

SERMON NOTES A Whole Bodied

Faith—An Invitation to Radical Hospitality and Stewardship

Big Idea: Biblical stewardship grows out of whole-bodied faith: loving God with all we are and all we have, and loving our neighbor through radical hospitality, generosity, and community care.

Key Texts: Deuteronomy 6:4–9; Mark 12:30–31; Matthew 20:1–16; Luke 12:13–21; Luke 14:12–24; 1 Corinthians 8:6

1. Stewardship makes sense in the real world of Scripture. The ancient world was relational, fragile, and community-based. Survival often depended on mercy, reputation, and mutual care. In that setting, Jesus’ teaching about money, wages, debt, and generosity was not abstract—it spoke directly into everyday life.

- The workers in the vineyard show the generosity of God beyond human calculations of fairness.
- The rich fool warns against hoarding blessings instead of becoming rich toward God.
- The great banquet calls us to welcome those who cannot repay us.

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2. Whole-bodied faith begins with the Shema. “Hear, O Israel” is a call to the whole community. Faith is never merely private. God’s people are invited to a life centered on the one true God and expressed through total devotion.

- **Heart** (leb): our inner life—mind, will, and affections.
- **Soul** (nepes): our life, desires, appetite, and embodied existence.
- **Strength** (meod): our capacity, resources, possessions, influence, and energy.

To love God with heart, soul, and strength is to offer our entire selves to God—from the inside out. Stewardship is not only about money; it is about surrendering our thoughts, desires, habits, bodies, homes, calendars, and possessions for God’s glory and our neighbor’s good.

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3. Whole-bodied faith moves outward: self, family, community. Deuteronomy 6 teaches that love for God must be woven into daily life—at home, in conversation, in formation of children, and in public witness. The commandments were meant to shape a people whose life together made God visible.

- Our faith should shape what happens inside our homes.
- Our faith should be visible in the way we treat guests, neighbors, and those in need.

- Our church should be a blessing to the surrounding community.

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4. Jesus and the early church model radical hospitality. Jesus joins love of God and love of neighbor. The early church lived this out by sharing resources, caring for widows and orphans, supporting mission, and making sure no one was left alone in hardship. Stewardship was communal, practical, and deeply spiritual.

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Conclusion: Stewardship is the practical expression of a whole-bodied faith. We love God with all we are, and that love overflows in generosity, hospitality, and care for our neighbors. The question is not only what we believe, but whether our lives, homes, and church make that love visible.

Taking it Home: We encourage you to take a few minutes today and this week to process this morning's message. These questions are designed for discussion with your family, a friend, mentor, spouse, and small group. They are also useful for self-reflection.

Points to Ponder

- What surprised you about the economic system in the Ancient Near East? Do you see any parallels to today's economic landscape?
- What does whole-bodied faith look like to you? Have you been living this way?
- How am I being
 - A blessing to the community in front of me?
 - A blessing to the neighborhood I live in?
 - A blessing to others in the world?
- Is COMMUNITY Covenant
 - Blessing the community around our church?
 - If our doors closed tomorrow, would anyone miss us?
 - Are we using the funds we have for mission and to alleviate the suffering in our own community?

Prayer and Reflection

- God, help me see how I can help COMMUNITY Covenant be a blessing to the people within our church family and those in our neighborhood and beyond.
- God, show me how I can be a blessing to others through my whole being: heart, soul, and strength for God's Glory and Neighbor's Good?