

STEWARDSHIP: Foundations

New series on Stewardship.

- **Answers:** How do you practically live, out of the generosity of God.
- **We will address:** spiritual gifts, work, money, physical body, sexuality.

Stewardship: Today a foundation for the series

Four pillars that hold up a biblical view of life.

1. The ownership of God
2. The responsibility of man
3. The Rewards of Stewardship
4. The Accountability of stewardship

1. The OWNERSHIP of God

• Rooted in Creation

- **Gen.1:1** "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."
 - **Tim Keller**, "God did not create to get the cosmic, infinite joy of mutual love and glorification, but to share it! The love of the inner life of the Trinity is written all through Creation."
- **David Psalms 24:1-2**, "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; 2 for he founded it upon the seas and established it upon the waters."

• Includes Giftings + Circumstances

- **CS Lewis, Mere Christianity**, "Every faculty you have, your power of thinking or of moving your limbs from moment to moment, is given you by God. If you devoted every moment of your whole life exclusively to His service, you could not give Him anything that was not in a sense His own already."
 - **Stewards realize that God's ownership includes gifts + circumstances that enable us to work.**
 - **OTHERWISE: normal to think differently:** I worked hard for this.
 - **Anticipated in Deut.8:17-18**, "17 Beware lest you say in your heart, 'My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth.' 18 You shall remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your fathers, as it is this day."

• If you're a Christian

- **1Cor.6:19-20**, "19 You are not your own, 20 for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body."
- **Twice God's.**

• PROOF ≠ Owner: **You can't take it with you.**

- **Solomon Eccl.5:15**, "Naked a man comes from his mother's womb, and as he comes, so he departs. He takes nothing from his labor that he can carry in his hand."

2. The RESPONSIBILITY of man

• In Creation, God called AE to work & keep creation.

- **Gen.2:15-17**, "15 The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. 16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

- **Genesis gives us a definition:** A steward is someone who manages the property of another.
 - **Salary** = eat anything in the garden (except 1 tree)
 - **Responsibility** = to work & grow God's rule.
 - **MANAGER... NOT HOARDER**
 - **Hoarde:** to use and keep solely for oneself.
 - **Bank teller** takes time & my \$ x Taco Bell while I'm waiting in front at the teller desk.

3. The REWARDS of Stewardship

The example of Joseph: **Genesis 39:4-6a.**

1. Likewise, God provides for our joy
 - **1Tim.6:17**, "As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy."
2. Growing responsibilities
 - **Luke 16:11-12**, "11 If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? 12 And if you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own?"
3. Ultimately, the joy and favor of the Master
 - **Matthew 25:21** His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.'

4. The ACCOUNTABILITY of Stewardship

- In 1989 a family in West Palm Beach Florida gave permission to the film crew of the TV show B. L. Stryker to use their front lawn as a set for a dramatic car crash scene. **But while their front yard was being blown up**, the owner of the house called from New York demanding to know what was going on. **It turns out the family who gave permission were renters, not owners.** And now the owner was very upset and was holding everyone accountable for what they did to His property.
- **1Cor.4:2**, "Now it is required that those who have been given a trust (literally, stewards) must prove faithful"
- **Matthew 25:14-30 Parable of the Talents.**
 - time, money, abilities, positions, possessions, gifts, talents, influence & authority.

APPLICATION

1. The STEWARDS' REAL JOB IS FAITHFULNESS...

- **1Peter 4:10-11**, "10 As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: 11 whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."
 - **The focus ≠ on resources.**
 - **The focus is faithfulness.**
 - **A farmer never fears losing a seed, because he expects a harvest.**

2. CALLED TO OVERFLOW, rooted in the Gospel

- **Keller**, ""Ultimate reality is a community of persons who know and love one another. That is what the universe, God, history, and life is all about... we believe the world was made by a God who is a community of persons who have loved each other for all eternity. You were made for mutually self-giving, other-directed love. Self-centeredness destroys the fabric of what God has made."
- **2Cor.8:8-9**, "8 I say this not as a command, but to prove by the earnestness of others that your love also is genuine. 9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich."