GPS

Week 1 | Week of November 1, 2026

Make It Count: Making the most of what God has entrusted to us

Be Fruitful and Multiply

SUNDAY 11.1.26 Matthew 25:14-18

For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. At once the one who had received the five talents went off and traded with them and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money.

God Brought the Animals to Adam

MONDAY 11.2.26 Genesis 2:7-9, 15, 19-20

The LORD God formed the human from the topsoil of the fertile land and blew life's breath into his nostrils. The human came to life. The LORD God planted a garden in Eden in the east and put there the human he had formed. In the fertile land, the LORD God grew every beautiful tree with edible fruit, and also he grew the tree of life in the middle of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. ... The LORD God took the human and settled him in the garden of Eden to farm it and to take care of it. ... So the LORD God formed from the fertile land all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky and brought them to the human to see what he would name them. The human gave each living being its name. The human named all the livestock, all the birds in the sky, and all the wild animals.

In the second account of creation in Genesis, God formed the first human, Adam, from the soil and breathed life into him. Before Adam could wonder where he would live or what he would eat, God planted a garden in Eden and set him down in the middle of it.

The garden was already growing when Adam arrived, full of trees that were beautiful to look at and heavy with fruit, with the tree of life standing at the center. He hadn't cleared any ground or planted a single seed, and everything he needed was already there.

Then God gave him work, settling Adam in the garden to farm it and take care of it. The trees he hadn't planted were now his to tend, though the garden itself still belonged to God.

What God did next went further. God formed the animals and the birds and brought each one to Adam "to see what he would name them." In the first chapter of Genesis, God had done all the naming, calling the light day and the darkness night and naming the sky, the land, and the seas. Now God stepped back and let Adam decide, and whatever Adam called each creature became its name. Our Senior Pastor, Adam Hamilton, wrote that as stewards of God's blessings, "our goal is to determine what God wants us to do with the resources we have at our disposal."* That kind of stewardship asks for more than keeping things in good order. It asks us to think and choose, the way Adam did as each creature was brought to him. God trusted Adam with real decisions about creation, and God trusts us with real decisions about what we've been given.

Adam's beginning in the garden showed what it means to be trusted with something that belongs to someone else. God provides for us before we've done anything to earn it, and then gives us a real share in caring for the world God made. We're called to make our decisions about our time, our abilities, our relationships, and our money as people God has trusted with them.

- The first human, Adam, was given a garden full of good things before he had done any work in it. As you look at your own life, what has God provided that you tend to think of as something you earned, and how does seeing it as a gift change the way you care for it?
- Adam Hamilton wrote that a steward's goal is "to determine what God wants us to do with the resources we have at our disposal." Think of a decision in front of you right now about your time, your abilities, or your money. What do you sense God wants you to do with what you've been given there?

Prayer: God, you formed me, gave me breath, and provided for me before I could do anything for you. Thank you for trusting me with a share in caring for your world. When I make decisions about my time, my gifts, and my money, help me remember that they belong to you. Give me the wisdom to choose in ways that honor you. Amen.

* Adam Hamilton, Enough: Discovering Joy through Simplicity and Generosity, rev. ed. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2012), 80.

Moses Told Israel to Remember

TUESDAY 11.3.26 Deuteronomy 8:11-18

But watch yourself! Don't forget the LORD your God by not keeping his commands or his case laws or his regulations that I am commanding you right now. When you eat, get full, build nice houses, and settle down, and when your herds and your flocks are growing large, your silver and gold are multiplying, and everything you have is thriving, don't become arrogant, forgetting the LORD your God: the one who rescued you from Egypt, from the house of slavery; the one who led you through this vast and terrifying desert of poisonous snakes and scorpions, of cracked ground with no water; the one who made water flow for you out of a hard rock; the one who fed you manna in the wilderness, which your ancestors had never experienced, in order to humble and test you, but in order to do good to you in the end. Don't think to yourself, My own strength and abilities have produced all this prosperity for me. Remember the LORD your God!

He's the one who gives you the strength to be prosperous in order to establish the covenant he made with your ancestors—and that's how things stand right now.

