

## Stewardship

### Introduction

Stewardship and fellowship are a result of our citizenship in heaven and are a natural outworking of our relationship with God and His Family. As good citizens of His Kingdom we look after what He has trusted us with and also desire to mix with like minded people who love God as we do. We are also good stewards of the things God gives us and desire fellowship with other citizens of The Kingdom.

Salvation begins with a relationship and we are to be stewards of our side of the relationship and maintain it through obedience. This stewardship of obedience also maintains the fellowship resulting from the salvation relationship we have with Jesus. It is through the stewardship of the relationship we have with Jesus that we can correctly enter into fellowship with others.

Every activity we do is a reflection of our obedience to God and the stewardship God has given us. If it is carried out in correct loving obedience, stewardship becomes worship and brings Him glory and will have fellowship implications.

It is because of these things, our life has significance as it is the outworking of our loving relationship (fellowship and intimacy) with Jesus, and The Father as guided by The Holy Spirit.

As good stewards we will value these things and care for them as a matter of utmost priority as salvation is built around the fellowship we have with Jesus and The Father and is an expression of how we value this relationship.

### Adam's Sin

*(Gen 2:15 GNB) Then the LORD God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to cultivate it and guard it.*

Adam was commanded to protect the Garden and cultivate it as a service to God. The Garden was part of the Kingdom of God and in it was the 'tree of the knowledge of good and evil' (v17). So having been given care of the Garden He was commanded not to eat of one specific tree. His sin was not doing what He was told so that the tree was not protected. He failed in his stewardship of Eve and as a result she ate of the forbidden fruit. So both sinned as a result of Adam's poor stewardship.

The first sin was Adam disobeying God and the second was poor headship, allowing Eve to be in a place where she could be tempted into eating the forbidden fruit. It was being a poor steward that resulted in God being disobeyed because Adam did not do as God commanded Him, namely guard the garden and eve.

So sin entered the world through Adam and not Eve.

Perhaps this is a wake-up call to Christians to tend what they have a good stewards of it as to do otherwise is sin and will lead to more sin. It may also show the importance of a husband protecting their wife from being tempted.

### A Warning

I begin this section with a warning.

Unless you are content with what God has given you or allowed you to have in the situation He cannot take you further in your walk as a Christian and give you more to do and care of for Him as you have not learned the lessons you need to go further because you have not learned to care for what you have already been given, either as possessions or ministry.

If you cannot love and care for the people Jesus has given you: wife, family, grandparents etc., how can He give you more to care for (minister too) until you know how to love and care for those he has already given you.

If you cannot handle what you have been given or are not content with what God has allowed how you to be Satan can attack or remove things till you start to appreciate what you have.

Look at the "parable of the talents". Those who had 10 and 5 talents appreciated what they were given and made more of them. He who had one talent did not appreciate what he had been given and did not use it for the King's benefit as the others had. So the king took the one talent away from him and gave it to another. If you do not use what God gives you or appreciate what he has done for you then you may find the ministry He had for you will be given to another along with all the blessings in that ministry.

*Tim 6:6-8 6 But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world; and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.*

### **Stewards of What?**

The two definitions of 'steward' that concerns us are the following:

One employed in a large household or estate to manage domestic concerns (as the supervision of servants, collection of rents, and keeping of accounts)

One who actively directs affairs : manager

*Tit 1:7KJV For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;*

It plainly states the people in charge of other Christians are stewards on behalf of God.

*KJV 1 COr 4:1 Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.*

The mysteries of God belong to heaven and not to the world run by Satan. Here we are told we are stewards of spiritual things we cannot see and other things of God that we can see.

Stewardship in the Bible is not just of physical things but things that cannot be seen but exist in our minds and hearts as well as the mind and hearts of others.

### **Ownership of our life**

Does a Christian own their life?

No! For two reasons:

Your spirit, soul and body are from God.

You were redeemed at Calvary and now belong to Jesus

A steward serves another by looking after the possessions they have been trusted with. Stewardship is the way we serve God and others with what He has trusted us with. Obedience to His will is the key to correct stewardship.

People believe they own things but really everything is really a stewardship of items trusted to us or others by God. He made everything and owns everything and has trusted to us the earth and all it has on or in it. There is thus a requirement to be a good steward of the earth and things on it (people, plants, animals, oceans etc.) and the things in it (minerals, oil etc.).

