

Opportunity Fund Priorities

8/25/2020

Our goal is to honor God

Proverbs 3:9 Honor the LORD from your wealth, And from the first of all your produce;
¹⁰ So your barns will be filled with plenty, And your vats will overflow with new wine.

Three Foundational Stewardship Truths

1. God owns it all, is generous and uses money as a tool to grow us.
2. We are stewards given the opportunity to make eternal investments and we will give an account and reap rewards.
3. How we are to invest God's resources is learned through a lifetime of praying through passages like these:

Our question in this study:

In what is the church to invest God's money?

Love one another

Invest in _____

Proverbs 6:6 Go to the ant, O sluggard, Observe her ways and be wise,
⁷ Which, having no chief, Officer or ruler,
⁸ Prepares her food in the summer, *And* gathers her provision in the harvest.

Invest in _____

Matthew 25:31 "But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne.

³² "And all the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats;

³³ and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left.
³⁴ "Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.
³⁵ 'For I was hungry, and you gave Me *something* to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in;
³⁶ naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.'
³⁷ "Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You drink?
³⁸ 'And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You?
³⁹ 'And when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?'
⁴⁰ "And the King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, *even* the least of *them*, you did it to Me.'
⁴¹ "Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels;
⁴² for I was hungry, and you gave Me *nothing* to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink;
⁴³ I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.'
⁴⁴ "Then they themselves also will answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?'
⁴⁵ "Then He will answer them, saying, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.'
⁴⁶ "And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Ephesians 4:28 Let him who steals steal no longer; but rather let him labor, performing with his own hands what is good, in order that he may have *something* to share with him who has need.

1 John 3:11 For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another;

¹² not as Cain, *who* was of the evil one, and slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother's were righteous.

¹³ Do not marvel, brethren, if the world hates you.

¹⁴ We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death.

¹⁵ Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

¹⁶ We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

¹⁷ But whoever has the world's goods, and beholds his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?

¹⁸ Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.

Invest in _____ locally

Acts 2:41 So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

⁴² And they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

⁴³ And everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles.

⁴⁴ And all those who had believed were together, and had all things in common;

⁴⁵ and they *began* selling their property and possessions, and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need.

⁴⁶ And day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart,

⁴⁷ praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved. (Also Acts 4:32-37)

Acts 6:1 Now at this time while the disciples were increasing *in number*, a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic *Jews* against the *native* Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily serving *of food*.

² And the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables.

³ "But select from among you, brethren, seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task.

⁴ "But we will devote ourselves to prayer, and to the ministry of the word."

⁵ And the statement found approval with the whole congregation; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch.

⁶ And these they brought before the apostles; and after praying, they laid their hands on them.

⁷ And the word of God kept on spreading; and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith.

Acts 20:33 "I have coveted no one's silver or gold or clothes.

³⁴ "You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my *own* needs and to the men who were with me.

³⁵ "In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

1 Timothy 5:3 Honor widows who are widows indeed;

⁴ but if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to practice piety in regard to their own family, and to make some return to their parents; for this is acceptable in the sight of God.

⁵ Now she who is a widow indeed, and who has been left alone has fixed her hope on God, and continues in entreaties and prayers night and day.

⁶ But she who gives herself to wanton pleasure is dead even while she lives.
⁷ Prescribe these things as well, so that they may be above reproach.
⁸ But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever.
⁹ Let a widow be put on the list only if she is not less than sixty years old, *having been* the wife of one man,
¹⁰ having a reputation for good works; *and* if she has brought up children, if she has shown hospitality to strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has assisted those in distress, *and* if she has devoted herself to every good work.
¹¹ But refuse *to put* younger widows *on the list*, for when they feel sensual desires in disregard of Christ, they want to get married,
¹² *thus* incurring condemnation, because they have set aside their previous pledge.
¹³ And at the same time they also learn *to be* idle, as they go around from house to house; and not merely idle, but also gossips and busybodies, talking about things not proper *to mention*.
¹⁴ Therefore, I want younger *widows* to get married, bear children, keep house, *and* give the enemy no occasion for reproach;
¹⁵ for some have already turned aside to follow Satan.
¹⁶ If any woman who is a believer has *dependent* widows, let her assist them, and let not the church be burdened, so that it may assist those who are widows indeed.