Forty years after God brought Israel out of slavery in Egypt, the people were camped on the plains east of the Jordan River, looking across at the land God had promised them. Moses had led them the whole way, and he knew he would not be crossing with them. Before they went, he gathered them for a long farewell, the speeches that make up the book of Deuteronomy.

Most of the people listening had grown up in the wilderness. For as long as they could remember, their food had come the same way. Every morning there was manna on the ground around the camp, enough for that day, and when there was no water, God brought it out of rock. Few of them had ever planted a field or brought in a harvest. Nearly every meal they had eaten had come straight from God's hand.

That was about to change. Canaan was a land of wheat and barley, vineyards and olive trees, and once Israel settled there, their food would come from their own fields and flocks. The book of Joshua tells us the manna stopped the day after Israel first ate food grown in the land. The daily reminder that God was feeding them would disappear, replaced by harvests they had planted and herds they had raised themselves.

Moses saw the danger coming. He pictured them years later, well fed and living in nice houses, their flocks growing and their silver and gold multiplying, and he warned them not to think, "My own strength and abilities have produced all this prosperity for me." He reminded them of the rescue from slavery, the desert full of snakes and scorpions, the water from hard rock, and the manna that came every morning. Then he told them where their strength had come from in the first place, saying, "Remember the LORD your God! He's the one who gives you the strength to be prosperous." Their work in the fields would be real work, and the ability to do it would still be a gift from God.

Moses was showing Israel that the greatest danger to their faith would come in the good years, when life was comfortable and God's care was harder to see. God provided for Israel in the wilderness long before they had anything of their own, and God still gives the strength behind every good thing we build. We're called to remember the Giver, especially when our tables are full, and to care for what we have as people who know where it came from.

- Once Israel's food came from their own fields, the daily manna stopped. What in your life comes so steadily now, like income, a home, or a full pantry, that it's easy to forget it's a gift from God, and how might you remember the Giver this week?
- Moses warned Israel against thinking, "My own strength and abilities have produced all this prosperity for me." Think about something you've worked hard for. How does remembering that God gave you the strength and ability to do that work change the way you use what it produced?

Prayer: God, you fed Israel in the wilderness long before they had fields of their own, and you have provided for me in more ways than I can count. Keep me from forgetting you when life is full and comfortable. Help me see my strength and abilities as gifts from you. Teach me to use what you've given me with gratitude, remembering where it all came from. Amen.

God Gave the Skill

WEDNESDAY 11.4.26 Exodus 31:1-6

The LORD spoke to Moses: Look, I have chosen Bezalel, Uri's son and Hur's grandson from the tribe of Judah. I have filled him with the divine spirit, with skill, ability, and knowledge for every kind of work. He will be able to create designs; do metalwork in gold, silver, and copper; cut stones for setting; carve wood; and do every kind of work. I have also appointed with him Oholiab, Ahisamach's son from the tribe of Dan. To all who are skillful, I have given the skill to make everything that I have commanded you.

While Israel was camped at Mount Sinai, God gave Moses plans for a meeting tent, a portable sanctuary where God would dwell among the people as they traveled. Building it would take gold and silver work, carved wood, cut gemstones, and woven cloth. For generations, though, Israel's labor had belonged to Pharaoh. Exodus tells us the Egyptians made their lives miserable with hard work in mortar and brick, and slaves had little chance to learn fine craftsmanship.

God supplied what they lacked. God filled a man named Bezalel "with skill, ability, and knowledge for every kind of work," appointed Oholiab to work beside him, and gave skill to every worker who would help. That skill came with a purpose. God gave it so they could build the place where God would dwell among all the people, a tent at the center of the camp where the whole community could worship.

Adam Hamilton, writing about what we were created for, says we were made "to love God and to love our neighbors as ourselves" and "to care for our families and those in need."* He describes following Jesus as saying to God, "Here I am, all of me! I'm yours. Put me to work." Adam applies this to our money and possessions, and it holds just as true for our abilities. The skills God has placed in us, whether teaching, building, organizing, cooking, or caring for someone who is sick, are meant to be put to work for that same purpose of loving God, loving our neighbors, and caring for those who need it.

