

BECOMING A GIVER!

A Bible Study Series of The Mt. Zion Church

Lesson 1- The Ownership Issue

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Introduction: The purpose of the following three-part study centers on the desire to help Christians understand the need to be, the command to be, and the benefit of being joyous givers. The Bible teaches about financial giving as part of the lifestyle of being a believer. Additionally, this study was designed with the intent to define obedient giving as tithing with scriptural support. By the end of each lesson, students will be challenged to become obedient givers to God. Other than becoming obedient to God, the believer will come to understand the greater benefit of their obedience to include more church impact, more community impact, more blessings from The Lord, etc. I pray that these lessons will challenge your walk with The Lord and prepare you to defend your beliefs on giving.



Warm Up Activity

Directions: Think of your favorite possession and how much you have paid for that possession. Why do you like it? What brings you joy about the possession? Then, discuss with a neighbor how your possession makes you feel and what you think of when you think about the item.

Share out with the group.



Key # 1: God Owns Everything!

Genesis 2:8-9, 15-20.

As we study the creation of everything in Genesis 2, we are able to see that God, with intention, created everything of His own will. Not only did he create mankind, He also placed mankind where He wanted us to be, then He created a job

for man, and even created the only helper suitable for man, a woman. In each instance, God makes a decision for the man and positions him to be and do what is best. God's authority to do this, centers on the reality that He is creator. He is owner. He is sovereign (big Bible word for above all, and over everything).

As believers, we cannot argue the point that God is creator and owner of everything. The Bible supports this truth in various verses:

- The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it. (Psalm 24:1)
- Behold, to the LORD your God belong heaven and the highest heavens, the earth and all that is in it. (Deuteronomy 10:14)
- Who has first given to me, that I should repay him? Whatever is under the whole heaven is mine. (Job 41:11)
- For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. (Colossians 1:16)

These and other verses clearly indicate ownership of everything including you and I belongs to God. This foundation statement sounds as such, "I belong to God because God is creator." If you struggle with this foundational idea, perhaps one other verse will convince you.

I Corinthians 6:19-20

- Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

In order to be obedient to God, we must all first agree that God has the authority to dictate to each of us what we must do. His word is final and anything other than following His word or living by His word leads to sin.

1. Do you agree that God is the ultimate authority in Heaven and Earth?

Since God has authority, and we acknowledge that as our first step, now let's consider the limitations of His right to command us to do what He wants us to do!

Activity 2: Discuss with a neighbor the boundaries you have placed on your children. Think in terms of the following areas:

- A. Their friends
- B. Bedtimes
- C. Food choices
- D. Schoolwork
- E. Chores around the house



Ultimate Authority Position (God) can Command Anything!

After we accept the authority of God because He is creator and owner, we must then acknowledge that He also can command the created (us) to do whatever He wants. Before you begin to freak out, consider the commands that you have given to your children (or children you have worked with).

Assuming you are a good parent, what is the reason for your commands to choose good friends that are of a like mind and belief system, to go to bed at the right time and get a good night's rest, to eat their veggies, and to not indulge in a lot of snacking, to do your school-work before play and do your best, to make sure the house is clean and you are done with your chores at a certain time. All of these commands/ directives have benefits attached to them. If you do A then B will be the outcome. As parents, we never purposefully suggest actions that will harm our children. All of our commands are for the benefit of the children. The Bible speaks to this as well.

Good Gifts:

- Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him! (Matthew 7:9-11)

Good Starts:

- Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it. (Proverbs 22:6)

Good Direction:

- But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. (2 Timothy 3:14-15)
- A wise son hears his father's instruction, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke. (Proverbs 13:1)
- Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and forsake not your mother's teaching, for they are a graceful garland for your head and pendants for your neck. (Proverbs 1:8-9)

Each of these are examples of what good fathers do for their children. Does God do these for us? Therefore, you must also conclude that God is a good father.

As father and authority, He has the responsibility for all the children who are under his care. With this responsibility, He must exercise His authoritative right to dictate the behaviors, actions, people, structure, and any other item that comes into His “house.” Not just the church, but the totality of where His people reside. (Your house, your job, your family, your car, your cell phone, your computer, your conversation, your TV, get the hint?)



The question to be answered at this point is why does He give us free reign in some areas, limit other areas, and puts boundaries around others? Let's analyze Genesis 2:16-17

“You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; 17 but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.”

Limited Area _____ Why God limited them _____

Notice, God limits their utilization and interaction with a small portion of the Garden of Eden because it would cause harm to His children. What a good parent!

Let's analyze some other areas where God puts limits.

Limited Area	Why God Limits Us

Can you agree that in every area that God limits His children, it always has to do with a benefit for us? If you can agree to this, then you must also agree that God knows best! As a father who knows best, God knows more, sees more, and understands more about every area of our lives. There is no area of your life that God is not concerned about or does not have an answer regarding. This includes finances.

Remember, whenever God commands something, it is for the benefit of His children. If we choose to do the opposite of God's command we are saying that we do not want the benefit of the command of God.

Satan pushes us to focus on the small limit. God wants us to see the big freedom.

Yet freedom is not total freedom. Freedom has boundaries and those are set by our heavenly Father, God, the Creator, the Authority of all things. Why? Because He owns everything!

Closing thought: Since God owns everything because He is the creator, then what amount of ownership does he have over us based on the following verse:

1 Corinthians 6:20

²⁰ For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

Since God created us (owns us) then bought us again with the blood of Jesus (twice bought) don't we owe Him double obedience?