

Right Resources for Money Save and don't Waste Part 2

We continue to speak in this message about how to be a good steward for the things that God give to us. **There are things in our houses and churches like clothes, shoes, toys, socks, books, laptops, mobiles, furniture, booklets, cables, lights, chairs, microphones, and musical instruments, all these can be repaired, maintained and reused and no need to spend in replacing them every now and then.** We find people changing their mobiles and laptops periodically and without a valid reason and they are not aware it is all wastage of money. Their love for the new trend of gadgets has clouded their vision. We also find this happening in churches. They periodically upgrade their musical instruments, sound systems, and other appliances to keep pace with the changing world, not realizing that it is an unnecessary expense and could very well be avoided. *** Other things in our houses and churches can be recycled to suit other purposes.** Used papers can be used as scratch papers. Old papers can be used to make envelopes. For example, the envelopes that we use in our congregations for tithes and offerings are made from used papers. God will continue to give us the wisdom how to use things and manage our lives successfully with fewer expenses. *** Purchase of small, inexpensive items may not make us feel the pinch. But over a period of time, if we count the cost, it will certainly become a huge expenditure. Then we will certainly regret our foolish behavior and for not having saved that money for a rainy day. * Some of us might be tempted to think and even to say, 'It is just a small amount of money.'** But if you calculate it for how many years you will do it, it will be a large sum of money that you can save and direct to do something noble. For example, a pair of inexpensive unbranded glasses can cost three dollars but we buy an expensive pair of glasses for 150 dollars just because it is branded. Then we change it every three to four years just because it became slightly worn out. A large amount of things that many people throw can be still used and reused; we need not to do the same what others are doing just to follow the trend. They will throw away a brand new thing just because they don't like the color or the design and for minor reasons will spend much money to buy a new thing. **Let's not follow people who waste resources but show them the way to thrifty living.** In this world, the business of second-hand goods is quite widespread. Goods like clothes, furniture, utensils, and electrical appliances are repaired and recycled and sold again. **We as families, members, and workers in the Churches of God should be an exclusive business center encouraging people to reduce, recycle, and reuse the resources available in our hands.**

Wisdom's instruction is to fear the Lord. Those who are humble and fear God will receive wisdom from God to manage life and the things entrusted to them in the best possible way. While those who do not fear God are proud and boastful, they will soon find their resources running dry. They will throw away things that God has placed in their hands as they consider them just average when in reality, they are valuable for the Master's use if they are preserved. Pride strips them of Godly wisdom, and for this reason, they are not able to value the resources that God has placed in their hands. Their pride blinds them from seeing things in a Godly way and from doing things pleasant to God. But those who are humble will have their eyes open to see the true worth of God's resources and use them for His glory. Below is a story of a humble person who feared God and used the humble resources that he had to do marvelous work for God.

***"7 Now when Ebedmelech the Ethiopian, one of the eunuchs which was in the king's house, heard that they had put Jeremiah in the dungeon; the king then sitting in the gate of Benjamin; 8 Ebedmelech went forth out of the king's house, and spake to the king saying, 9 My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet, whom they have cast into the dungeon; and he is like to die for hunger in the place where he is: for there is no more bread in the city. 10 Then the king commanded Ebedmelech the Ethiopian, saying, Take from hence thirty men with thee, and take up Jeremiah the prophet out of the dungeon, before he die. 11 So Ebedmelech took the men with him, and went into the house of the king under the treasury, and took thence old cast clouts and old rotten rags, and let them down by cords into the dungeon to Jeremiah. 12 And Ebedmelech the Ethiopian said unto Jeremiah, Put now these old cast clouts and rotten rags under thine armholes under the cords. And Jeremiah did so. 13 So they drew up Jeremiah with cords, and took him up out of the dungeon: and Jeremiah remained in the court of the prison."* (Jeremiah 38:7-13 KJV)**

Ebedmelech an Ethiopian eunuch was not one among the people of God but his heart was tender toward Jeremiah the prophet who was put in prison and his life was threatened because he was preaching to them the Word of God asking them to surrender to the Babylonians. Ebedmelech feared God and he took the initiative to approach King Zedekiah to save the life of Jeremiah. When he took the permission from the king, the king gave him thirty men to do it speedily and what this man used were old cast clouts and old rotten rags, and let them down by cords. Notice that he used old rotten rags. If it were someone else who had taken the king's approval, that someone probably would have used the most expensive and new clothes. Notice what the Scripture says where he went, ***"into the house of the king under the treasury, and took thence old cast clouts and old rotten rags."* (Jeremiah 38:11 KJV)** The treasury was just nearby. Many today, will produce a lengthy list of extravagant things to buy and will spend lavishly making it a point to extract as much as they can from the treasury of the church when asked to do something. People who are humble and God-fearing will be willing to work and operate even with humble resources and at a minimum cost.

