**Stewarding Love**

*Matthew 5:43-48*

The Context of the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7)

Stewardship is God-given responsibility with accountability.

**The Four Factors of Stewardship**

1. God owns everything, you own nothing.
2. God entrusts you with everything you have.
3. You can either increase or diminish what God has given you—He wants you to increase it.
4. God can call you into account at any time—it may be today.

3 ways we love biblically

**I. We remind ourselves of the way Christ loves us**

1. Even in our desperate \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ condition

**Matthew 5:3**—*Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

**Matthew 5:4**—*Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.*

**Romans 3:23**—*for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*

1. Even during times of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Matthew 5:10**—*Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

**Matthew 5:11**—*Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me.*

**Matthew 5:12**—*Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ our Father

**Matthew 5:16**—*Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.*

1. Fulfilling the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Matthew 5:17-18**—*Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished.*

1. Without \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Matthew 6:5**—*When you pray, you are not to be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.*

**Matthew 6:7**—*And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words.*

**Matthew 6:16**—*Whenever you fast, do not put on a gloomy face as the hypocrites do, for they neglect their appearance so that they will be noticed by men when they are fasting. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.*

1. Through the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ way

**Matthew 7:13-14**—*Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.*

**John 14:*6****—Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.”*

1. Mindful of false prophets

**Matthew 7:15**—*Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves.*

**Matthew 24:4, 11**—*And Jesus answered and said to them, “See to it that no one misleads you.****5****For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the  Christ,’ and will mislead many…****11****Many false prophets will arise and will mislead many.****12****Because lawlessness is increased, most people’s love will grow cold.*

**II. We live it out—even with the challenges**

1. By not “qualifying” our love

**Matthew 5:43**—*You have heard that it was said, “You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.”*

1. By loving our enemies

**Matthew 5:44**—*But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you…*

1. By loving like God loves

**Matthew 5:45**—*…so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.*

1. By not limiting our love like unbelievers

**Matthew 5:46**—*For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?*

**Matthew 5:47**—*If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?*

1. By putting on the gospel

**Matthew 5:48**—*Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.*

**Matthew 5:20**—*For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.*

**2 Corinthians 5:21**—*He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

**III. Take-a-ways—what are the specific ways where I am acting on these biblical truths?**

Change doesn’t happen in fuzzy-land.

**Matthew 7:24**—*Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock.*

1. Who are the people that I need to love in this way?
2. Ask God to forgive me for my lack of stewarding love in a way that pleases Him.
3. What can I do (proactively) as a means of demonstrating my commitment to love others (and thereby demonstrate my love to Him)?
4. Thank Him for the many examples in the church of where God’s people lived that out in extraordinary ways. Ask Him to make you one of those examples for others to follow (for His glory).