

STEWARDSHIP

A
Circle
Of
Giving

SUNDAY

FCBC Fresno November 15th, 2020

Stewardship Sunday

A Circle of Giving

ANNOUNCEMENTS & CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor: Over the last few weeks this fellowship has talked about our personal views, hopes and fears around the blessings God provide. The first week I asked you to **REMEMBER** that God created this beautiful world for us-a story of creation.

All: We remember today that we belong to one another. That we have and continue to journey through a time of pandemic, a time of loss. Yet we have been given this community of saints to make room for all at God's table so that we might have hope!

Pastoral Prayer

Hymn: "*Bind Us Together*"

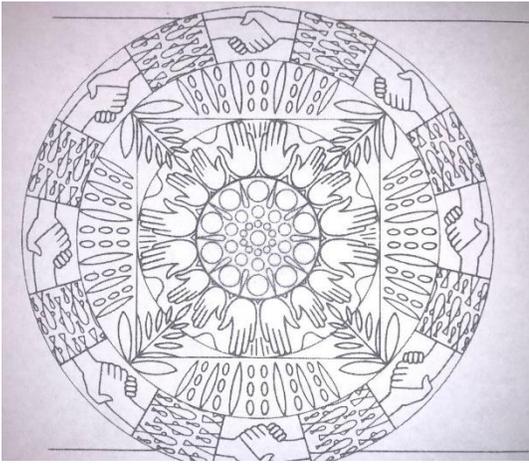
Pastor gives a Prayer of Confession: During week two of our stewardship series I talked about **RELEASE**, of letting go our fears, our shame around money. We asked God to give us the courage to accept healing and to trust our God with what He has provided. Today let us confess that is hard.

Hymn: "*I Surrender All*" v 1 & 2

Pastor: In week three we talked of how to **REIMAGINE** letting go of our old history with money and look for new ways of living of releasing our fears that we might just not have enough.

ALL: We reimagine a world, a church filled with laughter, with service, and with hope because we have learned to give. Today we reimagine our community with new stories to tell about a people of faith.

Pastor: We finish our circle today with the word **RESTORE**. As a people we recognize it's not easy to extend and receive grace. Yet, as a forgiven people our money should reflect that restoration through Christ.



Today's imagery is inspired by John 21:1-19 (Jesus appears to the disciples) and Genesis 33:1-17 (Esau forgives Jacob). The hands clasped on the rim of our circle represents reconciliation. The fish represent the abundance Jesus offers through His resurrection. This reminds of restoration of relationship and restoration of our fractured world.

I have taken a pipe cleaner and shaped into a heart. As we pray remember all the ways God's love restores you no matter the harm you may have caused, neglected, or received.

Pastor: Holy God, today we bring our hearts back to you. Our thoughts back to love, and our prayers back to peace.

ALL: We confess it's never been easy to accept or to offer reconciliation.

Pastor: We come face-to-face with an opportunity for justice, but we get scared. We are offered an opportunity to re-write our story around money, around blessings but we often get caught up in society and the need to want, to horde, to keep close our resources.

ALL: Bring us back to receiving and extending grace to another.

Pastor: Bring us back to love. Restore us. Forgive us.

ALL: Help us Father to remember Your blessing to us, give us strength to release money's hold upon us, give us the courage to reimagine a life of grace and giving so we may be restored in our walk with You.

Special Music from Jeff Burkett: "You'll Never Walk Alone"

Message: Life is not Fair!

Question: What is grumbling?

- 1) To show one's _____ or critical attitude.
- 2) To make _____ remarks or noises under one's breath.
- 3) To _____ or mutter in discontent; _____ sullenly.

"So the people grumbled at Moses, saying, 'What shall we drink?'" (Exodus 15: 24) "The whole congregation of the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness" (Exodus 16:2).

"But the people thirsted there for water; and they grumbled against Moses and said, 'Why, now, have you brought us up from Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?'" (Exodus 17:3).

Question: **How do you spot a Grumbler?**

- 1) *A grumbler is never _____ with what he has.*
- 2) *Second, he always has an _____.*
- 3) *Third, he secretly _____ he can never succeed.*

Jesus used a parable to help us deal with our issues of not feeling like life is fair.

Matthew 20:1-16. "For the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard" (v.1).

In order to understand this story, we need to know that the landowner has two things in abundance:

1. _____ of work and
2. _____ of money.

When the day's work is done, the time comes to pay off the workers. Immediately something unusual happens: "When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the workers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last ones hired and going to the first'" (v. 8).

"When those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius" (v. 9).

"Now when those hired first came, they thought they would receive more, but each of them also received a denarius" (v. 10).

"These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat" (v. 12).

Here Comes the Remedy/the POINT

1) _____ God for the Blessings You Have Already _____.

2) In order to enjoy God's blessings you must not _____ Yourself by the Way God
_____ Someone Else.

3) Remember that God Rewards _____, Not _____.

Pastor: Now we come to the end of this year's stewardship journey. We recognize that our relationship with money is not easy. That we are called to offer grace, to accept reconciliation to welcome all into God's family. That as we give our tithe we are physically and spiritually letting go of our need to want, to horde to keep close our resources, to grumble that life is not fair.

ALL: Thank you Savior for your sacrifice that restores us into relationship with our God. Today we remember, release, reimagine and feel restored as we come.

Hymn: "In All Things Give Him Thanks"

Benediction

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