

## MESSAGE TWO: REWARD

### SUGGESTED PASSAGE: 1 Corinthians 3:12–14 (NASB)

<sup>12</sup>Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, <sup>13</sup>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. <sup>14</sup>If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward."

### MESSAGE GOAL:

The goal of this message on Living In Financial Victory is to share with the audience the biblical principles of sowing and reaping so that we will faithfully steward the resources He has entrusted into our care and enjoy the rewards of His blessing.

### INTRODUCTION:

God wants you to be a good steward and manage what He has given to you out of your love for Him. But He has also promised to respond to your honoring of Him with that which is called a reward. Paul writes clearly concerning rewards in his letter to the church at Corinth,

"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." (1 Corinthians 3:12–14)

Rewards are such an integral part of our Christian life that Jesus Himself punctuates the very last chapter of the Bible, the last portion of inspired revelation, with a clear announcement concerning them. He says, "Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done." (Revelation 22:12)

There are also temporal rewards that will make life more enjoyable, such as not being enslaved to debt, when you live according to God's principles on money. God rewards those who give to Him in eternity as well as in the here and now. Jesus tells us,

"Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or farms, for My sake and for the gospel's sake, but that he will receive a hundred times as much now in the present age, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and farms, along with persecutions; and in the age to come, eternal life." (Mark 10:29–30)

God says that when you sacrifice for and give to Him, He does not forget it. In both the present age and in the age to come, you will be rewarded. Friend, you can never out-give God. I challenge you to try it. You can't. His Word is clear – what you give up for Him, He will return, plus more.

### SERMON POINTS:

#### 1. THE FAITHFUL STEWARD

- The faithful steward received the master's (i.e. God's) public recognition "Well done." (Luke 19:17)
- He also received a kingdom inheritance (Luke 19:17)
- He received additional kingdom resources (Luke 19:24)

#### 2. THE LESS PRODUCTIVE AND THE WORTHLESS STEWARD

- The less productive steward did not receive public recognition (Luke 19:18–19)
- Because he was still partially faithful, he received a partial kingdom inheritance
- The worthless steward receives the master's condemnation (Luke 19:22–24)

#### 3. HONOR GOD AND EXPECT A RETURN

- Obeying God's financial principles leads to rewards both now and in eternity (see Proverbs 11:25)
- Giving is the pathway to receiving (Luke 6:38)
- When you honor God first, He'll determine in return what measure you shall receive (Ephesians 6:8)



#### 4. REWARD OF ENJOYMENT

- Financial victory involves the ability to enjoy and extend that increase (see Proverbs 10:22)
- The love of money can lead you away from God and His blessings (1 Timothy 6:10)
- God's blessing has to do with the ability to be content with what He has given you (Philippians 4:11–12)

#### 5. REWARD OF INTIMACY

- God will rescue the faithful stewards in times of crisis (Psalm 50:14–15)
- God responded to Cornelius because his prayers were mixed with giving (Acts 10:1–2, 30–31)
- What you do with your money reveals what you value and what you are close to (see Philippians 4:19)

#### 6. LAW OF SOWING AND REAPING

- Whatever you sow, you also reap (Proverbs 11:24–27)

##### Five principles regarding the law of sowing and reaping

1. Your harvest depends on whether you sow
  - a. If there are no sowing of seeds, you cannot expect a harvest (see John 12:24)
  - b. Bearing financial fruit includes benefiting others for the advancement of God's kingdom
2. Your harvest depends on what you sow
  - a. You reap what you sow, so you should sow wisely (Galatians 6:7)
  - b. If you sow scarcity in your finances toward God, you will reap scarcity in your finances from God toward you
  - c. If you sow generously in your finances toward God, you will reap generously in your finances from God toward you
3. Your harvest depends on how much you sow
  - a. The size of your harvest is determined by the amount of what you sow (2 Corinthians 9:6)
  - b. The size of your desired harvest will determine what you need to sow
4. Your harvest depends on where and when you sow
  - a. Sowing in good soil means you are investing in the advancement of the Gospel,

God's glory and His kingdom

- b. There is always a period of time where your growth occurs (Galatians 6:9)
5. Your harvest depends on why you sow
- a. Prosperity theology often teaches a philosophy of gain in the name of God regularly detached from spiritual development, and where the material can take precedence over the spiritual
  - b. When you make God's goals your goals, He has every reason to respond to your requests

#### 5. PICK UP THE PACE

- Someday we are going to leave this world and go to the Kingdom of God
- At Christ's judgment seat, what will matter is what we did to make a difference for the kingdom with the time, talents, and treasure entrusted into our care
- For those who have squandered away years of unfaithful stewardship, pick up the pace like a runner does when falling behind in a race. Don't worry about the territory you've already covered—focus on covering more territory today.
- Jesus is looking for faithful stewards who will say to Him, "Lord, You are first in my time, my talents, and my treasure. Help me to make Your kingdom agenda my agenda. And help me make an eternal difference for You."

#### SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS:

**REWARD OF FINANCES:** When a farmer plants his rows of crops, he expects them to grow. He expects to receive a reward for his labor. Similarly, God wants you to expect to be blessed. If you will function according to the financial principles that He gives you, He wants you to expect to receive a reward both now and in eternity. There is nothing wrong with expecting God to keep His Word to you when you do what He says. It's what I like to call holding God hostage to His Word. Proverbs tells us, "The generous man will be prosperous and he who waters will himself be watered." (Proverbs 11:25) In other words, what goes around comes around. If and when you honor God with your finances, He sets you up to be blessed financially. The surest way to achieve financial victory



is to follow every jot and tittle God gives on money, beginning with generosity.

**REWARD OF ENJOYMENT:** A blessing in the Bible is the enjoyment of God's divine favor. A blessing is not just about having stuff, or accumulating more money. I know numbers of people who have gotten more money only to have also gotten more misery. A blessing includes more than just receiving financial gain. It includes the ability and freedom to enjoy that financial gain. Scripture tells us, "It is the blessing of the Lord that makes rich, and He adds no sorrow to it." (Proverbs 10:22) That truth is critical when exploring the area of financial victory. Financial victory involves much more than simply seeing an increase in your finances. It involves the ability to enjoy and extend that increase. If you experience a financial increase in your life and yet you do not possess the ability to enjoy it, you have not been blessed. Money, in and of itself, is not the blessing.

**REWARD OF INTIMACY:** Giving is often a thermometer that measures the temperature of the intimacy in your relationship with God. What you do with your money is one of the quickest revealers of what you value and what you are close to. When you demonstrate that you value and honor God and the advancement of His kingdom, He pays attention to your needs at the highest level. In fact, a verse that is often quoted in relationship to God taking care of us as believers was penned out of the context of financial giving. In his letter to the church at Philippi, Paul wrote, "And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:19)

**SOWING AND REAPING:** No farmer in his right mind would eat all of his produce, including all of his seeds. If he eats all of his produce and all of his seeds, he has nothing with which to reseed. Yet that's what a lot of people do. They get the good things from God that He supplies, and then they consume them all leaving nothing left to sow. Friend, if you eat all of your harvest, there is nothing left to plant for another harvest.

**CHRIST'S JUDGMENT SEAT:** The hardest part of playing Monopoly is when the game is over. Then I have to give up all my make-believe property and money, close the box, and go back to the real world. Someday, they are going to close the box on you and me. We are going to leave this world and go to the real world, the kingdom of God. There we will show what we really have, and the only thing that will matter on that day is not

what we left behind but what we have sent on ahead. The only "property" that will count at Christ's judgment seat is the time, talents, and treasure we invested in things of eternal value. What will matter then is what we did to make a difference for the kingdom.

**BACKGROUND BIBLICAL HISTORY AND CULTURE:**  
**REWARD:** (1 Corinthians 3:14) "Recognition (mostly by God) for the moral quality of an action... in affirmation of laudable conduct..." (BDAG, 653)

**BLESSING:** (Proverbs 10:22) "sought and obtained" (HALOT, Vol. 1, 161) "The content of 'blessing' includes such goods as vitality, health, longevity, fertility, and numerous progeny..." (Harper's Bible Dictionary, 199)

#### **SERMON LINES:**

This sermon will help you understand the biblical principles of sowing and reaping so you can enjoy the rewards of God's blessings.

This sermon will outline the different rewards you can expect as you faithfully steward the resources God has entrusted into your care.

This sermon will explain that making God first when it comes to your time, talents, and treasure will lead to temporal and eternal rewards.

#### **QUOTES BY DR. TONY EVANS:**

"Friend, you can never out-give God. I challenge you to try it. His Word is clear—what you give up for Him, He will return, plus more."

"...God has clearly revealed one of the major contributing factors to living a life of financial fruitfulness is personal productivity."

"...if you want something from God, you must first give something to God. God wants to honor you, but only if He is honored by you."

"When you do good with your money and honor God with how you both use it and give it, it is a guarantee that you will 'receive back from the Lord.'"



"When you give to God, He will hear and respond to your prayers when you need Him the most."

"Giving is often a thermometer that measures the temperature of the intimacy in your relationship with God."

"If there is no spiritual investment, why are you expecting a spiritual return?"

"The difference between the prosperity gospel and legitimate, biblical prosperity is motivation."

"Someday, they are going to close the box on you and me. We are going to leave this world and go to the real world, the kingdom of God. There we will show what we really have, and the only thing that will matter on that day is not what we left behind but what we have sent on ahead."