The skilled workers at Sinai showed that the gifts God gives us come with a purpose. God equips us first, and God's purpose for those gifts reaches far beyond us to the people God loves. We're called to put our abilities to work in service of that purpose, using what we know how to do and what God has blessed us with to love God and care for the people around us.

- God gave the workers at Sinai their skill so they could build something for the whole community. As you think about the abilities God has given you, which ones have you thought of mostly in terms of your own work or plans, and how might God want to use one of them to love and serve others?
- God gave the workers skill so the whole community could gather to worship. Who in your family, your church, or your community could be helped by something you know how to do, and what step could you take this week to offer it?

Prayer: God, every ability I have came from you, and you gave each one for a reason. Here I am, all of me. Put my skills to work loving you and caring for the people around me. Keep me from treating my gifts as mine alone, and make me generous with what I know how to do. Amen.

* Adam Hamilton, Enough: Discovering Joy through Simplicity and Generosity, rev. ed. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2012), 38.

Faithful with Little

THURSDAY 11.5.26 Luke 16:10-12

"Whoever is faithful with little is also faithful with much, and the one who is dishonest with little is also dishonest with much. If you haven't been faithful with worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? If you haven't been faithful with someone else's property, who will give you your own?"

Jesus had been spending time with tax collectors and people everyone else called sinners, and he told a series of stories about God's joy over what was lost and then found. Then he turned to his disciples and told one more, about the manager of a rich man's estate who was accused of wasting his master's property and was about to lose his job.

Managers like that were common in Jesus' world. A wealthy landowner might put one person in charge of his fields, his tenants, his debts, and his accounts. The manager could buy, sell, and make agreements in the owner's name, yet none of it belonged to him. His entire job came down to whether the owner could trust him with what was someone else's.

When the story ended, Jesus drew a lesson from it for his disciples. "Whoever is faithful with little is also faithful with much," he said, and then he paired "little" with worldly wealth and "much" with true riches. The true riches were the gifts of God's kingdom, the grace and life God offers freely. Faithfulness with worldly wealth can be practiced with any amount, and someone stretching every dollar to make it through the month is as much a steward of God's gifts as someone with plenty. Jesus also called the wealth in his disciples' hands "someone else's property." N. T. Wright, a New Testament scholar and former Anglican bishop, sums up the passage this way, "Money is not a possession, it's a trust."* Even what the disciples earned and saved had been placed in their care by God, to be handled the way a faithful manager handles an owner's estate.

That gives weight to the ordinary ways we handle money. Paying a bill on time, returning the extra change a cashier hands us by mistake, deciding what to do with what's left at the end of the month, these small decisions are where faithfulness takes shape. None of them earn God's grace, which God has already given. They show what we treasure, and over time they train our hearts to care for every gift God has placed in our hands.

Jesus was teaching his disciples that faithfulness with money is a small, daily practice that reveals what we treasure most. Everything we hold belongs to God, who has already given us riches far greater than anything in our bank accounts. We're called to handle what God has placed in our care with honesty and faithfulness, in the small decisions as much as the large ones.

- Jesus called money the "little" compared to the true riches of God's kingdom. What small, everyday money decision in front of you right now could become a place to practice faithfulness with what belongs to God?
- The true riches Jesus spoke of are gifts of God's grace, given before we've done anything to deserve them. Where have you experienced those riches in your own life, and what do they show you about what matters most?

Prayer: God, everything I hold belongs to you, and you have already given me riches far greater than anything I own. Thank you for your grace, which I could never earn. Help me be faithful in the small, ordinary decisions about money that fill my days. Keep my heart set on the true riches of your kingdom. Amen.

* N. T. Wright, Luke for Everyone (London: SPCK, 2001), section "Teachings on Stewardship," on Luke 16:10–18.

Good Managers of God's Gifts

FRIDAY 11.6.26 1 Peter 4:8-11

Above all, show sincere love to each other, because love brings about the forgiveness of many sins. Open your homes to each other without complaining. And serve each other according to the gift each person has received, as good managers of God's diverse gifts. Whoever speaks should do so as those who speak God's word. Whoever serves should do so from the strength that God furnishes. Do this so that in everything God may be honored through Jesus Christ. To him be honor and power forever and always. Amen.

