

Lesson 11: Stewardship

Steward = one who manages the affairs of another

“¹⁹ Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, ²⁰ for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20 ESV)

As Christians, we are bought by Jesus’ blood and now are his. This means that we are simply stewards of who we are and what we possess.

Four type of stewardship:

· Time

“¹⁵ Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶ making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸ And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, ²⁰ giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.” (Ephesians 5:15-21 ESV)

Paul ties our walk together with time management for they are inseparable. He also shares that there are two ways in which to walk: as wise or as unwise. Those that are unwise do not value their time, nor do they take advantage of it. He goes on to explain that it is foolish to ignore God’s will for our lives. Walking wisely is tied not only to knowing God’s will, but also being devoted to his will. These flow out of being filled with (yielded to) the Spirit.

· Talents

Talents = God-given abilities that we have from birth.

“Remember these things, O Jacob, and Israel, for you are my servant; I formed you; you are my servant; O Israel, you will not be forgotten by me.” (Isaiah 44:21 ESV)

God formed you the way you are for his service! Use what you’re good at for him!

· Spiritual Gifts

*"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." (1 Peter 4:10-11 ESV)*

Peter divides our gifts up into two areas: speaking and serving

The goal of using our gifts is also two-fold: to glorify God through Christ and to serve one another.

Paul explains this further in 1 Corinthians 12

Verse 7: The Spirit has given each believer a gift to use for the benefit of all.

Verses 4-6: The Spirit gives us the gifts...it is in service to Christ that we use them...and it is God who empowers us to use them.

Verse 11: God empowers us through his Spirit to use our gifts as he wills

Verse 12: We all make up the body of Christ

Verse 22: Every member, no matter the gift, is indispensable to the body

Verse 25: We are to have the same care for one another

God has given you a gift to use for his glory!

· Possessions

We are not owners, we are stewards, of all things.

"¹⁶ Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. ¹⁷ Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. ¹⁸ Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures." (James 1:16-18 ESV)

"The silver is mine, and the gold is mine," declares the LORD of Hosts." (Haggai 2:8)

"For every beast of the forest is mine, the cattle on a thousand hills." (Psalm 50:10)

"For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb." (Psalm 139:13)

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. ¹⁹ And if you forget the LORD your God and go after other gods and serve them and worship them, I solemnly warn you today that you shall surely perish."
(Deuteronomy 8:17-19 ESV)

⁸ Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, 'How have we robbed you?' In your tithes and contributions. ⁹ You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me, the whole nation of you. ¹⁰ Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need." (Malachi 3:8-10 ESV)

Therefore, Christians ought to seek to both enjoy the gifts that God has given them as well as invest those gifts in others and in the future by distributing them wisely.

Four types of stewards in Proverbs

· Righteous Rich

Marked by hard work, faithfulness, and God's blessing

"Riches and honor are with me, enduring wealth and righteousness. My fruit is better than gold, even fine gold, and my yield better than choice silver. I walk in the way of righteousness, in the paths of justice." (Proverbs 8:18-20)

"In the house of the righteous there is much treasure, but trouble befalls the income of the wicked." (Proverbs 15:6)

· Righteous Poor

Marked by hard work, honesty, and contentment

"Better is a poor man who walks in his integrity than a rich man who is crooked in his ways." (Proverbs 28:6)

"Jesus looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the offering box, ² and he saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins. ³ And he said, "Truly, I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them. ⁴ For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on." (Luke 21:1-4 ESV)

- Unrighteous Rich

Marked by deception, lying, and stealing

“A gracious woman gets honor, and violent men get riches. A man who is kind benefits himself, but a cruel man hurts himself. The wicked earn deceptive wages, but one who sows righteousness gets a sure reward.” (Proverbs 11:16-18)

“When the wicked dies, his hope will perish, and the expectation of wealth perishes too.” (Proverbs 11:7)

- Unrighteous Poor

Marked by laziness and complacency

“A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest...” (Proverbs 6:10)

“The sluggard does not plow in the autumn; he will seek the harvest and have nothing.” (Proverbs 20:4)

Things that can derail our stewardship

- Idolatry
- Pride (Matthew 6:1; those who give to be seen by others)
- Debt (Proverbs 22:7; the borrower is a slave to the lender)
- Envy and Covetousness (Ecclesiastes 4:4; envy of his brother was vanity)
- No fear of God (Proverbs 15:16; better is a little with fear of the Lord than great treasure)
- Laziness (Proverbs 13:4; the soul of a sluggard craves and gets nothing, see also 1 Tim 5:8)
- Lack of planning (Proverbs 21:5; 15:21-22; folly is a joy to him who lacks sense)
- Greed (1 Timothy 6:10; the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils)
- Not giving and thus robbing God (Malachi 3:8-10)