

“Currencies of Ministry”

As I prepared for the pastors retreat this week, I thought about the example of currency as a metaphor for how we use love and wisdom in the context of ministry. I want to briefly share that thought with you all. Currency is defined as “something that is used as a medium of exchange” – dictionary.com. It is something we spend and earn from another representing a transfer of value. It is the substance we intentionally control in our transactions to grow our investments. I thought of how in our interactions with each other, **love can be thought of as the “currency” we use to invest and grow relationships.** And **in stewardship, wisdom can be thought of as the “currency” we use to invest and grow the resources God has given us.**

In terms of **the “currency” of love, we can think of “spending this currency” in three types of relationships:**

- Loving upwardly to God (*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment – Matt 22:37–38*).
- Loving inwardly to fellow believers (*A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another – John 13:34*).
- Loving outwardly to our neighbors (*You shall love your neighbor as yourself – Matt 22:39*).

In terms of **the “currency” of wisdom**, Proverbs teaches us a wise person is **continually learning** God’s way as he lives his life in the fear of the Lord (*Let the wise hear and **increase in learning**, and the one who understands obtain guidance, to understand a proverb and a saying, the words of the wise and their riddles. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction – Prov 1:5-7*). **We can think of “earning this currency” through four types of learning:**

- Learning from scriptural commands as we read and obey scripture.
- Learning from meditating on scripture as we ponder the principles being taught and how they apply to our specific lives.
- Learning from others as we listen to the council, rebuke, and feedback of our authorities and peers.
- Learning from history as we consider the paths trod by those who went before us.

While teachings on love and wisdom are not new as they are a common thread throughout scripture, I found it very helpful to think of them as “currencies of ministry.” This helps ensure I focus on “spending and earning” them well in the many aspects of my day-to-day life. In addition, currency is either something of inherent value like silver and gold or represents something of value like paper money. When thinking of “currencies of ministry,” they find ultimate value in Christ as He is love incarnate and lived in perfect wisdom. In conclusion, I trust this metaphor may be helpful to you also as we **strive together as a church to love others well and wisely steward what God has given us** following the footsteps of our savior.

Jacob