Invest in _____ globally

Acts 11:27 Now at this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch.

²⁸ And one of them named Agabus stood up and *began* to indicate by the Spirit that there would certainly be a great famine all over the world. And this took place in the *reign* of Claudius.

²⁹ And in the proportion that any of the disciples had means, each of them determined to send *a contribution* for the relief of the brethren living in Judea.

³⁰ And this they did, sending it in charge of Barnabas and Saul to the elders.

2 Corinthians 8:1 Now, brethren, we *wish to* make known to you the grace of God which has been given in the churches of Macedonia,

² that in a great ordeal of affliction their abundance of joy and their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their liberality.

³ For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability *they gave* of their own accord,

⁴ begging us with much entreaty for the favor of participation in the support of the saints,

⁵ and *this*, not as we had expected, but they first gave themselves to the Lord and to us by the will of God.

⁶ Consequently we urged Titus that as he had previously made a beginning,

so he would also complete in you this gracious work as well.

⁷ But just as you abound in everything, in faith and utterance and knowledge and in all earnestness and in the love we inspired in you, see that you abound in this gracious work also.

⁸ I am not speaking *this* as a command, but as proving through the earnestness of others the sincerity of your love also.

⁹ For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.

¹⁰ And I give *my* opinion in this matter, for this is to your advantage, who were the first to begin a year ago not only to do *this*, but also to desire *to do it*.

¹¹ But now finish doing it also; that just as *there was* the readiness to desire it, so *there may be* also the completion of it by your ability.

¹² For if the readiness is present, it is acceptable according to what *a man* has, not according to what he does not have.

¹³ For *this* is not for the ease of others *and* for your affliction, but by way of equality--

¹⁴ at this present time your abundance *being a supply* for their want, that their abundance also may become *a supply* for your want, that there may be equality;

¹⁵ as it is written, "He who *gathered* much did not have too much, and he who *gathered* little had no lack."

¹⁶ But thanks be to God, who puts the same earnestness on your behalf in the heart of Titus.

¹⁷ For he not only accepted our appeal, but being himself very earnest, he has gone to you of his own accord.

¹⁸ And we have sent along with him the brother whose fame in *the things of* the gospel *has spread* through all the churches;

¹⁹ and not only *this*, but he has also been appointed by the churches to travel with us in this gracious work, which is being administered by us for the glory of the Lord Himself, and *to show* our readiness,

²⁰ taking precaution that no one should discredit us in our administration of this generous gift;

²¹ for we have regard for what is honorable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.

²² And we have sent with them our brother, whom we have often tested and found diligent in many things, but now even more diligent, because of *his* great confidence in you.

²³ As for Titus, *he is* my partner and fellow worker among you; as for our brethren, *they are* messengers of the churches, a glory to Christ.

²⁴ Therefore openly before the churches show them the proof of your love and of our reason for boasting about you.

9:1 For it is superfluous for me to write to you about this ministry to the saints;

² for I know your readiness, of which I boast about you to the Macedonians, *namely*, that Achaia has been prepared since last year, and your zeal has stirred up most of them.

³ But I have sent the brethren, that our boasting about you may not be made empty in this case, that, as I was saying, you may be prepared;

⁴ lest if any Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we (not to speak of you) should be put to shame by this confidence.

⁵ So I thought it necessary to urge the brethren that they would go on ahead to you and arrange beforehand your previously promised bountiful gift, that the same might be ready as a bountiful gift, and not affected by covetousness.

⁶ Now this I say, he who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly; and he who sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully.

⁷ Let each one *do* just as he has purposed in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸ And God is able to make all grace abound to you, that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed;

⁹ as it is written, "He scattered abroad, he gave to the poor, His righteousness abides forever."

¹⁰ Now He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food, will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness;

¹¹ you will be enriched in everything for all liberality, which through us is producing thanksgiving to God.

¹² For the ministry of this service is not only fully supplying the needs of the saints, but is also overflowing through many thanksgivings to God.

