

Lesson 6: Personal Stewardship

INTRODUCTION

Every child of God is God's steward – to whom God has entrusted many things. "Steward" comes from the Greek word "oikonomos" which means a manager or overseer. As stewards, we are not the true owner of whatever we possess in life. God is. We are just managers and caretakers of His manifold resources.

In our Christian stewardship, faithfulness is something expected of us by the Lord (1 Corinthians 4:2).

OUTLINE

I. EVERY CHRISTIAN IS A STEWARD

1. Pastors and ministers are stewards of the mysteries of God and are to teach the whole counsel of God (Titus 1:7; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2)
2. Church leaders are stewards and are to be examples in faithfulness, spirituality and good works (Acts 6:3; 1 Timothy 3:8-10)
3. Every member of the family of God is a steward (1 Peter 4:10-11)

II. REQUIREMENTS FOR STEWARDS

1. The most basic requirement of every steward of God is unwavering faithfulness to the Lord and His church.
2. Unfaithfulness is a willful sin (Hebrews 10:25-26)
3. Other requirements of stewardship (1 Peter 4:7-9):
 - a. Be sober-minded
 - b. Watch unto prayer
 - c. Have fervent love for one another
 - d. Use hospitality
 - e. Use all that God has given us for His glory
4. A steward is responsible for his works and is accountable to God:
 - a. The parable of the talents (Matthew 25:15,20-27)
 - b. The Judgment Seat of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:10)
5. A steward must strive lawfully in the Lord's work to receive the Lord's reward (2 Timothy 2:5; Philippians 3:14)

III. BASIC AREAS OF STEWARDSHIP

1. Stewardship of our time
 - Before we were saved, our time was wasted in sin (Ephesians 2:1-3).
 - We need to use our time for Christ because we do not know how long we have left to serve Him (James 4:13-15).
 - We need to use our time for Christ, for we shall give an account to Him for how we lived and served Him (Romans 14:10-12).

2. Stewardship of our bodies

- Our bodies, as well as our souls, belong to God (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).
 - The Holy Spirit dwells in us, and we are to use our bodies to glorify God.
 - Therefore, we are not to let our bodies be used for sinful things (1 Corinthians 6:13,15,18).
 - Since our bodies belong to God, we should not take them places God would not have them go.
 - We are also admonished to control our tongue in obedience to our Lord (James 1:26).
- We should avoid any habit that would harm, weaken or shorten the life of the body, for the body is to be used for Christ (1 Corinthians 10:31).
- Periodically, we should give the body an honorable rest and relaxation to preserve our strength for Christ (Matthew 14:22-23).

3. Stewardship of our means

- The Scriptures reveal to us the doctrines concerning giving.
- We are commanded to give according to our income as the Lord has blessed us (1 Corinthians 16:2; Deuteronomy 16:17).
- The Bible teaches proportionate giving (2 Corinthians 8:12-14).
- God commanded Israel to tithe (Leviticus 27:30):
 - Under Mosaic Law, a tenth of all produce, flocks and cattle are declared to be sacred to Jehovah. It was given as a tribute, acknowledging that the earth belongs to Him.
 - God charged Israel for being disobedient, having robbed Him in tithes and offerings (Malachi 3:8-9).
 - We should not be disobedient and rob God of our tithes and offerings, nor should we rob God of time, obedience and faithfulness.
- Tithes were given before the Law (Hebrews 7:2,6; Genesis 28:22):
 - The tithes were not restricted to those under the Law.
 - Tithes were given hundreds of years before the Law.
- God promised manifold blessings for giving according to His Word (Malachi 3:10-11; 2 Corinthians 9:6,7):
 - If we give bountifully, we will reap bountifully
 - If we give sparingly, we will reap sparingly
- Anything we give to God on top of our tithes is our offering to the Lord:
 - Missions offering
 - Love offering
 - Freewill offering
 - Sacrificial offering

4. Discussion: Other Areas of Stewardship