**PREPARING FOR CHRIST’S RETURN
*October 3, 2021 - Pastor Rick Reager***

**I. WHY SHOULD I PREPARE NOW?**

**1. IF WE ARE SAVED, WE HAVE BEEN \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
*“20****for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body.” 1 Corinthians 6:20*

**2. JESUS TOLD US \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

*“12Look, I am coming soon, bringing my reward with me to repay all people according to their deeds.” Revelation 22:12*

**3. GOD’S WORD TELLS US \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

***“42****“So you, too, must keep watch! For you don’t know what day your Lord is coming.****43****Understand this: If a homeowner knew exactly when a burglar was coming, he would keep watch and not permit his house to be broken into.****44****You also must be ready all the time, for the Son of Man will come when least expected.” Matthew 24:42-44*

*“****28****And now, dear children, remain in fellowship with Christ so that when he returns, you will be full of courage and not shrink back from him in shame.” 1 John 2:28*

**4. SIGNS OF THE TIMES TELL US WE ARE \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
*“******32****“Now learn a lesson from the fig tree. When its branches bud and its leaves begin to sprout, you know that summer is near.****33****In the same way, when you see all these things, you can know his return is very near, right at the door. ” Matthew 24:32-33*

**II. HOW CAN I PREPARE FOR CHRIST’S RETURN?**

**1. BE A GOOD STEWARD OF \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Matthew 25:14-30**

Parable of the Three Servants

*“14 Again, the Kingdom of Heaven can be illustrated by the story of a man going on a long trip. He called together his servants and entrusted his money to them while he was gone.* ***15****He gave five bags of silver[*[*b*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=matthew+25&version=NLT#fen-NLT-23997b)*] to one, two bags of silver to another, and one bag of silver to the last—dividing it in proportion to their abilities. He then left on his trip.*

***16****“The servant who received the five bags of silver began to invest the money and earned five more.* ***17****The servant with two bags of silver also went to work and earned two more.* ***18****But the servant who received the one bag of silver dug a hole in the ground and hid the master’s money.*

***19****“After a long time their master returned from his trip and called them to give an account of how they had used his money.* ***20****The servant to whom he had entrusted the five bags of silver came forward with five more and said, ‘Master, you gave me five bags of silver to invest, and I have earned five more.’*

***21****“The master was full of praise. ‘Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let’s celebrate together![*[*c*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=matthew+25&version=NLT#fen-NLT-24003c)*]’*

***22****“The servant who had received the two bags of silver came forward and said, ‘Master, you gave me two bags of silver to invest, and I have earned two more.’*

***23****“The master said, ‘Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let’s celebrate together!’*

***24****“Then the servant with the one bag of silver came and said, ‘Master, I knew you were a harsh man, harvesting crops you didn’t plant and gathering crops you didn’t cultivate.* ***25****I was afraid I would lose your money, so I hid it in the earth. Look, here is your money back.’*

***26****“But the master replied, ‘You wicked and lazy servant! If you knew I harvested crops I didn’t plant and gathered crops I didn’t cultivate,* ***27****why didn’t you deposit my money in the bank? At least I could have gotten some interest on it.’*

***28****“Then he ordered, ‘Take the money from this servant, and give it to the one with the ten bags of silver.* ***29****To those who use well what they are given, even more will be given, and they will have an abundance. But from those who do nothing, even what little they have will be taken away.* ***30****Now throw this useless servant into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’”* *Matthew 25:14-30*

**III. WHAT AM I TO BE A GOOD STEWARD OF?**

**KEY AREAS:**

**1. MY \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**2. MY \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

 **3. MY \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

 **4. MY \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, & \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

 **5. MY \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**IV. WHAT DOES GOOD STEWARDSHIP LOOK LIKE?**

**1. I USE EVERYTHING I HAVE ACCESS TO, TO \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ OR

MAINTAIN THE HEALTH OF \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

*“1 And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him.” Romans 12:1*

*“****8****But those who won’t care for their relatives, especially those in their own household, have denied the true faith. Such people are worse than unbelievers.” 1 Timothy 5:8*

**V. HOW CAN I BECOME A GOOD STEWARD OF GOD’S RESOURCES?**

**1. TURN OVER ALL MY WORLDLY RESOURCES TO \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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*“1 The earth is the LORD'S, and all it contains, The world, and those who dwell in it.” Psalm 24:1*

*“8 And that message is the very message about faith that we preach:* ***9****If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.” Romans 10:8-9*

*“****25****If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it.* ***26****And what do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul? Is anything worth more than your soul?” Matthew 16:25-26*

**2.** **ADOPT \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ FOR MY LIFE**

*“****24****But my life is worth nothing to me unless I use it for finishing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus—the work of telling others the Good News about the wonderful grace of God.” Acts 20:24*

*“18Jesus came and told his disciples, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. 19Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. 20Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:18-20*

**3. START EVERY DAY WITH \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

*“23Then he said to the crowd, “If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross daily, and follow me.” Luke 9:23*

*“23The Lord directs the steps of the godly. He delights in every detail of their lives.” Psalm 37:23*

 *“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.” Proverbs 3:5*

**4. PRACTICE SEEKING FIRST \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

*“****33****But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” Matthew 6:33*

 **THIS MEANS:
 i. PRIORITIZING GROWING \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

*“11Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. 12Their responsibility is to equip God’s people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. 13This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God’s Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ.” Ephesians 4:11-13

Matthew 28:18-20*

 **ii. IMMITATING GOD’S \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

***“15****But now you must be holy in everything you do, just as God who chose you is holy.****16****For the Scriptures say, ‘You must be holy because I am holy.’” 1 Peter 1:15-16*

**5. DEVELOP A \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ MINDSET FOR ALL \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

*“24Don’t you realize that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize? So run to win! 25All athletes are disciplined in their training. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize. 26So I run with purpose in every step. I am not just shadowboxing. 27I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should. Otherwise, I fear that after preaching to others I myself might be disqualified.” 1 Corinthians 9:24-27*

**6. THINK ABOUT \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ OFTEN**

*“1 Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God’s right hand. 2Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth. 3For you died to this life, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God. 4And when Christ, who is your life, is revealed to the whole world, you will share in all his glory.” Colossians 3:1-4*

**7. BEFORE SPENDING OR USING ANY RESOURCES ASK MYSELF:**

**i. Is This Use Of Resources \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_?

ii Is This Use Of Resources \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ To Maintain The Health Of Me Or My Family?

iii. Is This How \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Spend/Use This Resource?**