

# THE THEOLOGY OF STUFF: OWNERSHIP VS STEWARDSHIP

## STEWARDSHIP SERIES

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PSALM 24:1



### GOD OWNS WHAT I THINK I OWN.

Q: What is stewardship?

A: Faithfully looking after another's possessions.

Q: Upon what basis can we say we don't actually own anything?

A: Because God created the planet and everything it contains: A creator owns his creation – Psalm 24:1 *The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein.*

Psalm 89:11-12b

*The heavens are yours; the earth also is yours; the world and all that is in it, you have founded them. <sup>12</sup> The north and the south, you have created them.*

Exodus 9:27-30

*Then Pharaoh sent and called Moses and Aaron and said to them, "This time I have sinned; the LORD is in the right, and I and my people are in the wrong. <sup>28</sup> Plead with the LORD, for there has been enough of God's thunder and hail. I will let you go, and you shall stay no longer." <sup>29</sup> Moses said to him, "As soon as I have gone out of the city, I will stretch out my hands to the LORD. The thunder will cease, and there will be no more hail, so that you may know that the earth is the LORD's. <sup>30</sup> But as for you and your servants, I know that you do not yet fear the LORD God."*

Deuteronomy 10:12-14

*And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, <sup>13</sup> and to keep the commandments and statutes of the LORD, which I am commanding you today for your good? <sup>14</sup> Behold, to the LORD your God belong heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth with all that is in it.*

### Differences between Ownership & Stewardship

- Ownership: "My stuff is my stuff. The buck stops with **me**." vs. Stewardship: "I don't ultimately own anything. I did not create myself. My stuff is God's stuff given to me to steward for Him. Everything I have is ultimately His. The buck stops with God."
- Ownership: "**Security** comes from enough stuff so I must protect my stuff." vs. Stewardship: "Security comes from God, not stuff. Therefore, I can be **generous** with my stuff."

- Ownership leads to **chronic** dissatisfaction vs. Stewardship leads to guilt-free **enjoyment** of all good things.
- Ownership guarantees flat-lined value that never rises above my own **pursuits** vs. Stewardship creates **exponential** value that taps into God's economy.

### Action steps

- 1) Commit your skills & stuff to God.
- 2) Begin to share your skills & stuff with God's work through His local church.