

# Momentum Sermon Series

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## SERMON THREE - GOD OWNS IT ALL

Text: Psalm 24:1; Deuteronomy 8:10-18

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### I. INTRODUCTION

- a. Over the past several years, this country has seen a lot—and I mean a lot—of businesses close as a result of financial mismanagement.
  - i. Sometimes, in cases like Enron, there was criminal fraud involved. This means that some individuals or groups of shady businesspeople conspired to rip off the company and its customers or employees.
  - ii. Other times, however, the cause isn't as devious. These businesses didn't get in trouble because someone was stealing; they got in trouble because the people keeping the books didn't do a very good job!
- b. Can you imagine a \$2 million business succeeding for very long if the bookkeeper never bothered to do a budget?
  - i. Think about that, because whether you run a business or not, this applies to you.
  - ii. You see, most families will see about \$2 million flow through their hands over the course of their working lifetimes.
    - 1. I say "flow through their hands" because that's what money does: it flows from somewhere and then it flows to somewhere else.
    - 2. Money is fluid. It moves. It flows. That's why they call it current-cy!
- c. So, let me ask you a question that Dave Ramsey would ask if he were here right now.
  - i. Imagine you worked as a bookkeeper for a company called You Inc.
  - ii. If you managed money for You Inc. the way you manage money for you, would you fire you?
- d. What we're talking about here is a question of ownership and management.
  - i. At the end of the day, no matter how much cash we have in the bank or how much we owe to Visa, we have to understand that we are the managers of someone else's money.
  - ii. The truth is, we do work for You Inc.!
  - iii. Can you guess who our boss—the owner—is?

### II. GOD IS THE OWNER

- a. We are called to manage God's money.
    - i. Psalm 24:1: "The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it."
    - ii. God is the owner—period. God owns it all. (Have congregation repeat that aloud.)
    - iii. Psalm 50:10 says that God owns the cattle on a thousand hills. Guess what? He owns the hills, too. He owns it all!
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- b. You may not like hearing that.
    - i. You may say, “This isn’t God’s money in my wallet. It’s my money. I worked for it. I earned it. I deserve it.”
    - ii. Trust me, that’s not the first time God’s heard that objection.

### III. DEUTERONOMY 8:10-18

- a. Background
  - i. In Deuteronomy chapter 8, Moses relates God’s commands to the wandering nation of Israel. The Lord had brought them out of slavery and was taking care of their every need. He was providing food every morning, He was protecting and blessing them in battle, and He was ultimately leading them to the Promised Land.
  - ii. However, the nation continued to gripe and complain all the time. Honestly, they were a little full of themselves.
  - iii. In Deuteronomy 8:10-18, we see a warning that rings just as true for us today as it did for the Israelites thousands of years ago. Let’s take a closer look.
- b. Verse 10
  - i. This passage starts with an excellent piece of advice: when you are satisfied, content or fulfilled, your first reaction should be to thank God and praise Him for what He has done.
  - ii. We’re used to thanking God for a meal, but what about our paychecks?
  - iii. When you open your paycheck or check your direct deposit, is your first thought to praise God for providing your money?
- c. Verses 11–14
  - i. Here, we see how we get into trouble.
    - 1. Many people find that it is easier to praise God in their suffering than it is to praise Him in their success.
    - 2. Success often blinds us to God’s provisions.
  - ii. Success lulls us into a false sense of self-sufficiency, and that only leads us away from God.
    - 1. When things are going good—job promotions, raised incomes, obedient children, good grades—it is easy to sit back and think that we deserve these things.
    - 2. As we convince ourselves that our blessings are the result of only our own hard work, we slowly begin to lose sight of the Lord.

