the Pastor and promised he would tithe to the church. Several years later the young man asked the church to pray he get a promotion. The young man got promoted and he increased his tithe. Then several years passed and he was selected to be an Executive Officer with the Company. His salary increased ten times, but his tithe did not. So the Pastor called and invited him out to coffee. The Pastor told him how proud the church was of him and the career advances he had made, but he was concerned that he had

stopped tithing. The man said, I give more than anyone else in the church, I am sure. The Pastor said yes, but as your Pastor I don't want you to break your promise to God, so the church will pray you go back to your old position tomorrow.

Part 1: "If Everybody Gave a Little More"

As your pastor I have said I never want to know what someone pledges. In the eyes of God, we are all equal. The concept of percentage giving over flat amount giving is to promote equality in the church. Everyone gives differently based on abilities. A tithe ensures everyone gives equally.

That brings me to a common thing I have heard many times when it comes to a church budget. I am glad I haven't really heard it here at the Federated Church. But perhaps you have heard or thought of this comment before. "If everybody just gave a little more". God does not ask us to give more. God only asks we are faithful with a tithe, 10%.

A couple years ago I went to a Christian Book store to find a book. They didn't have it in the store, but they could order it for me online. Sound familiar? I said I would probably order it through Christian Book Distributors. The clerk said to me, "you know the owner of that company drives a Ferrari". My response was, I don't care what he drives as long as he tithes. In the same way I don't care if billionaires go into space as long as they pay their fair share of taxes, as opposed to hiding assets.

Part 2: It Is Not Wrong to Have Wealth.

It is not wrong to have wealth. It is wrong to have dishonest wealth. If it comes from the exploitation of others, it is wrong. If it is through deceptive gains, it is wrong. It is not wrong to pray for people in the church to be successful in their businesses or careers. The Lord does not ask everyone to give a little more, that would be charity. What the Lord asks for is faithfulness in being a steward of what God has entrusted to us. The Bible is filled with stories of many wealthy people like Solomon and Abraham. God blessed them because they were faithful and capable of being good Stewards of what God gave unto them.

Conclusion

The key takeaway in "If everyone gave a little more" is that the emphasis should be on everyone giving equally. Stewardship is about equality. Last week I shared the harvest model of stewardship, seeds, fields, harvest. If the number of people "everyone" grew a little, there would be a little more in the sharing of everyone equally. When we think "a little more" it should be for faithful stewards, not dollars. It is the act of faith that God calls us to.