Our attitudes to giving, ministry, and our activities in daily living, either at work or home will only be correct if we understand all these are properly done as a part of stewardship of the things God has trusted to us, either as relationships, assets, our minds and bodies or the spiritual things of God.

### **Love is the Basis of Stewardship**

The basis of good stewardship is God's Love in us reflected to all around us: towards God, towards other people, towards ourself and in the way we deal with the possessions we have been trusted

with, so that all we do in regard to being a steward of these things, is based on love and not greed. The basis of all human relationships (as Satan's kingdom sees it) is how we value another because of their importance to us or because of how they can benefit us. The basis of all Christian relationships is God's Love in us that values all life as He values it.

*Mat. 5:43-47 ¶ Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?*

Human life is sacred to God as He owns it and thus Satan tries to denigrate and bring to destitution and destruction the life of a person. It is God's Love in us that makes us hold life sacred and deal with others in Love.

Stealing is usurping the stewardship of another and not the stealing of their actual possessions (after all the possessions are God and they are just stewards of them so you are really stealing from God). It is actually rebellion against God's authority over the things given to that person to be steward of. In the Christian life we don't own possessions as The Father owns them and we have been given them in trust to be used as best we can:

Firstly, as God requires His servants to use them for His service,

Secondly, for our own families need so as to provide for their needs,

Thirdly, meet to our own personal needs and enjoyment and not our lusts or greeds. Overriding all this is the fact they must still be used in accordance with the Will of God.

Lastly, to provide for the needs (and not greeds) of others,

God's Property has been trusted to us (which includes out spirit, soul, body mind, love, attitudes, emotions etc.) so that all we control can be used for His purposes and not just to hoard or satisfy our insecurities and lusts. We are to show God's Love in all we do just as His Love flows through all He purposes and does. We are warned by Paul:

*1 Tim 6:6 ff Being able to live the Christian life and be content with what you have is a great asset.. We brought nothing into this world when we were born and we taking nothing material out of it when we die. And having food and clothing (what we need to live and do God's work) let us be satisfied and happy. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful desires, which result in their destruction and going to perdition (hell). For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some desired more than they should have gone astray from the faith, and caused themselves many sorrows. But thou, O person of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.*

We are to show God's Love in all we do just as His Love flows through all He purposes and what He does. We are to be satisfied with what God determines that we need and not desire that which is not necessary and which will result in us doing things that we should not be doing, either to gain these desired items or as a result of having them.

The idea of making a personal profit is also foreign to the kingdom as Jesus owns everything and it is all His profit. Rewards, however, are a part of the Kingdom of God but not in a profit making or profit taking sense. These rewards are incentive whereby, if you do well, you will be trusted with

more responsibility and items to be steward of as well as have an eternal reward in your mansion in heaven where there is no decay or wearing out of things as there is on earth. A Christian may be blessed with prosperity but this is so He can distribute it to others. There will be sufficient to give him enjoyment but he must remember he has been entrusted by God to hold it on behalf of others as well.

Each person should have an attitude of stewardship towards their 'God entrusted possessions' and not that of an owner which is why it is said in the Bible that it is required of stewards that they be found faithful:

Faithful with what God has trusted us with,  
Faithful in our relationships to others,  
Faithful in our relationship to Him

The corollary of this is that people should not amass more than they need to do what God has asked them too. Having more than you need is a form of security and thus is not a reliance on God's promised provision and will also lead to sin. Maintaining these things also hinders your seeking the kingdom of God and His purposes as they distract you from this purpose with the extra activities and time required to keep and maintain these assets. Hence Jesus advised us:

*Mat 6:31-33 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*

The greatest gift from God and the most important thing we have been given is the stewardship of our free will - the ability to choose (within limits) the activities we want to do, including accepting or rejecting Him! As stewards we are accountable for how we use our free will and will give an account to God of the way we administered and used it.

It is free in the sense we can choose to follow God or choose to reject Him but once we choose to follow His guidelines, our will becomes voluntarily subservient to His will so the freedom, in a sense, is lost except for the voluntariness of the continuing to choose His will over ours. But the loss is our gain because the choices God has for us are better than those we can make for ourselves and the Joy and Peace that results is better than anything we can strive to obtain through our own efforts.

So while we have free will we willingly place it under the constraints of His will, making our love of and choice for Him and his things all the more precious in His sight.

