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TEXAS NEWSLETTER

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SOUND STEWARDSHIP

The Excellent Steward

By Bishop Daniel Felipe

I remember growing up in church as a teenager and sitting through any given service as someone took the stage to sing a special song and after greeting the congregation attempting to explain why the upcoming song was not going to be excellent, they used what seemed to be the spiritualized redemptive blanket that made any offering acceptable, "... but this is for the Lord". Although the statement was always meant to inform the audience that "this" is not for "them", therefore, their satisfaction, acceptance or even enjoyment was irrelevant for it was intended to please God, the statement in itself had the potential of permeating our thinking process to produce an unintended cultural tendency of stewards offering less than the best. This is the very opposite of Paul's teachings to the Colossians when he said, "and whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men" (Col 3:23). By now you have probably realized that I am referring to matters much broader than an unrehearsed song. Stewardship at its core is the administration of resources. Our calling to divine stewardship is the calling to administrate all the resources God has placed in our hands; spiritual giftedness, ministries, relationships, time, finances, businesses, properties, our bodies, etc. All of these belong to God and He has chosen to entrust us with them expecting that we will administrate what is His with excellence. Stewardship is more than just a responsibility given to us. Stewardship is in the very fabric of how God has created us. T. A. Kantonen observed that to know that with all that we are, and all that we

***"And whatever you do,
do it heartily, as to
the Lord and not to
me."***

Colossians 3:23

have, that we are God's stewards is the answer to a particularly deep yearning of the time in which we live, namely the yearning for newness of life. Under such premise, the pursuit of excellence in our role as stewards is not only the ultimate expression of worship but it is a fountain that satisfies the soul. A common misconception in the area of stewardship is that it pertains primarily to matters of finance, therefore, as a result we often

believe that excellence in stewardship rests in our ability to administrate money in a manner that honors God. The biblical truth is that financial stewardship is only one area among our various stewarding responsibilities, and this area, just as all other areas are not independent of each other. These various areas are woven together, working harmoniously in a beautiful display of divine synergy, similarly to the systems within our bodies. Although,

our bodies have various systems (e.g. digestive, circulatory, nervous, lymphatic, etc.) the dysfunction of one system will affect the other systems, ultimately impacting the body as a whole. It is because of such interdependency between our various stewarding responsibilities that excellence in financial stewardship can not be attained by only pursuing excellence in financial stewardship. The health of our financial stewardship depends on the health of all other "systems" of ministry.

In the article, Stewardship is More Than Giving Money Paul Stevens provides a broader point of view of what Biblical stewardship is by making the undeniable connection between the word stewardship and the word ministry. "The word stewardship comes from the Greek word *oikenomous*, which means somebody who manages a household. The steward is therefore

entrusted with everything from seeing that the floors were clean, to the finances, to the public face of that household.” But similarly, “the word ministry in both Greek and Hebrew is the same word as servant. And servants are people who are at the disposal of another”. These definitions and contextualization make both roles, that of stewardship and that of ministry, simply distinct vantage points of the very same calling. Therefore, excellence in financial stewardship must not be disconnected from the health of ministry as a whole.

Consequently, lack of excellence in ministerial leadership will hinder excellence in financial stewardship. Lack of excellence in our expression of public worship will hinder excellence in financial stewardship. Lack of

excellence in our execution of proper discipleship methods will hinder our excellence in financial stewardship. Lack of excellence in our evangelistic efforts will hinder our excellence in financial stewardship. Lack of excellence in our compassionate service to our communities will hinder our excellence in financial stewardship. The pursuit of a financial stewardship that honors God certainly includes tithing and without a doubt contains sacrificial giving, but unless we come to the realization that stewardship is inclusive of so much more we will fall short of the greatness God has anointed our ministries for. After all, it seems that a well rehearsed song has everything to do with financial stewardship.

