
Graphics and Audio Notes

- There **will** be a sermon starter video.
- There **will** be notes and / or scripture to show on screen during the sermon.



Key Questions

What is this sermon about?

This sermon is about God owning it all, us acting as stewards and God's provision for all to which God has called us.

Why is this sermon important?

This sermon is important because too often we focus on the outcomes of our gifts, instead of on the foundation for all of what we have.

What is the context of this sermon?

This is the third week of Lessons from a Pumpkin Farm and New Member Sunday. We are using stories from Carroll and Becky Walters and their farm to help us learn about following Jesus. The videos are produced by Scott Olney of Olney Productions.

What are the next action steps?

God owns it all.

We are God's stewards.

We already have more than enough for all to which God has called us.

So, let's celebrate!

What is the good news? What is the bottom line?

The good news is that God provides us generously with the resources we need to do what God calls us to do.

What are other key takeaways?

For social media

- [text here]

16th Sunday after Pentecost
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Planting for the Harvest:
Giving and the Christian Life
First United Methodist Church of El Dorado
Text Online at <http://bit.ly/2b1hxST>

September 4, 2016
2 Corinthians 9:6-11
Preaching Target Word Count: 1,828
Audio Online at <http://bit.ly/2c6sPKr>

Metadata

Topics

- Give

Sermon Books of the Bible

- 2 Corinthians

Tags

sermon, worship, church, Methodist, UnitedMethodist, UnitedMethodistChurch, FirstUnitedMethodistChurch, ElDorado, Kansas, GreatPlains, AnnualConference, GreatPlainsAnnualConference, PumpkinPatch, pumpkin, pumpkins, farm, farming, discipleship, faith, growth, life, spirituality, give, generosity, stewardship,

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2 Corinthians 9:6-11, CEB **5**

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2 Corinthians 9:6-11, CEB

⁶What I mean is this: the one who sows a small number of seeds will also reap a small crop, and the one who sows a generous amount of seeds will also reap a generous crop.

⁷Everyone should give whatever they have decided in their heart. They shouldn't give with hesitation or because of pressure. God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸God has the power to provide you with more than enough of every kind of grace. That way, you will have everything you need always and in everything to provide more than enough for every kind of good work. ⁹As it is written, He scattered everywhere; he gave to the needy; his righteousness remains forever.

¹⁰The one who supplies seed for planting and bread for eating will supply and multiply your seed and will increase your crop, which is righteousness. ¹¹You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous in every way. Such generosity produces thanksgiving to God through us.

Response to Scripture

One: The word of God for the people of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

Introduction

Sermon Starter Video

Play sermon starter video.

Listen for God's Word

I invite you to listen for God's word today.

Place for Notes

You can find a place in your bulletin to take notes or, if you prefer, in the event for this worship service in the Bible app on your mobile device

Tool for Spiritual Growth

When you learn something new, have a question, make a connection with your life or hear anything that will help you live as a disciple of Jesus Christ as you worship, grow, give, serve and share, write it down.

Then, use these notes as a tool to help you grow in your faith in the days ahead.

Prayer

Will you pray with me?

O God, use these words to speak good news, so that, as individuals and as a congregation, we will fear nothing but sin, desire nothing but you, and live as part of your kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

Series Review

Discipleship Pathway

During this worship series, we are focusing on our discipleship pathway, which is this:

We live as disciples of Jesus Christ as we worship, grow, give, serve and share.

These are expectations for our members and invitations to all people to experience life as a follower of Jesus Christ. There are many ways to live a faithful life. This is how we live as Christians here at First United Methodist Church.

Lessons from a Pumpkin Farm

We will hear from Carroll and Becky Walters of Walters' Farm. They will be sharing stories on video about their life, pumpkins and the farm. We will be looking for lessons that a pumpkin farm can teach us about living as a follower of Jesus Christ.

Transition

Today, we consider giving and the Christian life. I will be using content from the excellent book *Ask, Thank, Tell* by Charles Lane.

It All Belongs to God

Transfer of Ownership

Gift Giving at Christmas Time

"When I was growing up, my cousins and I drew names to determine who would give a gift to whom at Christmas time. Imagine, for a moment, that I bought a gift for my cousin. After I buy that gift, it belongs to me. I have paid for it. It is mine.

