

Lesson 14: Stewardship

(Part 1)

In the Church, you hear many words that are not often used in our daily speech. Such words as grace, Trinity, Justification, Sanctification, sacrament do not often find their way into our conversations at work or at play. Another important word that you hear around the Church family that you do not hear often in any other place is the word "stewardship." Most churches have a stewardship committee. It is an important word to understand, and that is the purpose of the next three discipleship lessons.

When you hear the word 'stewardship,' you should immediately think of the central idea of this passage:

2 Corinthians 5:15

What is the central idea of this passage? _____

How do people live before they come to Christ? _____

As God's people, we do not want to live our life for ourselves. We want to live for Christ who paid the horrible price for our sins.

When kings or knights used to go off to war, a servant was placed in charge of all their possessions, their business interests and their family affairs. This servant was to manage all the affairs of his master's household and property until he returned. This person who was in charge of everything that belonged to his master was called a _____.

God has made you a steward. He has given you abilities and talents which he wants to use to carry on His work.

Everything we have really belongs to _____. We are only _____ of that which really belongs to God.

Name 15 things in your life that belong to God, but which you manage or administer.

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

11. _____ 13. _____
 12. _____ 14. _____
 15. _____.

1 Corinthians 4:2

What does God require of you concerning how you manage the 15 items that you listed above?

What does it mean to be faithful? _____

A Christian steward serves God out of love and gratitude for His many gifts by being faithful in managing that which God has entrusted to him.

We often talk about stewardship in terms of the God-pleasing way we use our time, talents and treasures.

By this we mean that God has given each of us a certain amount of time on this earth to be used in a way that pleases Him. He has given us certain talents and abilities which He wants us to use for His glory. He has also entrusted to our care certain treasures (material things) which He wants us to use lovingly and unselfishly.

Time is a very important gift of God. Once we have used time, it is GONE. We can never get it back. God has given each of us only certain number of days on this earth and no more. About how many days are there in the average lifetime of 70 years? (Not including Leap years.)

365 days, x 70 years = _____.

How many days do you have left? (Ave.) $365 \times 70 - (\text{age} \times 365)$ _____.

When you think about it, that is really not too many days. Ask yourself, how are those days that God has given to you being used? In ways that please Him or in ways that please you first. As you continue to walk with Him His delight will become your delight. But for now, what is wrong with a person with a person who has never missed a "T.V. mini-series" but claims to have no time for the church's mission and study of God's Word and prayer? Why?

The Bible says that God has given each of us certain talents and abilities.

1 Peter 4:10

How should we use the gifts and abilities and talents God has given us? _____

A Christian has been called to have the attitude that he is on this earth in order

to be a _____.

Where are two of the best places where God has given us the continual opportunity to be a servant?

When God has given us health and a job, and we get paid, what is the first thing God wants us to do? _____

Give 4 reasons why God wants this:

- 1) _____ 3) _____
2) _____ 4) _____

What are some reasons people don't give God their first fruits? _____

Why must we constantly be re-examining how we are using our time, talents and treasures?

Is part of our stewardship the use of our body? _____ Why? _____

HOMework

1. **DECIDE TO CHANGE SOMETHING THIS WEEK.** Look at your life and the things we have discussed in this lesson and with the guidance of prayer and the Holy Spirit, find an area of your life that needs improvement and make a change this week. Are you spending too much time in front of the T.V. and too little time in prayer and in personal study of the Bible? Do you let too much money slip through your fingers? Are you doing things for yourself at the expense of your family? Is there a place you could help in the church but for some reason don't want to get involved? Are you treating your body the way that pleases God? Are your eyes and mind exposed to things that do not please God which you could avoid? Are you giving God the first fruits of your money weekly? **LOOK HONESTLY AT YOUR OWN STEWARDSHIP THIS WEEK,** and ask God where changes need to be made.

PRIVATELY, take it to the Lord in prayer. Ask Him for His forgiveness for poor stewardship of your life and the many things He has done for your (seen and unseen). Ask His help to change those things that need to be improved in your life. Thank Him for the infinite love of Jesus, who lived and died and rose again, all for you.

2. With someone, thank God for this class and all that the Lord is showing you through it. Pray that God would continue to bless all the members of our church, so that dedicated to Him we, together, might carry out the mission He has given us.