

Faithful in Little, Faithful in Much

Scripture: Luke 16:10-13; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2

August 23, 2026 - Week 4 of Sermon Series: *"Fruitful Stewards"*

Key Sentence: *God does not ask us to be impressive; God asks us to be faithful with what has been placed in our hands.*

Grace and peace to you in the name of God our Father, our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ, today we come to the fourth week of our August sermon series, *"Fruitful Stewards: Faithful with All God Has Given."* During these past weeks, God has been leading us step by step.

In the first week, we learned that *everything belongs to God*. Our lives, our time, our abilities, our money, our buildings, and our resources are all gifts entrusted to us by God.

In the second week, Jesus reminded us, *"Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."* We learned that our financial choices are spiritual choices because our treasure quietly leads our hearts.

And last Sunday, we reflected on *honoring God with the firstfruits*. We remembered the Giver. We were invited to give God our first and best. And through the image of the harvest, we remembered this important truth: *"Today's harvest contains tomorrow's seed."*

Today Jesus brings us to another simple but powerful teaching. He says, *"Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much."*

This verse speaks to every Christian, but I believe it speaks especially beautifully to those who have already lived many years, worked many years, raised families, served churches, experienced loss, and learned to trust God through many seasons.

Sometimes, as life changes, we may quietly ask, *"Can I still do something important for God?"* My strength is not what it used to be. My responsibilities have changed. My income may be different. My children are grown. I am retired. I cannot do what I did thirty years ago.

But Jesus does not ask, *"How much can you still do?"* Jesus asks, *"Can you be faithful with what is in your hands today?"*

So today I would like us to reflect on three movements:

First, God Values Faithfulness More Than Size

Second, Faithfulness Changes with the Seasons of Life

Third, Faithful Stewardship Prepares Something for Others

The key sentence for today is this:

"God does not ask us to be impressive; God asks us to be faithful with what has been placed in our hands."

First, God Values Faithfulness More Than Size

People often measure life by size. How big was your house? How much did you earn? How successful was your career? How many people attended? How large was the offering? How successful was the program? We live in a culture that often celebrates what is bigger, faster, richer, and more impressive.

But Jesus measures differently. Jesus says, *"Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much."*

The important word here is **faithful**. The Greek word is **pistos**. It means **faithful**, trustworthy, dependable. That is enough for us to remember. Jesus is not asking, "Were you impressive?" Jesus is asking, "Were you **faithful**?"

God sees the person who gives faithfully what they can. God sees the caregiver who quietly serves another person day after day. God sees the prayer no one else hears. God sees the person who has worshiped faithfully for many years. God sees the widow or widower who continues trusting God through loneliness. God sees the older member who can no longer do everything physically but still prays for the church.

God sees the person who sends a card. God sees the person who calls someone who is lonely. God sees the person who quietly says, "I am praying for you." Sometimes the things God notices most are the things the world barely notices.

Many of you have served the church for decades. You have been elders and deacons. You have taught Sunday school. You have sung in choirs. You have prepared meals. You have repaired buildings. You have served on committees. You have given offerings. You have welcomed pastors and said goodbye to pastors. You have worshiped through joyful seasons, and you have remained through difficult seasons.

Your name may never appear in a history book. But God knows. God remembers. And God values faithfulness.

"The world celebrates what is impressive. God celebrates what is faithful."

This applies to our congregations too. We may compare ourselves with larger churches. They may have more people, more children, more staff, larger budgets, or newer buildings. But perhaps God is not asking CPC Plainview or CPC Rochester, "Why are you not as large as another church?" Perhaps God is asking, "Are you faithful with the people I have given you?"

Are we faithful with the children we have? Are we faithful with the older adults we have? Are we faithful with the buildings we have? Are we faithful with the financial resources we have? Are we faithful with the opportunities God places before us?

A small church can make a great difference when it is faithful. A small gift can become a great blessing when it is offered faithfully. A small prayer can carry someone through a difficult week. A small act of kindness can change someone's day. God does not ask everyone to do something spectacular. God asks us to be **pistos - faithful**.

