

**“LESSONS ON THE PLAYGROUND”  
NOVEMBER 2007**

Many of life’s lessons are learned on the playground as children freely interact with each other in a world not structured by adults. Recess was always my favorite period during elementary school. The class got to go outside and enjoy free time and fresh air. It was on the playground that I learned about private property. Like many of my friends, I collected baseball cards and marbles. Kids can be very astute when it comes to negotiating trades. How much is a Mickey Mantle card worth? What about a Willie Mays card? In my collection of baseball cards, I soon recognized which ones were the most valuable. I began to see these cards as my property and having value among my circle of friends.

Although I didn’t realize it at the time, I was learning about private property. I owned something of value and could barter with others. The right to private property is dear to the heart of Americans. It is the cornerstone of our economic system. There would be no free enterprise without it. This right is so important that it is carefully spelled out in the Constitution. The Fifth Amendment says that no person shall “be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.” Indeed, millions of immigrants came to America with the dream of owning their own property.

While I was learning about private property on the playground, I was hearing another message in church. One Sunday I heard these words of David,

*“The earth is the Lord’s and all that is in it,  
the world and those who live in it;  
for he has founded it on the seas,  
and established it on the rivers.”  
(Psalm 24:1-2)*

My Sunday School teacher and my pastor reminded me that God is the real owner of everything, even what we call our own possessions. It took a while for this to make sense to me. If God is the real owner, then what I possess is just placed in my keeping for a short time. According to the Bible, I am the steward (not owner) of certain things and one day I will have to give an account to God about how I used them.

In November, the Finance Committee will conduct our annual pledge drive. When you receive your Faith Promise Card, please pray about how you will use your time, talents, and resources in 2008. God calls us to be good stewards of what he entrusts to our care.

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