Remember, The Father in heaven, Jesus and The Holy Spirit knows our every need. To desire more than what they give us is to say they do not know what we need which would mean they are not God. It would make these improper desires an idol and a 'god'! I am not talking about prayer for others but desiring more than we need to be content.

Remember, an idol is anything we voluntarily place between God, His purposes, His Requirements and our selves. When we sin, the thing that causes us to sin is an idol.

### **Obedience is good stewardship of your free will!**

If the stewardship of your free will is correct then all other stewardships will be in place. Because of this we are told to guard our heart (will) as its decisions determines your eternal fate.

Satan's desire is to ruin and destroy the things of God. He hijacked Adam and Eve and the kingdom of earth and has used his efforts since then to destroy God's control over it as well as the relationship people have with God. This is so he has a legal right to rule both the earth and its people. As they reject God they fall from God's Kingdom to that of Satan and thus under his rule.

At Calvary, Jesus took off him the right to rule the earth and is now the rightful ruler of earth and all on and in it. Soon He will come back to claim it. His rule of 1000 years will show how the earth should have been ruled by Satan and that Satan's kingship was evil and corrupt so that God is right in punishing him - if only for the way he has abused what God allowed him to have. Satan and his followers are not good stewards of what God has allowed them to have!

All who abuse the stewardships God has given them and follow the example of Satan in any way need to examine their salvation very carefully.

You will also be required to give an account of what God has trusted you with. Your reward in heaven and perhaps even getting to heaven will depend on what you have done with your knowledge of Jesus as well as what you have done with what God has provided you with.

Have you used what you are steward of for God's Glory and the furtherance of the Kingdom of God? Or have you kept them to yourself distributing knowledge of Jesus only when you had to or using what God has given you for your own selfish needs except when compelled to use these things for others.

What motivates you in the use of the knowledge and goods God has given you? Your own selfish needs or the Love you have for God and his Purposes?

It is this expression of God's Love that may ultimately determine your eternal fate.

It is required of stewards that they are faithful. Faithful to God's Love, Faithful to God's provision, Faithful to God's Purposes.

Are you a faithful steward?

### **Stewardship of the things of God**

God has trusted His mysteries to us to declare to the world. The Gospel is one that is imperative we share. There are others so it is up to you to learn what they are and how to explain them to those He requires you to tell or teach them too.

### **Stewardship of our relationship with The Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit lives in us so we need to develop and nurture the relationship we have with Him. This is so we can relate to Him as we should and hear Him clearly when He speaks to us as well as be sensitive to His feelings and desires for us (which represent what Jesus feels and desires).

### **Stewardship of our mind**

God has given us a will (mind) to train to what He requires it to be (a reflection of His mind). If we do not train this mind it makes it very difficult to serve Him and we may end up with mental illness. Psychosomatic illness is also the sign of a mind which has not been properly cared for. The mind is so important it is the chief area Satan attacks and because of this we are to guard the inputs into it. A bad steward will allow bad inputs into their mind. A good steward will allow inputs into their mind God would approve of.

### **Stewardship of free will, thoughts, emotions, attitudes (and resultant habits)**

These are all a gift from God. He did not have to give these to us but did so. They should be treasured and looked after as good stewards. The greatest of these attitudes is love which should be treasured as it should be expressed in all the other attitudes we have. Be a careful steward of your love as if that is not correct all the other attitudes etc will be out of place and not be expressed correctly.

### **Stewardship of time**

God has given us 24 hours a day for our use. If we do not fill the time with Godly things demons will fill it with ungodly things at the expense of our faith and witness. This is why we have a time of prayer and Bible reading first thing in the morning before the day starts (our interaction with the

world) so God can speak to us first before Satan gets in.

This does not mean we do not rest or relax. The seventh day is a time of rest and focus on God. A day of relaxing in the things He has given us to enjoy in the way He wants us to relax and enjoy them.

Each morning greet The Father, Jesus and The Holy Spirit and spend some time with them in fellowship and at night the last thing to do is say good night to The Father, Jesus and The Holy Spirit and thank them for the day.

### **Our Body as tools for God to use**

Our bodies are tools God uses to get tell others of the Gospel, to Glorify Him as well as promote The Kingdom of God. Since it is a tool we have the responsibility of being a good steward of it.

We are to keep it in good working order, taking care of it as if it was a machine as well as always having it ready for God to use. Anyone not keeping their body in good order is being a bad steward, misusing their God-given body and sinning. Dis-ease (disease) is a sign of misuse of your body.