Second, Faithfulness Changes with the Seasons of Life

Jesus says, *"Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much."* Another important word in this verse is *"very little."* The Greek word is **elachistos**. It means very little, very small, or least. That is beautiful because Jesus does not overlook the little things.

And as we grow older, sometimes what we are able to do may feel smaller than what we once did. Life has seasons. There is a season to learn. A season to build. A season to work. A season to raise children. A

season to lead. And there is also a season to slow down. But slowing down does not mean becoming spiritually useless.

Some of you cannot do today what you did thirty years ago. But perhaps God is not asking you to do what you did thirty years ago. God is asking you to be faithful with what you have today.

Perhaps twenty years ago your stewardship was physical labor. You moved tables. You repaired things. You worked all day and still came to an evening church meeting. Today may be different. Perhaps today your stewardship is prayer. Perhaps thirty years ago your stewardship was raising children. Today it may be encouraging grandchildren. Perhaps forty years ago you gave energy. Today you may give wisdom.

Perhaps you once served as Session chair. Today you may sit beside a visitor and help that person feel at home. Perhaps you once taught Sunday school every week. Today you may simply tell a child, "I'm glad you are here."

That may sound **elachistos - very little**. But Jesus says that faithfulness in the little matters. A prayer may look small. A telephone call may look small. A card may look small. A quiet offering may look small. A conversation over coffee may look small. But in God's hands, small acts of faithfulness can become great blessings.

Think about a seed. A seed is small. You can hold it between two fingers. But inside that little seed is life. The seed is planted. For a while, nobody sees anything. But something is happening. Then a plant appears. Then fruit. Then more seed. And what looked small becomes part of a harvest.

That is often how God works: little things, faithfully offered, repeated over many years. And eventually God produces something much larger than we could see at the beginning.

Faith itself is often like that. A lifetime with Jesus is made from many little acts: coming to worship, praying, giving, serving, forgiving, beginning again, and trusting God one more day.

"We may retire from employment, but Christians never retire from discipleship."

Imagine someone who has worked all their life. For forty or fifty years, the alarm clock rang early. The job needed them. There were responsibilities, children to raise, and bills to pay. Then retirement comes. Suddenly the alarm clock does not need to ring at 5:30. The office does not need you. The farm may change hands. The children have their own homes. Someone else now holds the position you once held.

And that change can create a deep question: *"If I am no longer doing what I used to do, what is my purpose now?"*

The gospel gives us a beautiful answer: Your identity was never your job. You were a child of God before retirement. You are a child of God after retirement. And God still has gifts in your hands. Maybe different gifts, but still valuable.

Perhaps you now have something younger people desperately need: time to listen, experience, perspective, patience, prayer, wisdom, and a testimony. You can say, "I have been through difficult seasons, and God was faithful."

"As our strength changes, our calling may change - but our opportunity for faithfulness remains."

Retirement can be not only the end of a career, but the beginning of a different kind of ministry.

Third, Faithful Stewardship Prepares Something for Others

By the time we reach later seasons of life, stewardship begins to include another question. Not simply, "What do I need?" but, "What can I leave behind?"

There is another biblical word that helps us. The Greek word for *a steward or manager* is **oikonomos**. An **oikonomos** is someone who manages what belongs to another. The steward says, "This has been entrusted to me. How can I use it faithfully?"

That has been the foundation of our August series. Everything belongs to God. We receive. We care for what God gives. We use it. And eventually, we pass something on.

Last Sunday we talked about harvest and seed. *A mature crop is not only evidence of yesterday's planting. It also contains seed for tomorrow.* The same is true of a faithful Christian life.

What are we leaving behind? Not only money. Not only property. Not only a church building. But *faith. Wisdom. Prayer. Character. Generosity. Stories of God's faithfulness.*

Think about our churches. Many people who helped build CPC Plainview and CPC Rochester are no longer here. Yet we are sitting today in the fruit of their faithfulness. Someone gave. Someone prayed. Someone taught. Someone repaired. Someone served. Someone remained when the future was uncertain. Someone believed that there should still be a church here for another generation.

