

Stewardship

Matthew 25:21 His lord said unto him, Well done, *thou* good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

Steward- 1. A man employed in great families to manage the domestic concerns, superintend the other servants, collect the rents or income, keep the accounts, etc.

The doctrine of stewardship as taught in the scriptures is nearly lost in our self focused society. Yet at the very core of it's teaching we learn the most basic truths which should govern our lives. We understand God's Sovereignty and as a result we understand our place in this world and our purpose for being here.

I. God's Rightful Ownership

Though at times we may consider ourselves our own masters, the reality is that God has complete ownership over all things. He is the Creator, Provider and the Sustainer of all things.

A. Of the Earth and Heavens

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

Psalms 50:10 For every beast of the forest is mine, *and* the cattle upon a thousand hills.

John 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

Job 38:4-11 Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding...**8** Or *who* shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, *as if* it had issued out of the womb?...**11** And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed?

Psalms 24:1 The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

B. Of Mankind

Psalms 100:3 Know ye that the LORD he is God: *it is he that* hath made us, and not we ourselves; *we are* his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

Isaiah 64:8 But now, O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand.

Job 1:21 And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.

C. Of All Life

Acts 17:24-25, 28 God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; **25** Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;...**28** For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.

II. The First Steward

We can see in the first man, Adam, that God had stewardship in mind from the beginning of creation. There was no need for ownership seeing God gave all things freely to the first steward. God placed Adam in the garden with the responsibility to take care of it, as long as Adam faithfully kept it he enjoyed the fruits of his labor.

A. Made to Serve

Genesis 2:15-16 And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. **16** And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:

Revelation 4:11 Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

B. Expelled from the Garden

Adam's disobedience resulted in his separation from God and the blessings which came from being in His garden. He would continue to cultivate the ground but now with sorrow where previously he had joy.

Genesis 3:17 And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;

C. Lost

After the sin of Adam, mankind was lost and under the curse. No longer were they the servants of God but of sin. It has been said that the only things which a man owns in this life is his own sin. So it was with Adam's race.

Genesis 6:5 And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and *that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*

Psalms 107:10-12 Such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, *being bound in affliction and iron;* **11** Because they rebelled against the words of God, and contemned the counsel of the most High: **12** Therefore he brought down their heart with labour; they fell down, and *there was none to help.*

III. Redeemed and Returned

Separated from God, man was without hope in this life or the one to come. The way back to the Garden barred shut we had but one hope, The One who would later say, "I am the Door". Christ came to redeem mankind from the curse, to restore the relationship we had with God in the garden and to redefine our purpose, written and engraved upon our hearts.

Ephesians 2:4-10 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, **5** Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;); **6** And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: **7** That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in *his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.* **8** For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is the gift of God:* **9** Not of works, lest any man should boast. **10** For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

A. We are a Purchased Possession

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?* **20** For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

B. Bought with a Price

1 Peter 1:18-19 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received by tradition from your*

fathers; 19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

C. Bought for a Purpose

2 Corinthians 5:14-15 For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: 15 And *that* he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

Colossians 3:1-3 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. 2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

D. Every Gift from Above

James 1:16-17 Do not err, my beloved brethren. 17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

1 Corinthians 15:10 But by the grace of God I am what I am...

IV. Faithful Stewards

Seeing then, that every thing which we possess, every moment we draw breath into our lungs, every opportunity we encounter are gifts from above, let us use it all to the honor and glory of our Heavenly Father. We are not asked to do more than what we are able. The servant with two talents was praised by the Master in the same manner as the servant with five talents.

A. With all your Might

Ecclesiastes 9:10 Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do *it* with thy might; for *there is* no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.

Colossians 3:23-24 And whatsoever ye do, do *it* heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; 24 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

B. With all you Have

2 Corinthians 9:6-7 But this *I* say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. 7 Every man

according as he purposeth in his heart, so *let him give*; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

1 Peter 4:10 As every man hath received the gift, *even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.*

C. With every Life Entrusted to You

Ephesians 5:25-26 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; **26** That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

Psalms 127:3 Lo, children *are* an heritage of the LORD: *and the fruit of the womb is his reward.*

D. With every Moment

Psalms 90:12 So teach us to number our days, that we may apply *our hearts* unto wisdom.

V. Reward

The night comes when no man will work. One day we will all give an account of our Stewardship and the Master will give reward to every man according to his work, we shall inherit the treasures we have laid up in that place and rest from our labors.

Revelation 22:12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

Matthew 25:34-36 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: **35** For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: **36** Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

Hebrews 4:9-10 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. **10** For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God *did* from his.

1 Corinthians 2:9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.