

***“Where Is Your Treasure?”***

Rev. Robert Wade

October 24, 2010

Matthew 6:19-21

II Corinthians 9:1-8

In last week’s classic Stewardship Minute for Mission, *Jeff Adam* began, ***“Once again we have come to the season of Stewardship at Fairmont....”*** At which point *Lisa Shearer*, who was seated in a pew, interrupted Jeff and said, ***“Oh, great....here we go again....”*** However, Jeff continued, ***“We want to talk to you this morning about your giving to the church....”*** Lisa responded, ***“bla, bla, bla....of course you do.”*** Then she made the point that the church is always talking about money.

I have a hunch that most people would agree with Lisa that we talk too much about money in the church. However, I don’t think we talk enough about money. I am in good company to say that because Jesus raised the issue of money more than any subject except the Kingdom of God. About one third of Jesus’ parables (16 of 38) refer to money and possessions. Remember *The Rich Fool, The Valuable Pearl, The Wise and Foolish Builders, The Widow’s Mite?*

Could it be that Jesus talked about money and possessions so often because..

- ....Jesus knew money is like a window into our heart...a window that reveals what we truly value and what is most important to us
- ....Jesus knew money has potential to be a blessing or a curse
- ....Jesus knew there is a fundamental connection between our inner spiritual life and our beliefs and actions toward money and possessions

Yes, Jesus often talked about money. But we, on the other hand, often ignore money issues believing that money is a private matter and, therefore, should not be mentioned in church. Believing that money is a serious spiritual matter and desiring to follow in Jesus’ steps today my sermon is all about money. I apologize that we have not talked about finances more in the past and my hope is that this sermon will teach you something new about how money is handled here at Fairmont and that, guests and members alike, will receive new clarity on the spiritual importance of money. One of Jesus’ basic money statements is found in the Gospel of Matthew. (blue insert...let’s read Matthew 6:19-21 together)

<sup>19</sup>“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; <sup>20</sup>but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup>For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” The Word of the Lord!

Jesus makes it clear that some treasures will not last very long but, on the other hand, some treasures will last into all eternity. We love our cars, homes, 401Ks, physical bodies and we invest time and money in them. Connie and I just had carpet laid in our home. That was a personal stewardship decision with which we are pleased. But Jesus calls us to remember that someday our homes, cars, 401Ks, bodies and the carpet we have laid will be gone. However, there is a treasure that will last forever.

Jesus traveled the dusty roads of Palestine to teach that the treasure that lasts forever is worship, relational commitments, helping others and making a difference. Lasting treasure is about investing in faith, love, mercy, justice and acts of kindness. Jesus not only taught about lasting treasure, he gave his life to show what lasts forever.....sacrificial love for others.

As we focus on what Fairmont treasures I encourage you to also translate these treasures to your personal life. *Where is your treasure?*

### **Fairmont Treasures Worship and Music**

Worship is the heart of the church. As worship beats so goes the life of the church. Fairmont treasures worship and music....always has and, I trust, always will. In November 2006 our church received a wonderful gift from a family in our church who desired to see the worship and music of Fairmont enhanced. They gave \$100,000, with no strings attached, to be used especially in the area of music.

Their gift came at the perfect time. By the Fall of 2007 we had launched the 8:30 Casual service and *Matt Fleming* was paid out of this fund to lead the music in that service. Since that time a portion of *Meghan Wakeley* and, now, all of *Jerry Mahn's* salary has been paid out of this fund. Jerry Mahn, our current Praise Band leader, is God's gift to Fairmont through the gracious stewardship of one family. (*Thank Jerry and Praise Band*)

The Worship Team, which manages this fund, also decided several years ago to enhance the Chancel Choir by paying sectional leaders from this fund. We currently have two sectional leaders for each area: soprano, alto, tenor and bass. Our sectional leaders are God's gift to Fairmont through the gracious stewardship of one family. (*Thank Choir, Hank and Judy*)

The Worship and Music Enhancement Fund came at the right time and has been a wonderful gift to our entire church. Jerry Mahn's Praise Band leadership and our sectional leaders in the Chancel Choir have greatly enhanced the worship and music ministry of our church. We have been blessed and I thank God for the family who treasured worship and music so much that they gifted our church with \$100,000.

**1. In 2006, \$100,000 was given by a family in our church to enhance the music and worship of Fairmont. How much remains in the Worship and Music Enhancement Fund?**

- a. \$10,345   b. 28,967   c. **\$35,518**   d. \$56,700

From day one the intention was to use this gift as a shot in the arm for the music ministry of Fairmont. The fund has certainly accomplished this purpose! But the reality is that this fund will be depleted by the end of 2011.

Because Fairmont treasures worship and music, our Session wants to make it very clear that we have a stewardship opportunity by beginning to fund the Praise Band leader and our sectional leaders through our 2011 budget. This will obviously require an increase in our financial support.

### **Fairmont Treasures Its Building**

We are proud of our building and the care we give it shows that our building is one of our treasures. Maintaining and improving a building costs money.

**2. True or False**

*In 2010 the congregation's pledges paid for carpet in the Chapel, blinds in the Fellowship Hall, renovation of the front steps, refurbishing of the Women's bathroom and our pledges will pay for the electronic sign.*

By now I trust that you know that *all* of our major improvements are financed by our Endowment Income Fund. Years ago, our faithful members gave their money to establish an Endowment Fund so that the income from that fund could be used to pay for major improvements. We are blessed that your pledges and regular giving do *not* have to be used for these major improvements.

Just a parenthetical word or two about the electronic sign. As you look at the list of improvements we have made in 2010 all of them are for our convenience except the electronic sign. The sign will be there for the community.....to share with the community all that is happening here at Fairmont with the hope that people will come and discover that this is a great place for them. Many have asked, “how can we attract younger people to our church.” If we know one thing about the younger generation we know they are wired...texting, twitter, iPads, iPhones, and computers are second nature to them. Could it be that the Session and Trustees’ vision to wire Fairmont with an electronic sign might catch the attention of some who would never have given us a second thought? I have yet to hear any complaints about the women’s bathroom but I have heard complaints about a sign that isn’t even in place yet. Let’s trust our leaders!

### 3. True or False

*It takes a 2/3 vote of both the Trustees and the Session to approve expenditures from the Endowment Income Fund.*

	<u>Trustees</u>		<u>Session</u>
Oliver Beardmore	Lois Thomas	Ken Ginader	Jim Getty
Jeffrey Jordan	Paul Lamberger	Melissa Hohler	Linda Yoder
John Haas	Glen Kershner	Ken MacKenzie	Kim Gunlock
Joyce Keenan	Richard Sherwood	Annette Sakada	Sue Merrell
Verne Dodson	Martha Taylor	Lisa Shearer	Kerri Miles
Bill Lowry		Wally Taylor	Karen Sensel
		Jeff Adam	Robin Stevens
		Dave Youngerman	Sally Athmer
		Omar Bolivar	

### 4. True or False

*The Session develops the budget.*

### **Fairmont Treasures Mission**

Mission is as essential to the Church as milk is to cereal and Fairmont has always been a mission oriented church. If the church is not engaged in reaching out beyond its walls through evangelism, good works and justice ministries we are not being the church. Even today you heard Dave Youngerman speak of next Sunday's Fifth Sunday Offering that will go to the Kettering Police Foundation. Our Mission Team does a good job in keeping before us both "hands on" and financial opportunities to be involved in mission.

