

TRUTH B-P CHURCH
Adult Sunday School

BIBLICAL STEWARDSHIP

LESSON TWO: UNDERSTANDING STEWARDSHIP THROUGH THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

I. INTRODUCTION

Stewardship is the biblical principle that everything we have belongs to God. We are not owners, but caretakers entrusted with managing what God has placed in our hands. This truth is foundational to Christian living and shapes how we relate to God and others.

The Ten Commandments provide a comprehensive framework for understanding stewardship. Often viewed merely as moral laws, they are in fact divine instructions that reveal how we are to faithfully manage what God has entrusted to us. Each commandment addresses a different area of life, teaching responsibility, accountability, and reverence toward God.

Stewardship is therefore not limited to finances or material possessions. It includes worship, relationships, speech, thoughts, and desires. When seen through this lens, the Ten Commandments become a guide for holistic stewardship—governing both our inward attitudes and outward actions.

II. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS (EXODUS 20:3-17)

A. Towards God

1. **First Commandment.** *"Thou shalt have no other gods before me."*

The first commandment establishes the foundation of all stewardship: God must have first place in our lives. Stewardship begins with recognizing God as the rightful owner of everything, including our hearts. When we place anything above God—whether wealth, success, relationships, or personal ambitions—we fail in our stewardship. Devotion spent in worship, prayer, and meditation is part of how we prioritize our relationship with Him.

Faithful stewardship here means ordering life around God. Decisions, plans, and goals must reflect His authority. This includes trusting Him above all else, even in uncertainty. Ultimately, the first commandment calls us to surrender our hearts to God. When God is first, everything else falls into their rightful place. But when He is displaced, all other areas of stewardship begin to collapse.

2. **Second Commandment.** *"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image..."*

This commandment teaches stewardship of how we perceive and represent God. It warns against reducing God to something manageable, visible, or controllable. As stewards, we are responsible for maintaining a right understanding of God. Misrepresenting Him—whether through false teaching, distorted beliefs, or casual irreverence—is a failure of stewardship. God is holy, and our thoughts about Him must reflect that.

In practical terms, this includes how we worship. Worship must be governed by truth, not personal preference or cultural trends. This commandment reminds us that God is not ours to redefine. He entrusts us with the truth of who He is, and we must handle that truth with care and reverence.

3. **Third Commandment.** *"Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain..."*

The third commandment focuses on how we use God's name rightly. Words are powerful, and God's name represents His character, authority, and reputation. To take His name "in vain" is to use it carelessly, dishonestly, or irreverently. This includes profanity, but also extends to false oaths, insincere worship, and hypocritical living.

As stewards, we are entrusted with the privilege of speaking God's name. This is a sacred responsibility. When we pray, teach, or testify, we must do so with sincerity and reverence. We are His representatives. Therefore, every word we speak and every action we take reflects on Him.

4. **Fourth Commandment.** *"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy."*

Time is one of the most valuable resources God gives, yet it is often the most neglected. God set apart the Sabbath as a day of rest and worship, reminding us that sacred time belongs to Him. This commandment calls us to intentionally dedicate time for spiritual renewal and reflection.

In modern life, distractions compete for our attention. Entertainment, work demands, and technology can consume all of our time, even time which we ought to set aside for God. Faithful stewardship requires obedience to what God has commanded us to keep His day holy unto Him.

5. **Fifth Commandment.** *"Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee."*

Children are commanded to honor their parents, not merely obey them. Obedience may be temporary, but honor is lifelong. This involves respect in attitude, speech, and action. Even when parents are imperfect, the position they hold is to be respected because it is ordained by God. Stewardship here involves managing one's response to authority, learning humility, and cultivating gratitude.

Parents, on the other hand, are stewards of their children. They are entrusted with the responsibility of nurturing, teaching, discipling, and guiding them. Parenting is not ownership—it is stewardship. Children ultimately belong to God, and parents are accountable for how they raise them. This includes providing not only physical needs but also spiritual guidance, moral instruction, and loving discipline.

This commandment also extends beyond the home. It establishes a principle for all authority structures—government, church leadership, and societal systems. Respecting authority is part of stewardship because authority is instituted by God to maintain order. When individuals reject authority, chaos follows. Thus, stewardship includes submitting to rightful authority while exercising authority responsibly when it is entrusted to us.

Honor also includes care, especially as parents age. Providing for their needs, showing appreciation, and maintaining connection are all part of faithful stewardship. Neglecting these responsibilities reflects a failure to value what God has entrusted.

The promise attached to this commandment—long life and well-being—demonstrates that honoring relationships leads to stability and blessing. A society that respects family and authority is more likely to flourish. Faithful stewardship means honoring those God has placed in our lives and fulfilling our roles with integrity and love.

B. Towards Men

1. **Sixth Commandment.** *"Thou shalt not kill."*

The sixth commandment affirms the sanctity of human life. It teaches that life is not ours to control—it belongs to God. We are entrusted with life, both our own and that of others, and we are accountable for how we treat it.