When we give a gift to someone, we understand that a transfer of ownership has occurred. It goes something like this...

I wrap the gift and give it to him. He unwraps it, thanks me for the gift, and at that point, it belongs to him. I have given up any claim to it. What he does with the gift from that point on is not in my control; it is in his control. He probably will choose to use his possession in a responsible way, because he doesn't want to destroy it, and maybe because he doesn't want to disappoint me. However, he is not bound in any way to do this. The gift is his. He owns it."¹

¹ Lane, Charles R., *Ask, Thank, Tell: Improving Stewardship Ministry in Your Congregation* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2006), 22.

God's Gifts to Us

"This isn't the way that it is with God and us. No such transfer of ownership occurs. God has created all that is, and God continues to own all that is. Everything we have still belongs to God. We are given the privilege and responsibility to care for that which belongs to [God].

This biblical truth – that it all belongs to God – is the cornerstone of everything we have to say about stewardship [and giving]. The very word *steward* describes someone who watches over that which belongs to someone else. Let's consider some passages of scripture that help us understand this foundational truth."²

Key Scripture Passage - Psalm 24:1-2

Hear these words from Psalm 24:

"The earth is the Lord's and everything in it, the world and its inhabitants too. Because God is the one who established it on the seas; God set it firmly on the waters."³

"These words are a clear and powerful statement of ownership. God owns the earth and all that is in it. The basis for this claim of ownership lies in God's creative act. God made the world and all that is in it, and therefore owns the world and all that is in it."⁴

Example: Who owns that house?

The language that we use every day often speaks a different message than the message of the psalmist. We look at a house and we ask, "Who owns that house?"

We see a new car parked in [the parking lot] and we ask, "Whose car is that?"

When someone buys a new house and takes out a mortgage, they may often joke, "The bank and I own this house."⁵

God owns it all.

We don't need to change our language, however we do need to recognize how it shapes the way we think. The language we use leads us to believe that we are the ultimate owners of the things that are in our control.

² Lane, Charles R., *Ask, Thank, Tell: Improving Stewardship Ministry in Your Congregation* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2006), 22.

³ Psalm 24:1-2, CEB.

⁴ Lane, Charles R., *Ask, Thank, Tell: Improving Stewardship Ministry in Your Congregation* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2006), 22-23

⁵ Lane, Charles R., *Ask, Thank, Tell: Improving Stewardship Ministry in Your Congregation* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2006), 23.

The psalmist says, “No. God made it all and God owns it all.”⁶

Key Scripture Passage - Deuteronomy 8:11-18

Let me give you another example.

Hear these words from Deuteronomy 8:11-18:

“But watch yourself! Don’t forget the Lord your God by not keeping his commands or his case laws or his regulations that I am commanding you right now.

When you eat, get full, build nice houses, and settle down, and when your herds and your flocks are growing large, your silver and gold are multiplying, and everything you have is thriving, don’t become arrogant, forgetting the Lord your God: the one who rescued you from Egypt, from the house of slavery; the one who led you through this vast and terrifying desert of poisonous snakes and scorpions, of cracked ground with no water; the one who made water flow for you out of a hard rock; the one who fed you manna in the wilderness, which your ancestors had never experienced, in order to humble and test you, but in order to do good to you in the end.

Don’t think to yourself, My own strength and abilities have produced all this prosperity for me. Remember the Lord your God! He’s the one who gives you the strength to be prosperous in order to establish the covenant he made with your ancestors—and that’s how things stand right now.

Entering the Promised Land

“The setting of these words from Deuteronomy is very important. Moses speaks them to God’s people as they are ready to enter the promised land. They are across the Jordan River, in the present-day country of Jordan. These words are spoken to help them make sense of what is about to happen to them.”⁷

Taking credit when things go well...

“They address a problem that is hardly unique [to the people of Israel.] When things go well for us, it is very tempting to take credit for them. Of course, when things don’t go well, it seems to be human nature to blame someone else. But when things do go well, we want the credit.”⁸

⁶ Lane, Charles R., *Ask, Thank, Tell: Improving Stewardship Ministry in Your Congregation* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2006), 23.

