

Three Firm Resolutions

6 Investment Tips, 5 Purchases, 4 Tough Questions, 3 Firm Resolutions.
Our countdown series on *Practical Living: Total Body Stewardship* continues.

By the time you are reading this, we will have just ended (or will be nearing the end of) our three week *Stewardship Series* at the church. I've heard it has been said, "I can't believe they're trying to dip their hands in our pockets again". Wow! That sure is a misunderstanding! Anyone who has been tuned into the series knows that's not what we're all about, however we can never over communicate our goals and intentions.

Therefore as a review, let me remind you what our special *Stewardship Series* is all about before we consider this month's '*Three Firm Resolutions*'.

We believe that if we are to really be Biblical Christians, we need to think about and talk about stewardship on a regular basis. ***We define stewardship as the wise custodial use of all that we have and all that we are.*** We believe that it's less of a definition and more of a concept. The idea comes from Psalm 24, where we read, "the earth is the Lords and everything in it, the world and all who live in it".

In our series, we have three goals:

To Educate- We want to share with you, the *expectations* God has of each of us to be a wise custodial steward in every area of our life.

To Engage- We want to encourage and give everyone at First Church, opportunities to *respond to God's call* for each of us.

To Experience- We want you to have the experience of **being faithful to God** and if possible, have our body share in these benefits.

We have divided the series into three components. First, *The Stewardship of our Time & Talents*, where I took us through the Matthew 25 parable of the talents. Second, *The Stewardship of our Relationships* (specifically of our Families and Marriages), where Roy Pope took us through Deuteronomy 6:6-9. And finally, *The Stewardship of our Resources*, where Pastor Ed took us through many Biblical examples of using our resources for God's service.

There you have it. The *Stewardship Series* in a couple of paragraphs. So what should come of all of it? Consider three firm resolutions that every Christian, not just should, but *must* adopt **if**, they are to have a *Biblical Perspective*.

- 1) As a Christian, I should be continually growing in my understanding of God's standards in every area of my life (specifically my time, talents, relationships, and resources)
- 2) God has full ownership of me and everything He has entrusted to me.
- 3) As a Christian, I am to seek God's will and join Him where He is at work.

Let me round out our time together this month with a few passages the Lord has given us, to help shape our convictions:

- The words of the apostle Paul should be our words, *"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. (Galatians 2:20).*
- The words of Christ make it very clear, *"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me". (John 6:60)*
- Christ also modeled for us, *"not my will but yours be done" (Luke 22:42).*
- As did John the Baptist, *"He must increase and I must decrease" (John 3:30).*

Remember, God is an inviter, not an insister. He invites us into a relationship with Him and then He invites us to conform no longer to the patterns of this world but to be transformed by the renewing of our minds via His Word and Spirit. As you go about the business of being you, may the thoughts of your heart, your attitude, convictions, words and actions, illustrate your faith to the world.

May you have the courage to make three firm resolutions:

- 1) As a Christian, I should be continually growing in my understanding of God's standards in every area of my life (specifically my time, talents, relationships, and resources)
- 2) God has full ownership of me and everything He has entrusted to me.
- 3) As a Christian, I am to seek God's will and join Him where He is at work.

Walking with you,
Michael

Associate Pastor of Families and Caring Ministries

PS.

Here is a great hymn to encourage and reinforce our message. It's called, 'I am Resolved'. Does anyone else know or love this hymn? Let me know!

I Am Resolved

(V1) I am resolved no longer to linger,
Charmed by the world's delight,
Things that are higher, things that are nobler,
These have allured my sight.

Refrain

*I will hasten to Him, hasten so glad and free;
Jesus, greatest, highest, I will come to Thee.
I will hasten, hasten to Him, hasten so glad and free;
Jesus, Jesus, greatest, highest, I will come to Thee.*

(V2) I am resolved to go to the Savior,
Leaving my sin and strife;
He is the true One, He is the just One,
He hath the words of life.

(V3) I am resolved to follow the Savior,
Faithful and true each day;
Heed what He sayeth, do what He willeth,
He is the living Way.

(V4) I am resolved to enter the kingdom
Leaving the paths of sin;
Friends may oppose me, foes may beset me,
Still will I enter in.

(V5) I am resolved, and who will go with me?
Come, friends, without delay,
Taught by the Bible, led by the Spirit,
We'll walk the heav'nly way.