



CAYMAN ISLANDS REGIONAL MISSION COUNCIL

WEEKLY UPDATE

September 23, 2020

VOLUME 5 ISSUE 38

STEWARDSHIP & THE DISCIPLE

Christ is God's Supreme Gift

by Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble-Bloomfield

Stewardship and the Disciple has been the theme and energy in the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands since July 2020. In these three months we have focused on various aspects of stewardship but with the underlying truth that everything we possess is owned by God and we are called to be wise stewards of what God has entrusted to us.

As a Church we have therefore throughout this period placed emphasis on the following:

- God is Creator and Owner and as such has a purpose and a deep concern for all of God's creation.
- Humanity is given a special place in God's order. As human beings we have been created in the image of God and give dominion over the rest of creation.
- God created the world to fulfil God's own purposes.
- God created the world to serve the good of humanity.
- Sin brings disorder to God's perfect order. Man's sin hurts himself and the land. It sets him at odds with God and with each other. What the first Adam thwarted; the second Adam made and continues to make possible.
- What God set out to do in creation, God continues in the recreating or redeeming work of Jesus Christ. As such, God has given us new life through Jesus Christ.
- Material things are valuable. All things have their origin in God and find their purpose in Christ. Christian stewardship is the responsible management of all material things for God.
- That God created and owns all things must inform our understanding of ownership. Humanity's ownership has limitations. We are temporary tenants occupying the holding as a sacred trust.
- Stewardship is the total responsibility for all of life. It centers in man's relationship to God and in his God-given charge to care for the material world.
- We are God's accountable managers/caretakers. This involves the proper and responsible use of what God has entrusted to us.

- Christian stewardship is the highest form of responsible life.
- We are motivated to give by the example of God's giving and by our love for Christ.
- God is the supreme giver.

We come to the end of the series with an emphasis on the reality that **Christ is God's supreme gift**. God's engagement with us in the world from creation indicated that God had and continues to have a vested interest in all of creation. God described creation as being 'good' in Genesis 1:31

"God saw all that God had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day".

God elevated human beings above all of the other created beings and gave us mastery over the earth. The introduction of **sin** in Genesis 3 must have caused God much pain and disappointment as the 'good' creation became contaminated and imperfect. Perhaps, like some potters, God could have reshaped the clay, choose another clay or reduce the heat or usage of the kiln. God could have turned God's back on creation.

Instead, God as early as Genesis 3:15 pronounced the intention for the salvation for humanity.

"And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel".

Satan's theatre of the moment in the Garden of Eden, when he thought that the command performance would have completely destroyed God's creation, was stymied by the announced intention of the way being made for our salvation.

This became reality in the incarnation, ministry, vicarious death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

We need to note in three ways the critical nature of God's supreme gift to us in Christ Jesus.

1. **In giving us the gift of Jesus, God secured the atonement of our sins.** By nature, human beings have been and continue to be sinful. The Psalmist echoed this particularly in Psalm 51:5

"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."

Being so prone to sin, we dare not boast of any goodness of our own but must rely on the grace of God through Jesus Christ. It is the very blood of Christ that was shed for our sins as

“without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins” (Hebrews 9:22)

Further, we are reminded in 1 John 1:18 that

“If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us”.

We sin in thought, word and deed and we sin daily. Thank God for the supreme gift of Jesus and His redeeming blood which secures the forgiveness and atonement of our sin.

2. In giving us the gift of Jesus, God established the example of how we ought to love each other. As we experienced the gift of grace from Christ in a very generous manner, we must be nudged to make sure that we dispense this gift among our fellow human beings. Our generosity of spirit must enable us to engage with others in a manner which suggests that we think more highly of them than we think of ourselves. Philippians 2: 3-4 reminds us:

“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others”.

The basis of our relationship must be love. The small but powerful song is a constant reminder. “God forgave my sin in Jesus’ name; I’ve been born again in Jesus’ name; And in Jesus’ name I come to you, To share His love as He told me to”.

How well do you love people?

Jesus lived an exemplary life of forgiveness and grace which has enabled us to learn the true nature of how we need to conduct our relationship with others. So often we seek for the **quid pro quo** defined as seeking a favor or advantage in the expectation of receiving for something in return.

Further, often evidenced in relationships, there are disingenuousness, lack of integrity, jealousy, bitterness, discrimination and exclusion. If we truly love, these traits will not have any place or room to grow in our lives.

3. In giving us the gift of Jesus, we have the security of life eternal. – So often, we live as if this life is all there is and will be for us as human beings. Paul reminded the church in 1 Corinthians 15:19-20

“If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied. But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.”

In these days it is of uttermost importance that we so live our lives in Christ that we can be assured of our eternal rest. So often we say of the dead: **‘Requiescat in pace ‘Rest in Peace’.** This suggest the soul of the departed has found peace with God, based on the quality of the life lived. There is no torment of the soul as there is the certainty of the secured relationship the

person had with Christ. Those who are left behind speak well of the deceased who has truly found rest in the Alpha and the Omega. **How secure is your relationship with Christ?**

God truly gave us the supreme gift in Jesus and may each of us embrace this gift as we sojourn in this life as a Disciple who has been a faithful Steward.



Recently baptized young people from the Savannah United Church at Spotts Beach with Rev. Wray and their youth leaders.



On Saturday, September 19th, the Women’s Fellowship of John Gray Memorial Church hosted a Tea Party which was attended by approximately 20 ladies and 1 gentleman. The occasion was a great opportunity for fellowship and reconnecting after months of not having met. It signaled the resumption of Women's Fellowship activities in the Region. The event was much appreciated and enjoyed by the participants.

September 27. (Sunday) 17th Sunday after Pentecost

September 26. (Saturday)
Council mtg – 9:00am – BT church hall



on Radio Cayman 89.9 every Sunday at 7:45 am

September 27, 2020
Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble-Bloomfield

Published by the Cayman Islands Regional Mission Council of the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands
292 Prospect Point Road
P.O. Box 1700 Grand Cayman KY1-1109 CAYMAN ISLANDS
Tel: 1 345 947 1963 Email: rdgs@cicucjci.com or cirmcinfo@gmail.com
Website: unitedchurch.org.ky