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- iii. Verse 14 issues a solemn warning that we cannot ignore.
    - 1. If we keep our eyes on our own accomplishments, then our hearts become proud.
    - 2. The indictment of pride is a serious offense.
    - 3. Pride is one of the few things of which Scripture says God absolutely hates. (Proverbs 6:16–19)
  - d. Verses 15–16
    - i. This passage drives home the point that God is the one who has done the work.
    - ii. Speaking to the Israelites, Moses recounts all of God’s miracles throughout their journeys through the desert.
    - iii. The overriding theme in these two verses is clear: God did it.
    - iv. Whatever it is you think you accomplished, think again. God did it.
  - e. Verses 17–18
    - i. Verse 17 says what most of think in our moments of triumph: “My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.”
      - 1. That is, “Hey, look what I did! I worked hard and I made this money!”
      - 2. How often have we said, or at least thought, something like this?
    - ii. Verse 18 tells us the antidote to this kind of self-congratulation.
      - 1. We are called to “remember the Lord” because He is the one who “gives [us] the ability to produce wealth.”
        - a. It is interesting that in the opening of the passage, we are warned not to forget (a passive act), and here at the end, we are called to actively remember.
          - i. This shows that forgetting something, or someone, is easy. We just relax our minds, focus on the things we can put our hands on, and let the important things slip right out of our minds.
          - ii. However, remembering is more intentional. It is active. It indicates a sharp, controlled and disciplined mind.
        - b. I can forget something accidentally, but I have to focus to remember. I think this is one way in which Scripture is calling us to master our thoughts.
      - 2. Again, God owns it all. That doesn’t just mean that God owns all the land and all the “stuff.” It means:
        - a. God gives us our abilities.
        - b. God gives us our resources.
        - c. God gives us our skills and talents.
        - d. God gives us opportunities to earn money.
        - e. God gives us bodies and strength and energy to work.
        - f. God gives our employers the money to pay us with.

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- g. God gives us our homes and jobs and families and business partners and ideas and creativity and dedication and ingenuity and initiative.
    - 3. He gives us all of this because He loves us, and because He wants us to use what He owns to bring about the good that He's called us to do.
    - 4. It's all His, and He's giving it to us to manage on His behalf.

#### **IV. BAD MANAGERS CAN'T GIVE**

- a. Simply recognizing God's ownership isn't enough; we still have to be good managers.
  - i. A bad manager doesn't take the owner's money seriously.
    - 1. He doesn't value it.
    - 2. He squanders it.
    - 3. He steals it.
  - ii. If we aren't faithfully managing the owner's money, it won't be there when he tells us to give some away.
    - 1. Let's think in terms of a business again.
    - 2. What would happen in a workplace if the boss asked the CFO to cut a check, but the CFO couldn't because he had spent all of the owner's money?
  - iii. Managing God's money is the same thing! When He calls us to give, we need to have His resources properly managed in such a way that we can act when He tells us to act.
- b. When we get confused about who the owner is, something sad happens.
  - i. Have you ever noticed that, as some people become more successful, they also become more greedy, moody, and anxious?
  - ii. When we forget that we're just the managers, we start to take a closed-fisted view of money. We wrap our fingers around it and won't let any of it go.
  - iii. Antoine Riveroli said it this way: "There are men who gain from their wealth only the fear of losing it."
  - iv. That is, with a wrong view of money, we go on the defensive. Instead of living life with an open hand, giving generously as God directs, we close up and act like everyone is after our money.
  - v. That's no way to live!

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## V. GENEROUS GIVERS

- a. God has called us to be joyful, generous givers.
- b. However, we cannot be joyful givers if we have a wrong view about money.
- c. A spirit of giving doesn't happen in a vacuum. Giving in and of itself is not really a decision we make.
- d. Giving is the natural response to a right view about money.
  - i. Giving is only possible when we feel no emotional or personal attachment to our money.
  - ii. If I think it's mine, then my job is to protect it from you.
  - iii. If I think it's His, then my job is to use it the way God tells me to.
- e. This doesn't mean we can't have some nice stuff. Remember, God loves His children, and He has entrusted us with His money.
  - i. There's nothing wrong with proper spending, and there's nothing wrong with using God's money to enrich our lives and our families.
  - ii. The confusion comes when that's all we're doing. If that's our focus, then we've lost track of the true owner.

## VI. SO WHAT?

- a. Today, I want to end by asking you one question: So what?
  - i. So what if God's the owner?
  - ii. So what if we're just the managers?
  - iii. So what if everything we have belongs to God?
  - iv. So what if He expects us to go and to do and to give when He calls us?
- b. What does any of this have to do with your life, right here, today?
  - i. How does this change your budgeting?
  - ii. How does this change your giving?
  - iii. How does this change your buying decisions?
- c. Now, that's a lot of different ways to ask the same question. As you walk out of here today, I pray that this message sits on your heart for a while until you are honestly ready to answer the question, So what?