



## **SETTLE OWNERSHIP**

Less \$tress | Part 1  
Pastor Keith Stewart  
February 2, 2025

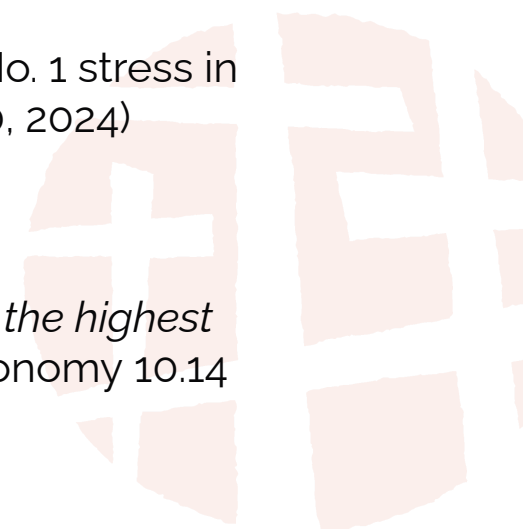
Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could just let go of our financial worries and stress over running our business and managing our mortgage and struggling with our student loan? What if I told you the key to a more peaceful and productive life is a 2000-year-old recipe in God's Word that teaches us that we're not owners, we're merely managers of the things that belong to God. That one reality has the power to release burdens we carry that belong to God and not us. I hope you can join us in this first installment in Less \$tress living.

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"73% of Americans rank their finances as the No. 1 stress in life." - Capital One Credit Wise survey (May 20, 2024)

*All the earth is Mine.* Exodus 19:5

*To the Lord your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it.* Deuteronomy 10:14



*You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me." But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth... Deuteronomy 8.17-18a*

*Whatever is under the whole heaven is Mine. Job 41.11*

*The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it. Psalm 24.1*

*Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? 1 Corinthians 6.19*

*You were bought with a price. 1 Corinthians 7.23*

*We have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. 1 Timothy 6.7*

***Everything belongs to God, comes from God, and is dispersed by God.***

"Every faculty you have, your power of thinking or of moving your limbs from moment to moment, is given to you by God. If you devoted every moment of your whole life exclusively to his service, you could not give him anything that was not in a sense his own already." - C.S. Lewis

## **1. THE MOST MISUNDERSTOOD PARABLE IN THE BIBLE**

□ The Story



*Jesus told his disciples, there was a rich man whose manager was accused of wasting his possessions. So he called him in and asked him, "What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your management, because you cannot be manager any longer." The manager said to himself, "What shall I do now? My master is taking away my job. I'm not strong enough to dig, and I'm ashamed to beg— I know what I'll do so that, when I lose my job here, people will welcome me into their houses." So he called in each one of his master's debtors. He asked the first, "How much do you owe my master?" "Eight hundred gallons of olive oil," he replied. The manager told him, "Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it four hundred." Then he asked the second, "And how much do you owe?" "A thousand bushels of wheat," he replied. He told him, "Take your bill and make it eight hundred." The master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly. Luke 16.1-8a*

□ There are two kinds of parables

**"Go and do likewise" parable**

**"How much more" parable**

## **2. LESSONS JESUS DRAWS FROM THE PARABLE**

*For the people of this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the people of the light. Luke 16.8b*



“Christians are called upon to show the same perception, foresight, enterprise and ingenuity in the service of God as people in the world show in their pursuit of success.”

- Frederick Couetts, The Salvation Army

#### □ The Purpose of Giving

*I tell you, use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings. Luke 16.9*

“He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.” - Jim Elliot

*As for the rich in this present age... They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.*

1 Timothy 6.17-19

#### □ The Pattern for Living

*Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. Luke 16.10*

**Money is a really SMALL issue loaded with HUGE implications.**



"...handling of money is a litmus test of our true character. It forms our biography. In a sense, how we relate to money and possessions is the story of our lives." - Randy Alcorn

"Charitable giving is as close as we can get to truly free financial behavior. You are not obligated to give (and lots of people don't). You aren't buying anything you need... You get nothing out of giving except the satisfaction in your soul. And so, giving shows something about a person's soul."  
- Tim Stafford

"I give you my hand and with it I give my heart to the Lord."  
- Sam Houston

"No, I believe not, pastor. I'm afraid it needs baptizing, too."  
- Sam Houston

"There are ONLY 5 things we can do with money: pay taxes, spend it, repay debt, save/invest it, or you can give it away."  
- Ron Blue

#### ❑ The Principle of Blessing

*...if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own? Luke 16.11*

#### ❑ The Priority of Loving



*No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money. Luke 16.13*

**The word Mammon is only used four times in Scripture - every time by Jesus and always in a derogatory way.**

*But watch out, or you may be seduced by wealth. Job 36.18*

**MONEY IS practically SACRED to us.**

"The slave of mammon will obey mammon while pretending to obey God." - A.T. Robertson

"Our hearts have room only for one all-embracing devotion."  
- Dietrich Bonhoefer

### **The Messages of Mammon**

Mammon says TAKE; God says GIVE.

Mammon says ACCUMULATE; God says SHARE.

Mammon is SELFISH; God is GENEROUS.

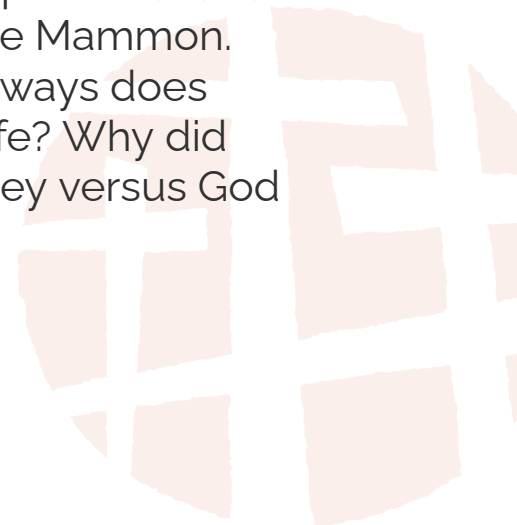
Mammon says, "buy and keep." God says, "sow and reap."

Mammon says, "cheat and steal." God says, "give and receive."



## ***DISCUSSION QUESTIONS***

1. Pastor Keith made some comparisons between renters and homeowners. Ultimately, it's the homeowner who bears the responsibility for major repairs that are a part of the normal upkeep of a home. What has been your experience in this area as an owner or a renter?
2. What, if anything, did you learn from the parable of the unjust steward that you didn't know before? What are some of your key learnings from this parable?
3. In drawing lessons from this story, Jesus reminded us, "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much" (Luke 16.10). The implication is money is a really SMALL issue loaded with HUGE implications. There are riches that are far greater than money. But whether or not God will ever entrust them to us is dependent on whether we can first pass the money test. How are you personally doing in this area of your life? What have been your greatest learnings? Where have you struggled the most? What comes naturally to you today and why?
4. Jesus made money into a very intensely personal and spiritual matter by giving money the name Mammon. Why is money a spiritual matter? In what ways does money take on God-like qualities in our life? Why did Jesus reduce our choice to God and Money versus God and Satan?



5. Pastor Keith's final illustration about playing the game of monopoly speaks to our obsession with money and acquisition. What do you know about the game of monopoly and especially its parallels with economic realities? What does it say to you that in the end, it all goes back in the box?
6. What decision or decisions will you make as a result of today's message?