⁷ Lane, Charles R., *Ask, Thank, Tell: Improving Stewardship Ministry in Your Congregation* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2006), 24.

⁸ Lane, Charles R., *Ask, Thank, Tell: Improving Stewardship Ministry in Your Congregation* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2006), 24.

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God is the source of my good life

“Just as the opening verses of Psalm 24 debunk the myth that we are the owners of the things we have, so these verses from Deuteronomy 8 debunk the myth that we are the source of our own wealth. ...

If I have brains that allow me to earn a living, God is the source of those brains.

If I have strength that allows me to earn a living, God is the source of that strength.

If I am fortunate enough to live in a country that is flowing with milk and honey, and has wealth beyond that enjoyed by any country in all of – God is the source of that as well.

Since God is the owner of all that is, and since God is the source of all the abilities and resources that allow me to live a more than comfortable life, then there is no room left for me to imagine that I am the source of my good life. God is.”⁹

Very Blessed to Be Here

Introduction to Video

In this video, Carroll and Becky talk about giving thanks.

Let's take a look...

[Play 2016-09-04 Sermon
6 - Very Blessed to Be Here]¹⁰

Video Transcript

Carroll: I give thanks every day that I am able to go out and enjoy this property.

Becky: That God has given us our health. That we are able to go out and work.

Carroll: Something like this is hard to explain the feeling that you have. I feel very blessed to be here.

Connection to Life / Response to Video

The proper response to the blessings of this life is not to pat myself on the back. The proper response is to give God glory and thanks.”

⁹ Lane, Charles R., *Ask, Thank, Tell: Improving Stewardship Ministry in Your Congregation* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2006), 24-25

¹⁰ This video clip is 30 seconds.

Leasing Land from the Lord

Introduction to Video

In this video, Carroll and Becky talk about taking care of the farm where they live.

Let's take a look...

[Play 2016-09-04 Sermon 8 - Leasing Land from the Lord]¹¹

Video Transcript

Carroll: We've been very blessed with the opportunity to live on this land. We feel like we're leasing it from the good Lord, in a sense. We are very blessed.

Becky and I have talked about this before, that we're just here on earth to take care of this land.

Becky: Of what we've been blessed to have.

Carroll: Yes. My father taught me years and years ago, when you come on this earth leave it in better shape than when you got here. That's always been my philosophy to take care of this farm - this land - this ranch. It's something I try to do. Whether it be building terraces, taking care of trees that fall over in the creek,

Becky: The banks so they don't erode on the creek - putting the concrete up in there and the rocks.

Carroll: Taking care of the buildings that have been built. Whether my dad built 'em or whether Becky and I built 'em since we've been here. It's just taking care of things. Don't let things just erode or fall apart.

Stewardship

This is a description of the Christian principle of stewardship.

"As we consider the scriptures, there are at least three things that can be said about a steward.

First, the steward is not the owner.

Second, the steward has a position of high authority in the household of the owner and is given great responsibility.

¹¹ This video clip is 1 minute and 31 seconds.

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Third, the steward cares for the possessions of the owner both for the benefit of the owner and for the benefit of other people who depend on the owner for their well being.”¹²

The truth for all of us,
for all that we have - our possessions, our finances, our abilities,
is that we are leasing it from the Lord.

Conclusion

Good News

The good news is that God provides us generously with the resources we need to do what God calls us to do.

Call to Action

We do not follow a God of scarcity. God is a God of abundance.

“Our creator God promises to be with us when we go out in God’s name.

Therefore, we can know that God has already provided us with all the resources we need to accomplish the mission to which God has called us. ...

God calls us to great and wonderful things.

God provides us generously with the resources we need to do what God calls us to do.”

Invitation

God owns it all.

We are God’s stewards.

We already have more than enough for all to which God has called us.

So, let’s celebrate!

Closing Prayer

[Text here]

Amen.

¹² Lane, Charles R., *Ask, Thank, Tell: Improving Stewardship Ministry in Your Congregation* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2006), 27.