VIRTUAL CAMP



JOIN US FOR KIDS CAMP JUNE 10-12

THEME: TIME LAB

WHERE: FACEBOOK LIVE EVENT

ON THE TEXAS COGOP FB PAGE

THEME: AWAKEN

JOIN US ON FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM





Dear Body of Christ,

I hope this letter finds everyone in perfect health and perfect peace! Year 2020 has thrown all of us a mean curveball with the COVID-19 disaster. No doubt, our world has been turned upside down. Nevertheless, we rest fully assured that our God is sovereign!

We know the Good Shepherd of Psalms 23 is with us even when we “walk through the valley of the shadow of death.” As bleak as the media prognosis appears to be regarding the deadly pandemic, children of God can boldly hold on to the following promise found in the book of Jeremiah: *“For I know the plans I have for you,” says the Lord. “They are plans for good and not for disaster; to give you a future and a hope.”* (Jeremiah 29:11, NLT). No matter what happens, we have the blessed hope that our last breath on earth will be our first breath in heaven with our Redeemer!

Our small, local church in Dallas (Garland), Texas, First Pentecostal Church of God of Prophecy, has been experiencing the comforting presence of the Holy Spirit amidst all the chaos. Since the lockdown, we have been conducting Saturday evening and Sunday morning services through teleconferencing. At first, we were quite upset at the disruption of the in-person worship services and fellowship that we all embrace dearly. Amazingly, teleconferencing has provided some unexpected blessings in disguise! One delight involves our Pastor, John K. George, who has been on sabbatical leave to India for almost a year. Due to remote telephonic access, he delivers the powerful word of God to us from India every weekend now! Also, we have other loved ones joining us from Alabama, Ohio, India, and even the Middle East. God works in mysterious ways, and irrespective of geographic divides, His presence continues to be very thick and tangible for us even during remote services.

We pray that God, in his infinite mercy, heal our lands, and bring us all back to seeking His face, not only His hands.

Yours in His Service,
Dr. Ben George

COGOP International GLOBAL ADDRESS



Announcing the first ever “One World (Digital) Youth Conference.” Coming July 24-26, 2020 with more information found at oneworldyouthconference.com



Youth Leadership CORNER

These last couple of months have been a very interesting time period. With virtual school, church, and graduations, many are struggling to find their new normal. Our response to what surrounds us is a reflection of what is happening inside our heart. Proverbs 27:19 says, "As a face is reflected in water, so the heart reflects the real person." If in the face of all the chaos surrounding us, we feel crippling fear, worry, and anxiety, a reflection of distrust is showing from our heart. Trusting in God is reflected in feeling peace in the midst of all of the confusion. In a season where it may feel like you have no control, this is a great opportunity to find a new dependence on God, placing all worries and fear in his hands.



In my own life, I've often used time as my excuse for why I don't pray more or read my Bible enough. I'm sure I'm not alone. Another reflection we can see in our lives right now is whether time has been the issue. Most of us have had an abundance of time free to fill. Everything around us was basically canceled, so the question arises. Has time been the issue in our lives or has our relationship with God just not been a priority? God uses these moments to help show us parts of ourselves. Together, we can see the reflection of what this time has shown us. We merely have to look.

By: Youth Director: Deidra Renfrow
Region - Piney Woods and Prairie & Lakes English

Pastors

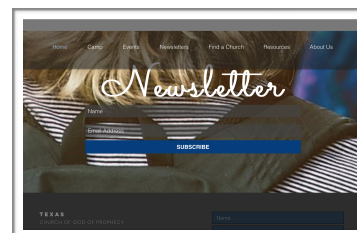
14th - Jack Pinkerton
18th - Shannon Bowdoin
19th - David Posey
27th - Patrick Kasongo

Pastor's Wives

2nd - Mary George
4th - Cristina Garduno
12th - Linda Atzbach
20th - Katie Woodard
21st - Brenda Mathews
30th - Lidia Guereca

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