

Lesson 5

“Stewarding God’s Provisions”

The concept of stewardship can be found throughout the Bible. The first man Adam was given incredible provisions from the Lord God. In fact, God gave him an assignment to be the steward (keeper) over all of His creation (Genesis 1:28). There was only one condition... *“but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die”* (Genesis 2:15-17). Because of Adam’s disobedience he lost nearly everything.

Jesus taught his disciples the principal of stewardship over and over again. The New Testament Christian understands that his life is not his “own” for he has been “*bought with a price*” (Ro. 6:20). Indeed, our lives belong to Christ. This means we are his property and we must be good stewards of what God has provided in us and for us. A good steward must learn how to transfer ownership!

Are you up to the task?!

Four Areas of Christian Stewardship:

(1Corinthians 4:2 KJV “Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful”)

- 1) I must be a good steward of my Salvation
 - a) I must guard my faith from the enemy.
 - i) Be alert for a spiritual attack from the devil. *1Peter 5:8,9 “Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. ⁹Resist him, standing firm in the faith...”*
 - ii) I must break off entanglements that could now hinder my new life in Christ. Like a soldier of the Lord I must be focused on what pleases my new commander and chief. *2Tim. 2:4 ESV No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him.*
 - b) I must share my new found faith with others.

- i) Sharing your faith is a natural outgrowth of your new life in your Christian Journey. It is normal for you to want others to know and experience what you have found in Christ.
- ii) Learn the **TAG** (Take and Give) **principal**: A faithful disciple of Jesus learns early the necessity of taking what God has given him and giving it to others. We call this the take and give principal.

iii) The best way to share your faith with others:

(1) First, live your life in such a way that the lordship of Christ is recognizable in your actions and attitudes. In so doing, some will seek to know why you are so thrilled serving Christ.

(2) Secondly, allow the Holy Spirit to teach you how to become a bold witness for Christ. Pray for boldness and deliverance from the fear of man.

Acts 1:8 "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses..."

2) I must be a good steward of my Time

a) Jesus taught his followers the importance of using their time wisely. Jesus said, "... we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work" (John. 9:4).

i) This speaks of setting the right priorities.

ii) Jesus said in (Mat 6:33) "*But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*"

b) The question in life is not "will my calendar be full?" Of course it will be full! But the proper question is: "Who will fill my calendar?" Now is the time to put Christ first in every area of your life and use your time wisely.

c) Please understand your time is a gift from God. Be a good steward of what God has given you.

3) I must be a good steward of my Money

a) Most new Christians are surprised to learn that God wants his people to flourish financially so we can use our money for the Kingdom of God. *Proverbs 11:28 KJV He that trusteth in his riches shall fall: But the righteous shall flourish as a branch*

b) There are several kingdom principals we must heed to see our finances blessed.

- i) Transfer ownership. Confess this over yourself, "everything I am; everything I have, and everything I ever will be belongs to God." (Jesus said, "... apart from me you can do nothing" John 15:5)
- ii) Recognize it is by God's hand that man gains wealth (Deuteronomy 8:17,18 You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me." ¹⁸ But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth...).
- iii) Honor God with the tithe (Malachi 3:10 "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it").
- iv) Be generous and not tight fisted (Luke 6:38 Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.")
- v) Refuse to spend more than you make (Proverbs 21:17 "He who loves pleasure will become poor...")
- vi) Don't become a slave to credit (Proverbs 22:7 The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender).

4) I must be a good steward of my Talents

The Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25): Jesus told his disciples a story about a certain businessman who was going on an extended trip. This man called his servants together and delegated some responsibilities to his servants. He gave one 5 bags of silver, another one 2 bags, and a third one bag. He divided up the portions of the task according to their abilities. The first two were good stewards for the business and invested their portion and it doubled. The third on buried his bag of silver in a hole in fear. The master was very pleased with the first two but the third man was rebuked by the master. In fact, the master called him "wicked" and "lazy" and took away what silver giving it to one of the faithful servants.

Jesus said, "To those who use well what they are given, even more will be given, and they will have an abundance. But from those who do nothing, even what little they have will be taken away" (Matthew 25:29)

The story above reveals God's heart toward the stewardship of our talents. God wants us to be fruitful in His kingdom by using our talents, experiences, and gifting(s) for His purposes.

- a) God's number one desire for us beyond our salvation experience is to invest our lives in the Kingdom of God. We must not bury our talents.
- b) Jesus said, "loving God and loving your neighbor" is the greatest commandment in all of the bible (Matthew 22:37-40).
- c) To God, people matter most and we must see our talents, experiences, and gifting(s) as a delegated responsibility from Him for the kingdom.
- d) Ask God to show you how you can become a good steward of God's provisions in your life.