“Every beast of the forest is Mine, the cattle on a thousand hills.” Psalm 50:10

“The earth is the Lord’s, and all that it contains, the world, and all those that dwell in it.” Psalm 24:1

It is a Biblical fact the God is the sole owner of all the resources in His material universe. God’s word reveals a divine-human partnership in the stewardship process. God owns everything – He is the “Senior Partner” and gives the orders. Man manages what God owns – he is the “Junior Partner” and carries out the will of the Senior Partner!

Illustration: Owning vs. renting. The rented home is never ours, it belongs to someone else – to the owner. As renters, we manage another person’s property. We live in it, care for it, clean it, and maintain it – but it’s not ours. The title is someone else’s name. It’s the same way with all the resources of the universe….THE TITLE IS IN HIS NAME!

Our society is obsessed with ownership. People stress themselves out working overtime just so they can own something. They think, “If I could just own _________, then I would be doing great.” There is a myth in our culture today that is blatantly untrue. It goes something like this, “Non-owners are nobodies. Owners are somebodies.” Ownership in our society seems to be synonymous with success.

What do you think motivates people to become obsessed with ownership?

List reasons you can think of why people work so hard to own their possessions:

How important is owning things to you? Your family? Your friends?

Think about something you wanted and how you pursued ownership of it. Were you happy when you finally “owned” it. Why or why not?
Do you think Christians should strive to own things? Make a list of the pros and cons of ownership:

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

Listen, home ownership or having possessions is not unreasonable, it’s the American Dream, for goodness sake! But in light of God’s Word, as a believer even when you “own” something, do you really own it? Are you really, in truth, the owner – is it really yours?

In the natural, your name may be on the title, but in the Kingdom (where things really count) God is the rightful owner and we are the daily, on-site managers of His house. As Christians, we belong to God. Everything we have also belongs to God because He owns everything!

The earth and all it contains belongs to ___________. (Psalm 24:1)

Look at Psalm 89:11. According to that verse, God owns four things. Name them:

1) _________________ 2) _________________ 3) _________________ 4) _________________

What is the basis for His ownership?

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

Read Exodus 19:5, Leviticus 25:23, Haggai 2:8, Deuteronomy 32:6, Ezekiel 18:4, and Romans 14:8. What do these passages say about God’s ownership?

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

He owns the cattle on a thousand hills (Psalm 50:10) Because God owns the cattle, there will always be plenty of beef to go around. He is a good owner and He will always take care of those who need some beef! Amen!

You lay up treasure in heaven only as you lay down your treasure on earth. The truth is: You don’t own anything. God owns it all. Therefore, you can willingly surrender your desire for ownership with confidence, because you can trust the legitimate owner, God, to meet your every need!

God owns everything, but He is not stingy! He makes all He owns available to those who have been made in His image (Genesis 1:26-31). God gave Adam and Eve authority to rule over all creation (vs. 26) and then He charged them to be fruitful and multiply (28) They were given the delightful assignment of prospering and bringing success to the earth! God’s intention was for humans to subdue the earth – supervise it – manage its resources.
We need to be very careful not to forget who it is that has caused us to prosper. Look at Deuteronomy 8:11-20. What things did Moses caution the children of Israel to beware of when they were enjoying the abundant blessings of the Promised Land?

______________________________________________________________________________

How does this warning apply to us today?

______________________________________________________________________________

Look at Deuteronomy 8:18. Who is it that gives us the power to prosper? Why?

______________________________________________________________________________

Why is it important that we always recognize that the power to prosper comes from God and not ourselves? What does kinds of attitudes does wealth tend to provoke in people?

______________________________________________________________________________

According to Philippians 4:14 – Who is our source for everything? _________________

Look at Paul’s attitude in II Corinthians 3:4-6 and Philippians 4:11-13. As a servant of God, Paul has learned how to depend on God to meet his every need, whether circumstances were in his favor or not, Paul leaned on God to supply everything he needed both is his life and in his ministry!

In closing, read the parable of the Foolish Farmer in Luke 12:16-21. Five things stand out about him as a man who did not recognize God as his source and mismanaged his resources:

1. The rich man forgot God (vs. 16-17)
2. He became greedy and selfish (vs. 18) Ephesians 5:5
3. He forgot other people (vs. 19)
4. He became worldly and lazy (vs. 19)
5. He lost it ALL (Vs. 20-21)

In the light of Luke 12:21, are you rich in things, or rich toward God?

Challenge: Spend time this week and take the “Ownership Exercise” in the following 2 pages.
Everything That Is, Is His

OWNERSHIP EXERCISE

Thoroughly read and study David’s prayer in 1 Chronicles, then respond to the exercise that follows.

David blessed the Lord in the Sight of all the assembly; and David said, "Blessed art Thou, 0 Lord God of Israel our Father forever and ever. Thine, 0 Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, indeed everything that is in the heavens and the earth; Thine is the dominion, 0 Lord, and Thou dost exalt Thyself as head over all. Both riches and honor come from Thee, and Thou dost rule over all, and in Thy hand is power and might; and it lies in Thy hand to make great, and to strengthen everyone. Now therefore, our God, we thank Thee, and praise Thy glorious name. But who am I and who are my people, that we should be able to offer as generously as this? For all things come from Thee, and from Thy hand we have given Thee. For we are sojourners before Thee, and tenants, as all our Fathers were; our days on the earth are like a shadow, and there is no hope. 0 Lord our God, all this abundance that we have provided to build Thee a house for Thy holy name, it is from Thy hand, and all is Thine. -1 Chronicles 29: 10-16

1. Make a list of all the adjectives David uses to describe God.

2. List His attributes (dominion).

3. Where does David say riches, honor, and abundance come from?

4. David said we are tenants on earth. What is a tenant? What do they do?

5. Who gave the people the ability to give a generous offering for the construction of the Temple?
6. Who gives you the ability to give?

7. David declared "all things come from Thee." Do you agree? List at least ten major things in your life that have come from God.

8. Study Matthew 7:9-11, Job 38:41, and Matthew 6:25-34. In your own words write about God being the great provider for His children.

Something to Think About

Your employer downsizes and you are laid off your job. No more paycheck. The national economy goes belly up and the stock market crashes. You lose your savings and investments. The government collapses and cannot provide humanitarian services for society. Where will you turn? Who will be your source for what you need?

Decide now that in all situations, no matter what, God and God alone is your source. If everything else falls, He stands. God's Kingdom will never downsize. Heaven's bank will never declare bankruptcy. Kingdom stock will only increase. No one will ever knock Jesus Christ off the throne. God is an inexhaustible, unlimited source. His kingdom is stable, secure, and more than able to meet your every need.

God is your source because He owns the cattle on a thousand hills!

Confession of Faith

I acknowledge that God is the owner of all things. He is my Maker and Redeemer. I am accountable to Him for my life and the lifestyle I choose to live. I trust God as my source. I will give Him the glory for prospering me. By faith, I will honor, respect, and obey His stewardship principles. As He blesses me, I will bless others in His name.