Peter wrote this letter to small communities of Christians scattered across what is now Turkey. Many of them had once joined their neighbors in the town's festivals and celebrations, and when they stopped, their neighbors were surprised and began to insult them. They were a small, suspected minority, and Peter warned them that harder days were still ahead.

In a season like that, the natural response would be to pull in, protect what you have, and keep to yourself. Peter asked them to do the opposite and share. He asked them to love each other sincerely, to welcome one another, and to serve each other with whatever gifts they had received, whether that meant teaching, encouraging, providing a meal, or caring for someone in need. Many of them had little to spare, and Peter knew generosity could easily be offered with a sigh. So he asked them to give without complaining.

Peter also gave them a reason. He called them "good managers of God's diverse gifts." Their time, their resources, and their ability to speak or to serve had all come from God, entrusted to them for a time, and even the strength to serve came from God. A good manager uses what belongs to the owner the way the owner intends, and God intended these gifts for the people around them. When these early believers shared what they had been given, their ordinary lives became places where God was honored.

Peter was showing these early believers that even in uncertain times, the gifts God gives us are meant to be shared. Everything we have to offer is God's grace given to us first, and God supplies the strength to share it. We're called to share our time, our resources, and our care gladly, managing God's gifts so they reach the people God loves.

- Peter's readers were facing uncertain days, and he still asked them to share what they had. When life feels uncertain for you, what do you tend to hold onto most tightly, and what would it take to trust God enough to share it?
- The strength to serve is something God supplies, along with the gifts themselves. Where do you need to rely on God's strength right now to share something you've been given, whether your time, your money, or your care?

Prayer: God, everything I have to share came from your grace first. When life feels uncertain and I'm tempted to hold on tightly, give me the trust to open my hands. Supply the strength I need to serve, and make my giving glad. Let what I share bring honor to you. Amen.

A Grateful Response to God

SATURDAY 11.7.26 Psalm 116:12-14

What can I give back to the LORD for all the good things he has done for me? I'll lift up the cup of salvation. I'll call on the LORD's name. I'll keep the promises I made to the LORD in the presence of all God's people.

The Psalms include many of David's poems, prayers, and songs. They also include the writings of other people who prayed to God. The author of Psalm 116 nearly died. "Death's ropes bound me," the psalmist wrote, describing trouble and grief so heavy it felt as if the grave itself had found him. In that moment he cried out, "LORD, please save me!" and God rescued him.

Safe again, the psalmist asked a question anyone who has been rescued might ask, "What can I give back to the LORD for all the good things he has done for me?" There was no way to repay a gift like his own life, and nothing he owned could balance the scales. So, he answered with what he could offer. He would lift up the cup of salvation, call on the LORD's name, and keep the promises he had made, in front of all God's people.

That cup was likely part of a thanksgiving offering. Under the law, someone who had been delivered from danger could bring an offering to the temple and then share a meal from it with family and friends. At that meal, the grateful person would lift a cup, give thanks to God, and tell everyone gathered what God had done. The psalmist's response to God's goodness was worship, a shared table, and gratitude spoken out loud.

This is where stewardship begins. Our lives, our abilities, our relationships, and our money all come from God, and none of it could ever be paid back. God doesn't ask us to try. God invites us to respond with gratitude, to call on God's name, to keep our promises, and to share what we've been given with others. Faithful stewardship is gratitude taking hold of our daily choices.

The psalmist was showing that the fitting response to God's goodness is a grateful life offered back to God. God gives first and gives more than we could ever return. We're called to answer that generosity by caring for what God has entrusted to us, keeping our promises to God, and sharing gladly with the people around us.

- Think about a time God carried you through a hard season. How did you respond afterward, and how might gratitude for that moment shape the way you use what God has given you now?
- Making a promise to God in front of others can turn gratitude into commitment. What is one commitment you sense God inviting you to make about how you'll care for what you've been given, and who could you share it with?

Prayer: Generous God, every good thing in my life began with you. Thank you for your goodness to me, in the seasons I remember and the ones I've forgotten. Let my gratitude shape how I care for my time, my abilities, my relationships, and my money. Make my whole life a grateful answer to all you have done for me. Amen.