Ebedmelech was a compassionate man and was careful in his work. He did not throw the rotten rags to Jeremiah lest it fell into the mud but he, ***"let them down by cords into the dungeon to Jeremiah."* (Jeremiah 38:11 KJV)** He ensured that it was handed over to Jeremiah in a clean state, so he could put them clean under his armholes and later on takes them out clean. He carefully instructed Jeremiah how to apply them. ***"12 And Ebedmelech the Ethiopian said unto Jeremiah, Put now these old cast clouts and rotten rags under thine armholes under the cords. And Jeremiah did so."* (Jeremiah 38:12 KJV)** He instructed that to Jeremiah so his armholes would not be hurt by the cords.

Ebedmelech did not think of himself when he went to the king. He could have asked for the king's favor and permission to take leave from Jerusalem to save his own life, but he trusted God and went forward to rescue Jeremiah. The Lord rewarded him for his good work and ministry. God promised that He would deliver him and save him. ***"15 Now the word of the LORD came unto Jeremiah, while he was shut up in the court of the prison, saying, 16 Go and speak to Ebedmelech the Ethiopian, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring my words upon this city for evil, and not for good; and they shall be accomplished in that day before thee. 17 But I will deliver thee in that day, saith the LORD: and thou shalt not be given into the hand of the men of whom thou art***

afraid. 18 For I will surely deliver thee, and thou shalt not fall by the sword, but thy life shall be for a prey unto thee: because thou hast put thy trust in me, saith the LORD.” (Jeremiah 39:15-18 KJV)

The meaning of Ebedmelech is ‘**servant of the king**’. We are the servants of the King of kings, the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, let us learn how to serve faithfully even with less and basic resources. Let us learn to be less demanding in our service. Let us be good stewards of the material things that have been entrusted to us, and let us teach and develop in our children, disciples, and others who want to serve God with us, the skills of good stewardship.

When we homeschool the children in our church, we give them desktop computers Pentium 4 to work on. They have been used since 2004 until 2020. They are handled carefully by students to do some of their lessons, to watch lab experiments, and to do certain exams.

Now let us read the story of the manger that became a cradle to a newborn baby.

“1 And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. 2 (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) 3 And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. 4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) 5 To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. 6 And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. 7 And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.” (Luke 2:1-7 KJV) Jesus was born in a stable and was laid in a manger which by a definition is a trough or open box in a stable designed to hold feed or fodder for livestock. The manger was used by Joseph and Mary and they made it a bed for Jesus.

Old furniture can be adjusted and used for different purposes. In our church, we have a lot of furniture, sofas, chairs, tables, and cabinets that we had picked up from garbage dumps. We fixed the wood, cleaned, painted, fixed the upholstery and now they are put to good use.

Notice that Mary used swaddling clothes to wrap her newborn baby *“7 And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.” (Luke 2:7 KJV)* Swaddling is an age-old practice of wrapping infants in blankets or sheets so that movement of the limbs is tightly restricted to keep the baby from being disturbed by his own startled reflex. It can also help the baby to stay warm. The swaddling clothes have another privilege over the ordinary infant clothes that are replaced nowadays. Technically, it can be prepared easily by the mother. It does not need to be replaced with a bigger size when the baby grows, and it does not need the mother to prepare the baby’s shoes and socks. So it is economically far better for the parents.

King Hiram, whose name also spelt Hiram, was the one who aided King David and King Solomon in their building of the temple of God. Therefore after King Solomon had finished the building he rewarded King Hiram by giving him twenty cities.

“10 And it came to pass at the end of twenty years, when Solomon had built the two houses, the house of the LORD, and the king's house, 11 (Now Hiram the king of Tyre had furnished Solomon with cedar trees and fir trees, and with gold, according to all his desire,) that then king Solomon gave Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee. 12 And Hiram came out from Tyre to see the cities which Solomon had given him; and they pleased him not. 13 And he said, What cities are these which thou hast given me, my brother? And he called them the land of Cabul unto this day.” (1 Kings 9:10-13 KJV)

The meaning of Hiram (Hiram) is ‘**Noble Born**’, and he did noble things in his contribution to building the temple of God and other important buildings. But what he did in response to what King Solomon gave was not noble. The twenty cities were located in a district in Galilee. He contemptuously called them Cabul meaning ‘**binding**’. They were of no value to him and he did not take them and be in a binding relationship with King Solomon. Instead, he sent gold to King Solomon to convince him that he still hadn’t received anything from him, to undermine King Solomon’s gift and also to boast about his own worth. *“14 And Hiram sent to the king six score talents of gold.” (1 Kings 9:14 KJV)*

But King Solomon used these twenty cities for a noble purpose as we can read here: *“1 And it came to pass at the end of twenty years, wherein Solomon had built the house of the LORD, and his own house, 2 That the cities which Hiram had restored to Solomon, Solomon built them, and caused the children of Israel to dwell there.” (2 Chronicles 8:1-2 KJV)* He prepared these cities and allowed people to live in them. When some people receive certain things that don’t suit their standards, they refuse and return it. This is not good because what they return is what God is rewarding them with. God’s intention of giving them such things is to bless them and to add to their wealth. But in the process of succumbing to pride and a choosy attitude, they lose God’s wealth. **Certain times we do the same when we are granted certain things as a reward for our hard work. We refuse to take them and as a result, lose out on God’s reward.**

As we read and examine the Scriptures, we will learn how to avoid wastage and be thrifty.

