



Introduction: Today we are thinking about what 'Intentional Discipleship' means in relation to our assets: how we are to think about them and how we are to use them. The last few chapters of 1 Chronicles have an elderly King David making preparations for handing over the Kingship of Israel to his son Solomon, whose main task was to build a magnificent temple to house the Ark of the Covenant and provide a permanent place of worship for God's people. Chapter 29 begins with David himself being extraordinarily generous in providing resources for the building of the temple and then asking the leaders of the people to follow his example: they responded incredibly willingly and David rejoiced and praised the Lord: Read **1 Chronicles 29: 10-14**.

1. David praises God's generosity.

- Verses 11-13 are a list of God's assets: explore some of them by turning David's nouns in verse 11 into adjectives, eg: God is great
- See what he does with His assets in verse 12. We should come to the conclusion that God shares His assets with us!
- And, verse 11, His assets include '**Everything in heaven and earth**' God has Kingdom Authority.
- Verse 14: How had the Israelites been able to give so generously towards the temple building?

'Everything comes from You and we have given You only what comes from Your hand.'

2. Our assets.

- What do we value most? It might be our home, our car, our private space, our health, our strength, our wealth, a musical instrument, a boat, a second home, our holidays, our relationship with someone special.
- Whatever the answer(s), they all come from God and ultimately belong to Him. They are on loan to us and meant to be for sharing generously with the help of God's grace at work within us. If we ignore God's hospitable heart and become possessive of our blessings, they become burdens. *Martyn Percy*
- And we often find that really generous giving is generously rewarded. **2 Corinthians 9:6; 8:9, 13-15.**

3. Our attitudes.

- Keeping **verse 14b** in mind should help us to develop generous attitudes towards our possessions:
 - a) "I shall possess my material possessions – they shall not possess me." *E Stanley Jones 1884-1973*
 - b) God doesn't bless us to raise our standard of living, but to raise our standard of giving.
 - c) The greatest blessing of a gift or blessing is the ability to bless others because of it.
- We need to be thinking about what we can do with our assets, like God does. His love is biased towards the poor: **Isaiah 58: 6-7. Luke 1: 46 (or 52) – 55.**
- Jesus tells us not to worry about our assets as long as we live according to His values: **Luke 12: 22-31**

'..Do not worry about your life your Father knows your needs seek His Kingdom and these things will be given to you as well.'

4. David prays for Godly integrity 1 Chronicles 29: 17-18

- Going back to our reading and on a bit further: David prays that the Israelites' desire to give willingly and generously would always be in their hearts and that God would keep them loyal to Him for ever.
- Giving should always happen with 'honest intent.' Cf, **Malachi 3:10.**

Questions for discussion

1. What do we think of as our assets? Is there anything we find difficult to share, or would really hate to lose?
2. Is my Bank Statement really a 'Theological Statement' of who I am?
3. Has anyone any examples from their experience of the joy of generosity either as a giver or as a receiver?
4. Do we find it easy to rely on God and not worry about material possessions in 21st century Britain?
5. The Church Centre and the manner of its funding is often a source of amazement to visitors: has the experience of being willingly generous stayed in our hearts?
6. When asked how we should respond to such a demanding gospel, Brother Roger of Taizé said, "Il ne demande pas trop – mais il demande tout." 'He doesn't ask too much – but he asks for everything.' What did he mean?