### **Stewardship and daily living**

Everything we hold or touch is owned by God and should be treated as such. Even if Satan is using it, it still belongs to God as spoils of the victory at Calvary. To do otherwise is to be a bad steward, disregard God's property and show rebellion and a lack of love towards Him. If we love a person we look after what they own not for our benefit but to deal with the matter in a way that is best for them. That is what Love does.

The fact the item is under the stewardship of a non-Christian does not change this attitude as it is still God's and who knows whether a Christian will be the next steward of the item or that that owner may become a Christian in the future? Whether we are at work, at home or enjoying ourselves elsewhere this attitude of caring for God's possessions is really worshipping Him as well as showing our love for Him.

To be able to use a thing for God may require demons to be cast out of them and there are things used for the worship of Satan or the purposes of his kingdom which should be destroyed as they cannot be used for the purposes of The Kingdom of God.

### **Stewardship and Love**

Proper stewardship is a result of love for God and His things and the resultant desire to use properly what He has entrusted to you for His purposes only.

It is the servant heart of God in action in a person!

### **Earthly Relationships**

We are to relate to others on earth in love as a good steward of the relationship we have with them.

Love is the first principle as it is the Nature of God. We are to Love others as Jesus Loves them.

We are to respect authority lines: Legal: employer/employee etc. Those people the laws of the land have given authority over you.. (A minister only has no legal authority over you. He can minister to you spiritually only as God directs and serves God's authority in this and not his own.

Spiritual relationships: Spiritual father/mother, Mentors and similar

We are to be guided by the guided by The Holy Spirit in all the ways you relate to people:

Do not argue, reason, react or assume what people say Ask Holy Spirit what to do and then answer.

Do not do for them what The Holy Spirit says they should be doing for themselves.

Remember you are stewards of all God has given you and that includes His Love in you and the relationships He has given you.

## **Stewardship of Marriage**

God has given the wife to the husband and the husband to the wife. God has trusted him with her and her with him. He is a steward of her on God's behalf and she is a steward of him on God's behalf. It is required of stewards that they be found faithful.

Wives should obey her husband as a good steward of the domestic relationship with her husband that God has trusted to her. The stewardship is physical (domestic) as a man cannot provide for his wife's spiritual needs (eternal life, heaven, salvation etc.). He can only encourage her to pursue her relationship with God and provide the physical and emotional security for her to do this. Note that the wife obeys Jesus and submits to the domestic authority of husband as a result of obeying Jesus. Not to do this is not to disobey husband so much as to disobey Jesus. The wife is only required to respect and submit physically (not spiritually) to her husband while the husband is to love wife.

Jesus governs the spiritual side of the relationship and to give a man spiritual authority over a woman is to remove Jesus from his role as spiritual head of the wife and to imply man is spiritual steward of his wife! The man, however, does have a 'duty of care' to the woman to encourage and help her develop in Her spiritual walk with God. Nowhere has Jesus delegated His spiritual authority over a wife to a husband. He has delegated some authority (over domestic matters) but not this. No one else can delegate this on his behalf so to take Paul's writing as doing this is wrong! Paul did not have the authority to delegate the authority of Jesus!

The husband is to love his wife and look after her as Jesus looks after His people - self-giving, sacrificial love, placing the needs of his wife before his own needs. Not meeting her greeds that satisfy her flesh but meeting her needs that keep her alive and help her draw closer to Jesus.

Parents are also stewards of the children trusted to them. They are to provide for the needs of their children, guide them in the things of God and teach them how to be good parents themselves as well as how to correctly relate to God and others.

Life is a continual stewardship of all God entrusts is, which is why Love is so important as it is the basis of all relationships and all stewardship.

## **Stewardship of Sexuality**

Men and women are made differently sexually by God and they are to be stewards of their sexuality and not just allow it to be transformed in any way to the sexuality men have as Satan is trying to do this so that the roles blur and people do not realize the full potential of their sexuality as either maleness or femaleness.

There are common roles for men and women but there are also roles men and women are designed to do that are different and only a male or female can successfully do these roles.

Two examples that come to mind are fatherhood and motherhood. When the roles are changed there are stresses in the family and headship is not there. If Satan can blur these roles then headship disappears along with God's order in the family. This blurring of sexuality is one of the reasons many families are in a mess as each parent does not carry out the role they were designed for.

