

## March Teaching Series

### LIVING AS GOD'S FAITHFUL STEWARDS

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“Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.”

(1 Corinthians 4:2 NIJV)

“More so it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.” (KJV)

#### INTRODUCTION:

1. A Math teacher says, “Let us have a quiz and see if you have the right answer.” It’s not our purpose to understate academic correctness when we ask a similar question but not on Math. Although some, if not many, abhor Math! “Let’s have a life quiz.” How do you see yourself in life- an OWNER or a STEWARD?” I believe that the way we view life will affect the way we live.

2. The apostle Paul is telling the Corinthian believers that he and other ministers of the Gospel are stewards of the mysteries of God (1 Cor. 4:1). He further amplified the principles of stewardship in a larger sense of its use – to manage and administer resources of an owner he was entrusted with.

The apostle Paul, in taking the image of stewards in his ministry call, knows the ever important truth that makes LIFE INTACT. It’s about the principle of stewardship

#### 3. Principles of Stewardship

- a. Life is a matter of stewardship (v.2)
- b. Faithfulness is required in stewardship (V.2)
- c. Accountability is an integral part of stewardship. (v.1)

#### I. LIFE IS A MATTER OF STEWARDSHIP

From its Greek word OIKONOMOS, a STEWARD, means a house distributor, a manager (of resources and properties)

This points us to an important life perspective. The accurate way to position yourself in this life is to be a STEWARD, not an owner. Actually, we don’t own anything. When you came out into this world, you have nothing.

Life should be viewed this way:

1. The book of Genesis tells us how it all began. It tells us how everything started including life.

Genesis 1:1 “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth...”

V.27-28, Key words are “subdue, rule.” After creating everything, God created man subdue/rule in other words “manage”.

You didn’t create yourself. God is the creator, maker, owner and sustainer of all things.

Man is the recipient and STEWARD of God’s blessings (Gen. 1:1-27). When God created man, He made him ruler/manager of His creation.

It tells us here that God is the Creator.

2. The Psalmist recognizes this truth when he said, (Psalms 24:1)

“The earth is the Lord’s and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.” (NIV)

David goes back to the core of stewardship – God’s creation. It’s always in this order. It shows us very clearly the two opposing views: God’s view and man’s view.

- God’s view emphasizes STEWARDSHIP
- Man’s view emphasizes OWNERSHIP

To see yourself as a steward is not only a healthy view of life, it is the BIBILICAL view of life as a Christian.

3. Job recognized this truth in the midst of trial when he declared:

“Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked I will depart. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away, may the name of the Lord be praised.” (Job. 1:21)

Job overcame because of this. He acknowledged that :

- a. He is naked when he came into being – a sign of humility
- b. God has the power to give and take away.

All of God’s blessings are just like robes that could be placed or removed upon one’s life.

## **II. FAITHFULNESS IS REQUIRED IN STEWARDSHIP**

“It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful.”

1. “FAITHFUL” – in Greek is “PISTOS” which means trustworthy.

An employee in a company or in any institution knows that it matters that he or she won’t lose the trust of his superiors. He is aware that he is expected to manage or do well with whatever is entrusted to him.

2. Having established the fact that we are “managers” of God’s resources, we should not mismanage our lives. There is something more terrible than a mismanaged company – it is a mismanaged life. The losses are greater.

QUESTION: How do you manage your life? How do you manage God-given giftings and talents?

- Giftings /Talents: used for our flesh
- Resources/Possessions/business: shady dealings
- Physical Body: Abuse
- Spiritual Growth/Christian duties: Neglect
- God’s sacred call in your life: neglect of duties
- Family: neglect of duties
- Finances: Lack of Financial Integrity
- Mind/emotions/Desires: Allowing junk; Envy
- Relationships
- Tongue (James 3)
- Time

Practice faithfulness in all areas. It should be applied in all aspects of life. IF YOU’RE FAITHFUL WITH LITTLE, GOD WILL ENTRUST YOU WITH MUCH.

### **III. ACCOUNTABILITY IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF STEWARDSHIP**

V.1, "So then men ought to regard us as servants of Christ as those entrusted with the secret things of God.

We go back to verse 1 to get Paul's admonition regarding their call as SERVANTS and STEWARDS. These are two appropriate words for every servant and child of God.

1. To whom are we accountable? It's quite clear here that we are accountable to our Lord Jesus Christ.

Strong and mature Christians have a deep sense of ACCOUNTABILITY. It means that Paul recognizes he is ANSWERABLE to somebody for those DIVINE ENTRUSTMENTS.

Stewardship fails when there's no accountability.

Listen to Paul's strong reminders:

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each may RECEIVE what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad. (2 Cor. 5:10)

2. The underlying truth of stewardship is MAKING JESUS LORD of every aspect of your life – be it in the area of relationships, career, finances, ministry, God-given talents, etc. It will always do you good to remind yourself "I don't own my life, I don't own anything. I am a steward. God owns me and all I have. Jesus is my Lord."

#### **CONCLUSION:**

Good stewards will be rewarded. If there are areas in your life that you're not a faithful steward you're reminded of, CHANGE THE WAY YOU LIVE.

Let's go back to this life quiz: "How do you see your life – an owner or a steward?" It's not condemnable if you fail in math but please don't fail on this quiz. You'll be blessed.

If what you're experiencing now isn't what you expect, you're not experiencing abundant life (John 10:10). You mismanaged your life. There's hope, God can "repair" your life. God can restore you.