We inherited their faithfulness. Now the question becomes: *What will the next generation inherit from us?*

Will they inherit only a building? Or will they inherit a living faith? Will they inherit only financial accounts? Or will they inherit a generous spirit? Will they inherit only traditions? Or will they understand why Jesus Christ mattered enough that previous generations sacrificed for his church?

"The greatest inheritance we can leave is not simply what is in our accounts, but what is planted in another person's faith."

Perhaps your legacy is telling your grandchildren, "Let me tell you how God has been faithful to me." Perhaps it is praying for them by name. Perhaps it is encouraging a younger person in the church. Perhaps it is sharing wisdom without trying to control the future. Perhaps it is supporting children's and youth ministry. Perhaps it is preparing financial resources so that ministry continues after we are gone.

Perhaps it is simply giving the next generation room to serve Jesus in ways that may look different from the way we served him. Every generation faces a different world. Our responsibility is not to make the next generation exactly like us. Our responsibility is to help them become faithful followers of Jesus Christ.

That is faithful stewardship. For both CPC Plainview and CPC Rochester, Jesus' question is not, "How much do you have?" Jesus' question is, *"Are you faithful with what you have?"*

Can we faithfully welcome the people God sends? Can we faithfully teach the children we have? Can we faithfully care for our older members? Can we faithfully support our communities? Can we faithfully manage our finances? Can we faithfully use our buildings for ministry? Can we faithfully prepare for those who will come after us?

"God has not called us to be the biggest church in Plainview or Rochester. God has called us to be a faithful church."

Christ Is Faithful to Us

And finally, my brothers and sisters, our faithfulness is always a response to the faithfulness of Jesus Christ. We are not faithful enough to save ourselves. There have been times when we failed, times when we were afraid, times when we made poor decisions, and times when our faith was weak.

Our hope cannot rest upon how perfectly faithful we have been. Our hope rests upon the faithfulness of Christ.

Jesus remained faithful when his disciples abandoned him. Faithful through rejection. Faithful through suffering. Faithful even unto the cross. And God remained faithful by raising Jesus Christ from the dead.

Our salvation rests not upon our perfect faithfulness. It rests upon the grace and faithfulness of Jesus Christ. And because Christ has been faithful to us, we can offer whatever remains of our lives faithfully to him.

Whether we have fifty years ahead or five years - whether we have much or little - whether we can run or only walk - whether we can lead or quietly pray - there is still something we can place into God's hands.

Conclusion

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ, Jesus says, "Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much."

So remember these three truths. First, God values faithfulness more than size. Be *pistos* - *faithful*. The world celebrates what is impressive. God celebrates what is faithful.

Second, faithfulness changes with the seasons of life. Do not despise the *elachistos* - *the little thing*. A prayer. A word. A gift. A visit. A testimony. In God's hands, little things can carry great blessing.

Third, faithful stewardship prepares something for others. We are *oikonomoi* - *stewards*. What God has placed in our hands is not meant to end with us. Some of it must become seed for those who come after us.

And especially to those who have already served Christ for many years: Your calling is not finished. Your ministry may look different. Your strength may be different. Your responsibilities may be different. But your faithfulness still matters.

So let us ask: "*What has God placed in my hands today?*" Not twenty years ago. Not ten years ago. Today. And then: "*How can I use it faithfully?*"

For we may retire from our careers, but we never retire from following Jesus. May we be faithful in little. May we be faithful in much. May CPC Plainview be faithful. May CPC Rochester be faithful.

And by the grace of our faithful Lord Jesus Christ, may everything God places in our hands today become a blessing for those who come after us tomorrow.

For God does not ask us to be impressive. God asks us to be faithful.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Reference Notes

1. The Holy Bible, New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition, Luke 16:10-13; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2.
2. Society of Biblical Literature Greek New Testament, Luke 16:1, 10-13; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2.
3. Joel B. Green, The Gospel of Luke, New International Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997, commentary on Luke 16.
4. Darrell L. Bock, Luke 9:51-24:53, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1996, commentary on Luke 16.
5. Douglas John Hall, The Steward: A Biblical Symbol Come of Age. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990.
6. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Book of Order 2025-2027, F-1.0304, "The Great Ends of the Church."