We must look after and cultivate that which makes up our maleness or femaleness, parts of which are uniquely different (our masculinity and femininity), which God has given us to help us in the unique roles He has given us to carry out the different tasks He has ordained as uniquely male or female.

This does not mean that the role of one is more important or superior to that of the other but that God has designated what each gender is to do. So each is important to God and as such has a purpose in His Kingdom and in the marriage. If these roles are carried out correctly they will fit like a glove and result in unity and order in the marriage. This interaction also needs to be looked after as a faithful steward of what God has given you.

## **Stewardship of your God-given Ministry**

Most people want to do big, important things for Jesus. Often this is so they will either feel they are doing God's Will adequately or need to do them for purposes of self-esteem.

God is interested only in the relationship He has with you and the love that flows from it. Nothing you do can change this. All Jesus requires is to relate to Him in love and do what He gives you well - no matter how small or trivial it appears to be!

As you obey God and do well the daily routine of life within the guidelines He has given you, your life becomes an act of worship and satisfies His requirements of you as you show by your attitudes He is worthy of being followed and by this you worship Him.

Love is faithful and is a good steward of all that is trusted to it and does what is required without thought of self or gain, thinking only of serving others and from this obtains its pleasure. Reward is not important. The benefit and joy and it gives to another is their reward.

The joy of being a good steward of your God-given ministry is to see the lives that are changed into the image of Jesus and to know that by this you are a good and faithful servant and faithful steward of all you have been entrusted with.

Remember that love never does for another what they should be doing for themselves and never neglects what God has given them so they use these God-given things to serve others.

### **Is man steward of the earth?**

No!

People point to Adam being given the care and protection of the garden of Eden as meaning he is was given stewardship of the earth. The garden was only a part of the earth and it was into the rest of the earth Adam was cast out.

The Garden was part of God's Kingdom on earth so Adam was given care of the things of God and not of the world (the earth is Satan's at the moment and God will not protect the things of Satan). You are responsible for what ever God gives you to maintain on His behalf and no more. While we may need to protect things for God and His Glory this will only be as He directs us to do.

Anyone who says Christians have responsibility to be a steward of the current world is helping Satan. It will be different in the Millennium when Jesus rules but in this period of time you are to care and protect only that which Jesus says you are steward of on His behalf.

### **Stewardship and wealth**

All the wealth in the world is God's. Satan just has it at the moment and is misusing it. He is not a good steward of it. As citizens of The Kingdom of God we have a responsibility as stewards of the things of The Kingdom to use God's property in a proper way.

The pursuit of expensive stuff involves earning money and takes you away from time you could use for God. We are told not to lay up treasure on earth but to send it ahead to heaven through our giving of money, possessions and time. We are told time is short and we do not need expensive things that will last long and that we will not really have that much time to enjoy them anyway. We are told that god will provide all we need for his work and that having food and clothing to be content. To desire more than God wants us to have is covetousness and takes us away from God's purposes for us. It is idolatry as well.

You don't need wealth to serve Jesus

You don't need power or authority

You don't need theological training

You just use what he has given you



and listen to the guidance of The Holy Spirit

If your family is in order and your house is neat and tidy, no one has a right to criticize your 'poverty' (lack of worldly wealth) and don't forget, in the Western world that the 'poverty' you live in is better than what 2/3 of the world live in.

Don't forget that all you have will be left behind when you die. You cannot take it with you. When you die, all you take with you is relationships: to Jesus, others (including family) and yourself. All you send ahead are the rewards you gained in this life through the wise stewardship of what God allowed you to have in this world.

### **Should a Christian have more than they need?**

No! To do so is greed or covetousness and implies God has not provided what you need to serve Him as He promised in Mat 6:33. This is why you are to check with God when buying things or you appear to have more money than you need. This way you will not buy what you do not need or will buy what He tells you to and you will not spend money carelessly but on what He wants done with it.

There are other reasons for not buying more than you need:

It is a command to be organised and tidy:

*1 Corinthians 14:40 " let all things be done decently and in order."*

It is good stewardship to only have what God wants you to have and not what another should have. If you have too much it is because someone else has less than they should.

It shows trust in God's Love to not tie up things as security so that others do not have what they need as the money your should have given them is tied up in your unnecessary assets.

It is a sign of faith in God's provision not to stock up on things excessively apart from normal needs and adequate reserves and do not value them more highly than God's Will for you.