“19 When thou shalt besiege a city a long time, in making war against it to take it, thou shalt not destroy the trees thereof by forcing an axe against them: for thou mayest eat of them, and thou shalt not cut them down (for the tree of the field is man's life) to employ them in the siege: 20 Only the trees which thou knowest that they be not trees for meat, thou shalt destroy and cut them down; and thou shalt build bulwarks against the city that maketh war with thee, until it be subdued.” (Deuteronomy 20:19-20 KJV) God here taught the Israelites not to destroy the trees while they were waging war against the cities of their enemies. God wanted them to preserve the trees and segregate them for different purposes. Those trees that bore no fruit were to be cut and used for making a bulwark against that city. But those that bore fruit were not to be cut but to be used as source of food. Trees are part of nature and God wants us to preserve the natural resources and use them wisely, *“For the tree of the field is man's life.” (Deuteronomy 20:19 KJV)*

When I teach people about good stewardship, I tell them the following:

“If today you spend unwisely, then your children will be affected in the future because of your debt. If you use water unwisely, then your children will have less water to use. ‘Wasting’ is

one of the greatest enemies of mankind, an ally of the devil, and you should stop giving him your resources. Wasting is to deprive yourself of good things by giving them to your enemies. Wasting is to deprive your descendants of good things and giving them instead to the devil to use them against you. When we waste resources, we allow the enemy to rob us of this privilege and also our descendants of theirs.”

King Hezekiah acted wisely when he did not allow water resources to go to his enemy, Sennacherib, the King of Assyria. **“1 After these things, and the establishment thereof, Sennacherib king of Assyria came, and entered into Judah, and encamped against the fenced cities, and thought to win them for himself. 2 And when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib was come, and that he was purposed to fight against Jerusalem, 3 He took counsel with his princes and his mighty men to stop the waters of the fountains which were without the city: and they did help him. 4 So there was gathered much people together, who stopped all the fountains, and the brook that ran through the midst of the land, saying, “Why should the kings of Assyria come, and find much water?” (2 Chronicles 32:1-4 KJV)**

My dear and beloved: Let us heed from all the examples in this message how God’s people were good steward to what God had given to them. How they were thrifty, and used all the resources wisely, how they preserved what God had given to them and how they feared God and obeyed His Word that helped them to pass trials and the time of scarcity. Let us pray ...

My Prayer: Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the cross for my sins and rose from death to give me eternal life. Lord thank you for your Word that teaches me to be good steward and to use my resources wisely in order that all my needs will be met and I will be able to pass the trial and the hardship that I am passing in my life. Lord I thank you for all the corrections and the admonishments that I received in this message. Lord thank you for all the resources that you had placed in my hand to use them for your glory.

Repent and renounce all your sins. Repent of pride, boasting, showing off and spending much. Repent of your worldliness and your love for material things. Renounce your bad stewardship and wasting your resources. Repent of throwing things that are useful for you, and replace them with things that are more expensive. Repent of your lack of humility and refuse receiving things from people which were sent by God to help you. Repent of your non reading to God’s Word and lack of prayers. Lord I repent and renounce the following sins

_____.

Lord I commit myself to live according to your will humbling myself and willing to go along your Word and what we learned today from the message. Lord I commit myself to be good steward of my resources, willing to gather things and store them so I can use them for the future. Lord I am willing to live according to your will and the good plan that you have for me. Lord lead me always with your Holy Spirit and remind me to do what is right.

Lord, thank you for my Brothers and Sisters who repented of their sins and committed themselves to be good steward to the resources that they received from you. Lord continue to provide for them and make their lives a good testimony to others to follow.

Lord bless us as a church and help us to continue to direct your people with your Word so they will use their resources wisely and that all their needs will be met. Lord lead us to teach new

people those principles that we studied and they need in their lives. Lord refill us with the Holy Spirit and give us the Spiritual gifts that we need in our lives to go on and evangelize, and make new disciples and train new workers to go and plant more Bible studies and congregations for the church. Lord we pray for more people to be water Baptized and receive the Holy Spirit Baptism. Lord prepare us for your coming to go with you when you come. Lord fulfill the vision of the church, ‘Multiplication in peace with implementing the whole will of God.’ Lord bless us, enlarge our territory, let your hand be with us and free us from harm so that we will not feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all in Jesus name, Amen.

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