Stewardship Bible Study #3

God’s people at Crown of Life

**Our Vocation as Stewards:**

Today we will explore how God calls us to act in our vocation as stewards of all that God has given us. This is the third use of the Law—a guide for how to live as God’s redeemed people. However, along the way it might turn into the second use of the Law—a mirror that shows us our disobedience and need to repent and believe the Gospel that Jesus died and rose again to defeat sin and win our forgiveness.

**A. What is vocation?** (Some parts taken from *My Vocation in Christ* by K. Cherney, Jr.)

Vocations are really the different roles God assigns us in life. But our vocations are more than just roles we fulfill. A Christian mother doesn’t get that name unless she’s *somebody’s* mother. A Christian employer is always *somebody’s* employer. By calling me into a vocation, God has placed me into a unique relationship with special people who surround me. Why has God done this?

Read Luke 10:25-37

What does the expert’s question imply about the way of salvation?

In one word, what does God’s law demand? For whom?

How does Jesus define neighbor and love?

The Samaritan knew what to do to help the man. His needs were obvious. Compare that to the way we know what to do for our neighbors.

God works through our vocations to bless the people around us.

 “What else is all our work to God—whether in the fields, in the garden, in the city, in the house, in war, or in government—but just such a child’s performance, by which He wants to give His gifts in the fields, at home, and everywhere else? These are the masks of God, behind which He wants to remain concealed and do all things.”

 --Martin Luther (*Luther’s Works* 14:114)

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**B. Some False Perceptions**

“Become a Christian and watch all your troubles disappear,” some preachers say. Neither Scripture nor experience support this statement.

When troubles come along, one might wonder whether there’s something wrong with their Christianity.

“Serve God with your vocation, and you’ll have a trouble-free life” would be a false statement, too. The fact that you experience troubles in your vocation doesn’t mean you’re doing something wrong. In fact, troubles may come because of what you’re doing right.

Read John 16:33

According to Jesus, what are the chances that Christians will have trouble while in this world?

Read John 17:13-16

What are the sources of our troubles?

Read Romans 7:19-25

What is one other source of trouble?

**C. The Extraordinary in the Ordinary**

It looks like any other baseball—until you turn it over and see the famous signature between the seams. That signature turns a baseball worth a few dollars into a valuable collector’s item.

Good works are often simple things that ordinary people do every day. But with Jesus’ signature on them, they take on a whole new meaning.

Read John 15:1-5

How are branches able to bear fruit?

How are Christians able to do good works?

Read Ephesians 2:10

What further evidence is there that the works we do are God’s works?

**D. How are we called to act as God’s stewards in our many vocations including part of the body of Christ at Crown of Life Evangelical Lutheran Church?**

*What are your vocations and how does God call you to serve your “neighbors” in love as His child?*

*How does God call us to use the money He has entrusted us with according to these verses?*

**Psalm 24:1** “The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein”

**Mark 12:41-44** “And He sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people putting money into the offering box. Many rich people put in large sums. And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which make a penny.And He called His disciples to Him and said to them, ‘Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box. For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.’”

**I Corinthians 16:2** “On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper, so that there will be no collecting when I come.”

**2 Corinthians 9:7** “Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”

How did God call the Old Testament people to give? How might this serve as a guide for His followers at Crown of Life?

**Deuteronomy 14:2** “You shall tithe all the yield of your seed that comes from the field year by year.”

*In summary:*

My vocations are the ways I serve my neighbor in love. Stewardship is one of my vocations—a way that I serve my neighbors at Crown of Life and in mission and service outside of our congregation. Though I am selfish by nature, God calls me to generously and joyfully use everything that He has given me (all that I am and have) to love and serve my neighbors in my vocation as steward of God’s gifts.

If you’re anything like me, studying God’s Word on this topic makes me realize that my giving does not measure up with the cheerful, first-fruit, generous giving to which God calls us. Please know that God is calling us to repent, receive His forgiveness and by Jesus’ strength as the vine be better stewards of the gifts He gives us, His branches. (John 15)