It is a sign of a correct relationship and attitude to God in that you desire the things of God more than the things of the world.

As we remove the things from our lifestyle that clutter us and take our time we will have more time to relate to God and others so that we can also get these into order. It is to be remembered that how we express our relationships is what the Christian life is all about.

Remember that the main purpose of advertising is to buy things you do not need. If you needed them they would not have to advertise in the way they do for you to buy these things. This is why you are to ask the Holy Spirit what to buy and when to buy it and what to do with it. Then you will have what is best for you and not what someone else trying to sell something says is best for you.

### **A Short Summary?**

What are we stewards of? A short list is as follows:

- God's Love given to us
- God's Grace given to us
- God's Authority delegated to us
- God's Wisdom shown to us
- God's property in our possession
- God-entrusted relationships
- Our Life

A steward is one who is faithful in dealing with what has been trusted to them. We show our stewardship of these things in the way we use them in the everyday things we do.

If you are a good steward you will satisfy the requirements of Matt 6:33 as stewardship is part of the obedience required by the principals of this walk.

When you die you take only three things with you:

The stewardship of your relationship to The Father, The Holy Spirit and Jesus (how you related to them and used what God gave you For His purposes).

The stewardship of your relationship to others (how you how you related to others and used what God gave you for the benefit of others),

The stewardship of your relationship to yourself (how you used the life God gave you).

It is required of stewards that they are faithful. Only faithful stewards enter heaven and the restored Millennial Kingdom of God on Earth and later the New Heaven and New Earth that follows it.

### **Ownership versus Stewardship**

A person who owns something takes pride in ownership and protects it against others taking it from them. They do not easily part with the item owned for anything usually unless what is offered has more value to them than the item has.

A person who is a steward realizes he is only a caretaker and that the owner (Jesus) has the right using the item or of giving it to someone else. He takes satisfaction in the way he serves his stewardship and not in the ownership of the item.

Love is not possessive over things and a good steward will give to others what they need if they are able to within the guidelines of stewardship God has given them. They will not stockpile or withhold from others because they are a different church or denomination. It is different if God tells you to stockpile things as then He will have a purpose for doing this.

The denominations usually act as owner rather than steward and teach this to their people so that they do not ask Jesus usually what to do with what they have especially in the mundane repetitive things of life. This was the problem with the church in Corinth, those who had did not give to those who did not have hence the need for Paul to explain Love to them.

It is hypocrisy to say you have the Love of Christ and ignore the needs of your brethren when you are in a position to be able to meet it. So while denominations say they have the love of Jesus and ignore the needs of those in their own church or around them they are hypocrites and God cannot accept anything they 'offer to Him' or 'do for Him'.

Remember, a hypocrite will not be allowed to approach God so this form of hypocrisy also leads to eternal damnation.

### **Sharing possessions**

People say at times that Christians should have all things in common and not own things individually. That all belongs to the group. This is wrong. All belongs to Jesus and He gives us things to be stewards of on His behalf. It is not the group or person in charge who has the right to say what to do with something. It belongs to Jesus and He is to say what you are to do with it.

### **Stewardship and churches**

Churches are stewards of what they have. Not for the denomination or themselves but for God and His Purposes. Any church or similar organisation or fellowship not using what it has for the Body but for its own purposes cannot belong to the Kingdom of God as they have rejected the Lordship of Jesus over what He has given them to be stewards of. But why do they have church buildings anyway when these tie up the money of God and are treasure on earth.

God does not require them and many of the worlds people do not have a church building.

### **Stewardship and Jesus.**

*Matt 25:40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me*

How is this possible that doing something to someone affects Jesus as well? This only makes sense if we are His stewards of all that is brought across our path by God. So what you do to them you do to Jesus their owner.

God owns all, which is why he can separate the sheep and the goats at the Great White Throne Judgment as well as do with them what he pleases. He is lord of all so all belongs to Him so whatever we do to anything in a sense is done to Him as He is owner of it.

This is why serving (helping another) is important as you are being a good steward of 'what you can help that person with' as the person is his master's (God's) property and what you do to that person you do to its owner, God. It is also a reason for showing love to all as they are really His property and if we love Him we will look after his property on His behalf.

It is also why we keep His commandments as they are His guidelines for being a good citizen of His Kingdom and stewards of His property. The degree you keep them shows you how to relate to Him (eternal life Jn 17:3) and be a good steward (obtain eternal rewards).