¹³ Because of the proof given by this ministry they will glorify God for *your* obedience to your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for the liberality of your contribution to them and to all,

¹⁴ while they also, by prayer on your behalf, yearn for you because of the surpassing grace of God in you.

¹⁵ Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift! (see also 1 Corinthians 16:1-4)

Galatians 2:9 and recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that *we might go* to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcised.

¹⁰ *They only asked* us to remember the poor-- the very thing I also was eager to do.

Invest in _____

1 Timothy 5:17 Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching.

¹⁸ For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing," and "The laborer is worthy of his wages."

1 Corinthians 9:13 Do you not know that those who perform sacred services eat the *food* of the temple, *and* those who attend regularly to the altar have their share with the altar?

¹⁴ So also the Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living from the gospel.

Live the mission

Invest in _____

Luke 16:1 Now He was also saying to the disciples, "There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and this *steward* was reported to him as squandering his possessions.

² "And he called him and said to him, 'What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.'

³ "And the steward said to himself, 'What shall I do, since my master is taking the stewardship away from me? I am not strong enough to dig; I am ashamed to beg.

⁴ 'I know what I shall do, so that when I am removed from the stewardship, they will receive me into their homes.'

⁵ "And he summoned each one of his master's debtors, and he *began* saying to the first, 'How much do you owe my master?'

⁶ "And he said, 'A hundred measures of oil.' And he said to him, 'Take your bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.'

⁷ "Then he said to another, 'And how much do you owe?' And he said, 'A hundred measures of wheat.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, and write eighty.'

⁸ "And his master praised the unrighteous steward because he had acted shrewdly; for the sons of this age are more shrewd in relation to their own kind than the sons of light.

⁹ "And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by means of the mammon of unrighteousness; that when it fails, they may receive you into the eternal dwellings.

¹⁰ "He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much.

¹¹ "If therefore you have not been faithful in the *use of* unrighteous mammon, who will entrust the true *riches* to you?

¹² "And if you have not been faithful in *the use of* that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own?

¹³ "No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other, or else he will hold to one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."

¹⁴ Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, were listening to all these things, and they were scoffing at Him.

¹⁵ And He said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves in the sight of men, but God knows your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men is detestable in the sight of God.

Invest in _____

Philippians 4:10 But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at last you have revived your concern for me; indeed, you were concerned *before*, but you lacked opportunity.

¹¹ Not that I speak from want; for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.

¹² I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need.

¹³ I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

¹⁴ Nevertheless, you have done well to share *with me* in my affliction.

¹⁵ And you yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first preaching of the gospel, after I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone; ¹⁶ for even in Thessalonica you sent *a gift* more than once for my needs.

¹⁷ Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the profit which increases to your account.

¹⁸ But I have received everything in full, and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God.

¹⁹ And my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

1 Corinthians 9:13 Do you not know that those who perform sacred services eat the *food* of the temple, *and* those who attend regularly to the altar have their share with the altar?

¹⁴ So also the Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living from the gospel. (this passage listed earlier with "Invest in pastors (elders)")

Love one another and live the mission

Invest in _____

1 Timothy 6:17 Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy.

¹⁸ *Instruct them* to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share,

¹⁹ storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed.

Invest in _____

Matthew 6:19 "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.

²⁰ "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal;

²¹ for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

²² "The lamp of the body is the eye; if therefore your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light.

²³ "But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!

²⁴ "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

²⁵ "For this reason I say to you, do not be anxious for your life, *as to* what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; nor for your body, *as to* what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body than clothing?

²⁶ "Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, and *yet* your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they?

²⁷ "And which of you by being anxious can add a *single* cubit to his life's span?

²⁸ "And why are you anxious about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin,

²⁹ yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory did not clothe himself like one of these.

³⁰ "But if God so arrays the grass of the field, which is *alive* today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, *will He* not much more *do so for* you, O men of little faith?

³¹ "Do not be anxious then, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'With what shall we clothe ourselves?'

³² "For all these things the Gentiles eagerly seek; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

³³ "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you.

³⁴ "Therefore do not be anxious for tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. *Each* day has enough trouble of its own.

Invest in _____

Matthew 23:23 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others.

²⁴ "You blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!