

Text: 1 Chronicles 29:10-20. Stewardship Sunday. **October 26, 2014.**

Praise be to you, Lord. Amen.

Mine! Two kids, plus one toy, equals trouble. "It's mine. I was playing with it first." Mine! Our three year old preschool teacher has a list of things to do in such a situation. Stop. Ask nicely if you can share. Take turns playing with it. Play together. Finally, if you can't solve the problem on your own, ask the teacher. If the teacher gets involved, the toy just might get taken away. Then there won't be anything to fight over. Until someone finds another toy. Then we have two kids, plus one toy all over again. You can hear it coming. Mine!

We would like to think that we grow out of that, but... Teenagers fight over boyfriends and who gets to be captain of the team. Adults have been known to fight over toys before Christmas time. It never really stops, this, "Mine!" It's going to take more than taking turns and sharing. It's going to take a new heart, a new attitude about stuff. It's not mine. It's God's. It's not ours. It's his. It's all God's. Everything belongs to him. It's all God's stuff. He's just letting us use a little bit of it for a little while. It really is God's. Everything is God's. It's all God's.

I'll tell you right up front that I'm going to be repeating a lot of King David's words, because he has said it so well and says it over and over again. It's all God's. As King David prays, you just get the sense that there are not enough words to use to describe everything that belongs to God. It's all his, the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor. How many more ways can you say that? But David keeps going. His is the kingdom. Doesn't this sound a lot like the final part of the Lord's Prayer? For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and forever. Maybe you didn't realize those words were around 1000 years before Jesus.

David doesn't stop where we stop in the Lord's Prayer. Wealth and honor come from you. Stop. Where does wealth come from? God! Yes, God gives us the ability to work and God expects us to work, but finally, wealth comes from God. It's all God's, even the wealth, the money you call mine, is really God's. It came from God. God gave it to you. When your investment statement comes, what do you think? "How much money did I make? How much did I lose? How much do I have?" How much has God given me? How much has God taken away, to remind me it's all his? How much is God entrusting me with? Wealth and honor come from God. There aren't enough words to say it. There aren't enough ways to repeat it. It's all God's.

It's all God's. The intangible things like strength and power and the tangible things, the abundance we have provided for building you a temple comes from your hand. We'll talk about this more in Bible study, but I'll just mention, the tangible stuff David gave for the temple was massive. He gave over 100 tons of gold. 100 tons. A quick calculation, over 3 billion dollars. With a b. Plus 260 tons of silver and a bunch of other stuff. But David doesn't see it as David giving or certainly not David losing. David is only resharing with God what came from God in the first place, even when it was over 3 billion dollars. It was all God's.

It was all in God's hand. Think of the control you have when \$1 is in your hand. You can squeeze it tight. You can let it go. You can give it away. You can spend it. It's in your hand. You have control. God's hand just as easily controls all the dollars and euros and rupees and pesos. God can give them to anyone he wants or take them away from anyone he wants. It's all God's. Allow me to ask a question. Pretend for a moment that you are God. All the money and stuff in the world is in your hand. You can give it to anyone you want to. Are you more likely to give it to people who love you, people who will use this money the way you want? Will you give it to people who hold on to everything with a tight fist? People who never say, "Thank you"? People who constantly cry, "mine!"?

It's not yours. It's God's. How many times did David say that? Yours, LORD, is the greatness and the power. Yours, LORD, is the kingdom. Come from you. In your hands. Everything comes from you. We have given only what comes from your hand. All this abundance comes from your hand. All of it belongs to you. It's all God's. I know I've been repeating that. No apologies. David repeated it. God wrote it down repeatedly. God wants us to remember. It's all God's.

Do you realize what that means? It's not my car. It's God's car. He's just letting me borrow it for a while. Uhoh. Ever borrow a car from a friend. Better not get one scratch. Better wash it before I bring it back. He might not let me borrow it again. It's not my house. It's God's house. God is kind enough to let me live there and gracious enough to provide me a job so I can pay for the house with God's money that he's letting me borrow. Did that sound really strange? God's money that he's letting me borrow?

That's not how we normally think. I include myself. "Mine," is our natural way of thinking. My strength and my power have produced this wealth for me. I work hard at my job. I studied long nights in school to get this job. This is my money. I worked for it. This is my stuff. I'm keeping it, with a tight fist around it. Mine! What a childish attitude. What a sinful attitude.

Only God can give a new attitude. He starts by crushing our hard hearts, by smashing that sinful attitude of mine. God points us to Jesus. He lived a homeless life, not to show us that we should be homeless, but to be perfectly free from the attitude of, "mine!"

Jesus didn't even hold us his equality with God like a trophy. Instead, Jesus came as a humble servant, to take our place, to be our Substitute. Our sinful attitude of mine is replaced with Jesus' perfect attitude of not mine, but yours be done. Our sinful attitude of mine was placed on Jesus' big, broad shoulders, shoulders big enough for all the sins of all the world, including our sins of mine. Those sins are nailed to the cross, forgiven, forgotten, freely and forever. You can't change your attitude through will power. Only Jesus changes your attitude through God power. Strength and power are his, strength to change our hearts. Power to give us a new attitude.

There are so many attitude words in these verses as well. Just as there weren't enough words to describe all the power and strength and wealth and abundance and glory and greatness and majesty that belong to God, there aren't enough attitude words to describe our giving back to God a little bit of what he has given to us.

One word that stands out is willingly. The people didn't have bills they had to pay. They gave willingly. The people loved the LORD. The people were moved to build a special, palatial structure, not for people for their own glory, but for God, to his glory. How great is God's glory? How much is God worth? For David it was 3 billion dollars, just in gold. You see, willingness has no limit.

Willingness leads to generous. Did you hear David talk about generous? Who am I? And who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? David considers it such a privilege to give. He can't believe that he gets to do it. He knows he's not worthy to give. He knows he's not worthy to manage any of God's stuff and here God has entrusted David with so much that David and the people can give generously. This is a new attitude. There wasn't some goal they had to meet. There wasn't a thermometer that got higher every week as they gave. This was for God. No amount was too much. They gave generously. They gave willingly.

They gave whole heartedly. They were all in for God. They gave with integrity. The definition of integrity is what you do when no one's looking. Notice how David connects integrity with God testing the heart. When no one's looking, when no one's noticing, when no one's counting, that's integrity. Thank God that he has cleansed our hearts of sin. Thank God that he has washed us clean and pure. Thank God that he has given us a new attitude. The old attitude of mine is gone. The new attitude of, "It's all God's," dominates in our hearts. That's the only way we want God testing our hearts, after he cleanses us. We want God to examine our willingness, our generosity, our whole heartedness, our honest intent, our integrity, because in our hearts, God is going to find Christ, and God is going to find the attitude of Christ, willing, generous, whole hearted.

Let's not leave out joy. David saw the people giving and it gave him joy. He saw their attitude of willing giving and it gave him even more joy. Many of you have heard me say before, "Joy is Jesus first. Others second. Yourself last." It's that simple. David had joy because he put Jesus first. David said over and over, "It's all God's. It all comes from his hand." That's how David looked with joy when others were giving. He had Jesus first. David put himself last. 3 billion in gold in the offering plate is a pretty big sacrifice. But that sacrifice gave David joy. It's joy to put Jesus first. It's joy to put others ahead of yourself. It's joy to have a new attitude, not the old attitude of mine, but the new attitude of it's all God's. Let's bow down and worship him. Let's thank him for sharing some of his stuff with us. Let's praise him for cleansing our hearts and making us see, "It's all God's. Everything. It's all God's." Amen.