At its most basic level, this commandment prohibits the unlawful taking of innocent life. However, its scope goes much deeper. It addresses attitudes, intentions, and behaviors that devalue life. Hatred, anger, bitterness, and violence all violate the spirit of this commandment. Stewardship of life begins with recognizing its **sacredness**. Man is created in the image of God. A faithful steward sees people as God sees them. Faithful stewardship involves preserving, valuing, and nurturing life in all its forms. It calls us to reflect God's care and compassion in how we treat ourselves and others.

2. **Seventh Commandment.** *"Thou shalt not commit adultery."*

The seventh commandment focuses on the sanctity of marriage and the importance of sexual purity. It teaches that relationships, particularly marital relationships, are sacred trusts that must be guarded and honored.

Marriage is a covenant established by God. It involves commitment, faithfulness, and mutual responsibility. Adultery or fornication represent a violation of this covenant and a failure of stewardship.

This commandment also extends beyond physical actions to include **thoughts and desires**. Lust, inappropriate fantasies, and emotional unfaithfulness can all undermine purity. Stewardship, therefore, involves guarding the mind and heart.

Faithfulness is central to this commandment. It reflects God's own faithfulness. When individuals remain faithful in relationships, they mirror God's character. Unfaithfulness, on the other hand, leads to broken trust and damaged relationships. The seventh commandment teaches that purity is not restrictive but protective. It safeguards relationships and preserves the beauty of God's design.

3. **Eighth Commandment.** *"Thou shalt not steal."*

The eighth commandment speaks directly to the stewardship of material possessions and resources. What belongs to another person is not ours to take, manipulate, or misuse. This applies not only to physical property but also to intellectual property, time, opportunities, and even credit for work. Taking what is not rightfully ours—whether through force, deception, or negligence—is a failure of stewardship.

Honest labor is a key principle in Scripture. A steward is expected to work diligently and earn honestly. Laziness, manipulation, or exploitation are contrary to this principle. God has designed work as a means through which we participate in His provision. Therefore, the process of acquiring resources must reflect integrity.

Our stewardship has eternal significance. We are accountable to God for how we use what He has given. Faithful stewardship involves recognizing His ownership, respecting others, managing resources wisely, and using them for His purposes and glory.

4. **Ninth Commandment.** *"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour."*

The ninth commandment teaches stewardship of truth. While it specifically addresses false testimony in a legal context, its implications extend to all forms of speech and communication. It calls us to manage our words with integrity, recognizing that truth is a sacred trust.

The ninth commandment goes hand in hand with the third commandment. As we bear the Name of Christ, whatever that come out of our mouth is important. Words are powerful. They shape perceptions, influence decisions, and impact relationships. As stewards, we are entrusted with the ability to communicate, and we are accountable for how we use that ability. This commandment reminds us that truth must be preserved, protected, and spoken faithfully.

At its core, this commandment prohibits falsehood. Lying, deception, exaggeration, and misrepresentation all violate the principle of truth. These actions distort reality and harm others. In a stewardship context, lying is a misuse of the gift of speech. It undermines trust and damages relationships. Not only we must have nothing to do with lies and falsehood, we must uphold the truth always.

Ultimately, the ninth commandment teaches that truth reflects God's character. God is a God of truth, and as His stewards, we are called to reflect that truth in our lives. Stewardship of truth is not optional. It is essential for maintaining trust, justice, and righteousness for Jesus' sake.

5. **Tenth Commandment.** *"Thou shalt not covet..."*

The tenth commandment focuses on desires, specifically the desire for what belongs to others. Covetousness is the root of many sins. It begins with dissatisfaction—looking at what others have and longing for it in a way that breeds envy and discontent. While it may not immediately result in outward action, it creates a mindset that can lead to other violations, such as stealing, lying, or dishonoring relationships.

Stewardship of the heart begins with recognizing that desires must be managed with God's help. Our desires are powerful and can shape our actions. Left unchecked, they can lead us away from God's will. Faithful stewardship involves aligning our desires with God's purposes.

Contentment is the antidote to covetousness. Contentment does not mean complacency; it means being satisfied with what God has provided while trusting Him for the future. A content heart is at peace, free from the constant pressure of comparison.

Ultimately, the tenth commandment teaches that true stewardship begins within. A heart that is content, grateful, and aligned with God will naturally lead to faithful living. But a heart driven by covetousness will lead to a life filled with carnality, discontentment and full of envy. Be thankful and contented, for God knows best what is best for us.

III. SUMMARY

The Ten Commandments provide a complete picture of stewardship. They show that stewardship is not limited to external actions but includes the heart, mind, and soul. From worship to relationships, from time to truth, every area of life is entrusted to us by God.

Faithful stewardship means living in obedience, recognizing that we are accountable to Him. Ultimately, stewardship is about honoring God with everything we are and everything we have. When we live this way, we fulfill our purpose and bring glory to the One who entrusted us with all things. Amen.