Jesus reminds us of our calling to minister to the hungry, stranger, sick, homeless, and those in prison by saying, "...*just as you did it to one of the least of these you did it to me.*" (Matthew 25:40)

#### **5. True or False**

*The Endowment Income Fund can be used for mission.*

*As the next couple of questions relate to the 2011 proposed budget let me remind you that the word proposed is underlined as a reminder that the 2011 budget will not be finalized until January after we have the results of our stewardship opportunity.*

**6. In 2010 Fairmont's budget for mission was \$78,000. In the proposed 2011 budget, Session is recommending how much for mission?**

- a. \$65,800   b. \$78,000   c. \$86,500   **d. \$99,500**

### **Fairmont Treasures Staff**

**7. In the proposed 2011 budget, Session is recommending what percentage salary increase for staff?**

- a. 0%**                      b. 1%                      c. 2%                      d. 3%

I have visited with each staff member and every member of our staff recognizes the reality of our times and accepts the salary freeze for 2011. We have a gifted staff and they do feel treasured by our church.

## Fairmont Treasures Financial Stewardship

<b>Giving Levels</b>	<b>Pledge Units</b>	
\$1 to \$200	14	
\$201 to \$500	33	
\$501 to \$800	31	
\$801 to \$1200	47	54% give 1200 and under
\$1201 to \$1800	23	64% give 1800 and under
\$1801 to \$2500	25	75% give 2500 and under
\$2501 to \$3500	22	
\$3501 to \$4500	14	
\$4501 to \$6000	9	
\$6001 to \$7500	4	
\$7501 to \$9000	3	
\$9001 to \$10,500	3	
over \$10,501	2	
	Total 230 out of a potential of 357	

### **8. The Session is challenging our members to increase their 2011 pledge/giving by:**

- a. 5%                      b. 7%                      c. 10%                      d. 17%

A couple of weeks ago Connie and I took our daughter, Carrie, and her husband out to eat at Harriagan's Pub. We had a delightful time. Our total bill came to \$70.69 which included four hamburgers, 10 chicken wings, six beers and a generous tip. Seventy bucks! As you look at the giving levels you will see that there are 31 giving units (husband/wife or a single adult) pledging between \$501 and \$800 per year. If you are in that giving range, it will cost you 4 hamburgers, 10 chicken wings, 6 beers and a generous tip to increase your pledge by 10%.

Because I treasure my time with family, I gladly paid for the burgers and beer. It was worth every dollar! Our session believes that you treasure Fairmont and is asking that you prayerfully consider increasing your giving by 10%.

At the same time we are aware there are people out of work, the economy is moving at a snail's pace, and the recession has taken its toll on everyone. Some, here at Fairmont, have been hit harder than others and our Session does not want anyone feeling guilty into giving more than you *prayerfully* believe you can. The 10% is a good faith challenge that our Session believes is possible for many of our members.

**9. At the October 19, 2010 Session meeting 15 Elders offered their 2011 pledge and their pledge increase averaged what percentage?**

- a. 4%      b. 9%      c. 15%      **d. 18%**

I also offered my pledged during the session meeting and want you to know that Connie and I are increasing our pledge by 17% for 2011. I tell you this so that you will know that I am not asking you to do something I'm not willing to do myself.

Paul sums it up best.....

*<sup>6</sup>The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. <sup>7</sup>Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. (II Corinthians 9:6-7)*

You will soon be receiving your pledge card in the mail. Thank you for seeking God concerning your 2011 pledge. I sincerely hope you will come to worship on November 7<sup>th</sup> and will cheerfully consecrate your treasure to the glory of God and the blessing of our church. Let us commit ourselves to pull together in this stewardship opportunity! To symbolize our unity and our reliance upon God, I invite you to pray our Stewardship prayer together:

**Loving God, I come to you in thanksgiving knowing that all I am and all I have are gifts from you. In faith and love, help me to do your will. I am listening. Lord God-speak your words into the depth of my soul, that I may hear you clearly. I offer to you this day all the facets of my life, whether at home, at work, or at school-to be patient, to be merciful, to be generous, to be holy. Give me the wisdom and insight to understand your will for me and the fervor to carry out my good intentions. I offer my gifts of time, talent and treasure to you as a true act of faith, and to reflect my love for you and my neighbor. Help me to reach out to others as you, my God, have reached out to me through Jesus Christ. Amen.**