

God's First Fruit Principle

"No Turning Back" (Study of Hebrews) - part 9
Pastor Bob Johnson, February 2nd, 2020

More about Melchizedek:

(Hebrews 7:1-10, Genesis 14:17-24)

God's First-Fruit Principle:

The Principle: The first ...

(Genesis 4:2-5; 14, Exodus 13:1-2, Joshua 6:19-20)

The Reason:

The blessings ...

(James 1:16-17, Matthew 5:43-45)

The believing ...

(Proverbs 3:9-10, Philipians 4:14-20)

God's First-Fruit Passion:

He desires us to ...

1. His delight with David

(2 Samuel 24:21-25)

2. His disappointment with Judah

(Malachi 1:6-9; 3:6-12, Haggai 1:2-11; 2:15-19)

Two Observations for our Generation:

1. A tip is ...

2. If not today, tomorrow ...

(1 Corinthians 16:1-2)

This Week's Discussion Guide:

Welcome to our fourth week of this 12 week study of Hebrews 5-11. Our last week of small groups for this season will be the last week in March.

At GPC, we are big on small groups :). May our church family grow warmer together as we meet in small groups to develop friendships and encourage each other as we learn to apply God's truths to our everyday lives.

Getting Started:

Last Sunday morning, we looked at Abraham meeting Melchizedek in Genesis 14. It was a short encounter but one that Abraham surely remembered for some time. Speaking of memories, what small encounter in terms of time happened in your life, that made a lasting impact on you? Why does it still linger with you?

In Genesis 14, we heard about the story of Abraham rescuing Lot and some other men and women after they were kidnapped. Being a rescuer is pretty heroic.

When have you (in a big or small way) done something for someone else that might be considered heroic or at least admirable?

God grows our faith through a lot of ways. One of the ways is stretching us in our giving. What are some other ways that God has grown your faith over the years or recently?

Last Sunday, Bob spent some time teaching on what God's Word has to say about "first fruit" giving. This is not the first time you heard someone share some thoughts about money. Which of the following messages about money and financial security did you hear in your family growing up?

- money can't buy you happiness
- financial security is the most important goal in life
- money is the root of all evil
- wealth is a sign of God's favor and approval
- budgeting is a skill worth developing
- we never talked about money
- the best part of having money is helping others
- debt is always bad
- debt is okay for things you really want
- never buy anything unless it's on sale
- saving for the future is very important
- other:

Quick Review:

Looking back at your notes from last Sunday's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, challenged, confused you, encouraged you, or stretched your thinking?

Digging Deeper:

1. The natural response to God being the source of every blessing in our lives is gratitude and generosity.

What insights about generosity and what it looks like when we live it out, do the following passages give us?

Luke 21:1-4

2 Corinthians 8:1-5

2 Corinthians 9:6-8

This next verse (Leviticus 23:22) talks about how God wants the Israelites to build generosity into their lives. Since most of us don't have any experience farming, can you think of any simple and inexpensive ways to apply this principle?

Understanding and being genuinely thankful for what Jesus has done for us is often a first step in developing a generous mindset.

What has God done for you that you are thankful for?

2. Ananias and Sapphira were two members of the first church in Jerusalem who met an untimely death. Their story is often used as an example of why we shouldn't lie, but it can also be viewed as a story about money and giving.

In their story in Acts 4:32 - 5:11, what can we learn about God's view of money and how we handle it?

If you were to describe your attitude toward money in one word or phrase, what word or phrase would you choose?

3. We have all heard stories of people 'losing it all' ... in a fire, flood or other catastrophe. In those times, we are given the opportunity to re-evaluate our earthly possessions and the role they play in our lives.

Too often we fall into the trap of thinking life is all about what we have. How could the following passages help us keep our earthly possessions in proper perspective?

1 Timothy 6:6-10

1 Timothy 6:17-19

What is most challenging for you about balancing the storing up of treasures in heaven with the pursuit and enjoyment of material possessions?

4. Lastly, Bob talked about the steps to financial, Biblical investing being from nothing to something, from something to systematic, and from systematic to sacrifice.

Looking at these steps, are there any changes you would like to make in your faith journey with your finances?

Wrapping Up:

Looking back on the message from Sunday and from our discussion, what is one truth that stands out to you that you can prayerfully ask God to help apply to your life somehow?

Before we wrap up are sharing time, let's prayer for one another!

What are some specific requests we have that we can pray for?