In a sense, all earthly relationships are of equal value before God, so in all you need to show His Quality of Love, the only difference being :

How God says you can relate to each other in the relationship

How much person is willing to trust you and expose themselves to you

The authority level God has given you in the relationship.

Any authority is only given you so you can serve your King and another better and not just for personal gain.

### **Giving and Stewardship**

The good steward does not amass wealth for his own purposes as his Master gives him all he needs to live and serve Him and to do otherwise is theft of His Master's possessions. What he has above his needs he uses for his Master's purposes before his own out of love and gratitude to his Master for what the Master has done for him. However, at times, his Master will tell him to use some of this wealth for his own purposes, such as relaxing or improving His lifestyle.

If we are to be faithful stewards then the Will of the King must be expressed in all we do.

A lie of Satan is to make us think we are owners and not stewards of all we have so that God's Will is not as relevant in what we do with the "thing we own". So when we give we are giving from what we believe we own not from the reality of the situation - giving God back something from what He has blessed us with and prospered us with. Thus any kind of giving: time, money, possessions, worship, becomes an imposition and not a joyful returning to God some of what He has Graciously given us.

Matt 6:33 States that God gives us everything we need to do His work of which supporting others through giving and tithing is a part of. If He did not supply what we needed to do this He would be a liar and could not be God. This also means that there is no such thing as sacrificial giving as God supplies all you need to give to others. It also means He gives us what we need to bless others.

We cannot ourselves bless others ourselves. All we do is give what God gives us to bless them with.

## **Interest and profit**

Interest and profit are always at the expense of someone else's stewardship lifestyle. Satan knows this which is why big business and banks have grown so big in Satan's world system and because of their nature (tools for Satan) usually have no love, compassion or mercy in their ethics,

It is all a matter of perspective and understanding that we are stewards and not owners of all God has given to us, allowed to happen to us or brought across our path.

Trials are things God allows to happen to us and by the way we deal with the trial will show how good a steward we are of our attitudes to the suffering.

You want to get to heaven? Then you must be a faithful steward of all that God has given to you: life, possessions, people, work and relationships.

## **Saving up for a Rainy Day**

Are we to provide for the future?

Scripture in the Bible talks about laying up treasure in heaven by giving away what you do not need on earth. You are to provide for those dependent on you and out of your surplus help others.

Remember, anything you hoard or keep above what you need is a form of treasure (excess wealth) and unless God has told you to hoard this excess it will be used by Satan to compromise your faith or lead you away from it.

Mat 6:33 states that God will provide all you need if you seek His Kingdom and of being in a correct relationship with Him in all things

To lay up provision (save) implies God cannot meet your needs. This is different to budgeting where money is placed in an account to meet a future liability that you have as a result of ministry (and which God has directed you to do).

You are either seeking God's Kingdom and having your needs supplied or are not seeking Him and His Kingdom, in which case you will be seeking things you don't need and having to get them yourself as God will not provide them for you. Ever wonder why churches are always asking for money and trying to enforce tithing, even though it is not a New Testament requirement.

You are also to put aside any surplus on the first day of each working week (our pay day) to help those less fortunate than yourself. We give from our excess provided by God not from what is necessary to maintain our dependents. This excess is also included in Mat 6:33 as God promises to provide all of needs of which giving is a part.

Note that it is all our needs, not just ones we think we need. If our needs are not being met we need to ask why.

Perhaps we are in sin and not in a correct relationship with God

Perhaps we are not seeking His Kingdom and His Righteousness

Perhaps we are seeking things we do not need and have placed ourself out of His Will so that He will not meet these extra needs.

We cannot serve two masters. We cannot serve our own desires as encouraged and cultivated by Satan and that of God. We must listen to The Holy Spirit's Guidance and spend only on what he says to or else we will waste God's provision and not have sufficient for what God requires of us.

The promise is there in Mat 6:33 for the provision of all our needs as is the requirement to have our needs met- the requirement being to seek God and His Kingdom. So if you have financial problems I would do some real soul searching

## **The Difference between a need and a Greed**

A need is something you require to do the work of Jesus or to live as He requires you to live. Greeds are usually used to satisfy desires for things you don't need and are often a way to cope with emotional pain or hurt. Deliverance may be needed to deal with these hurt and pain. There is a grey area in between when at times we do not know what it is and we need to ask The Holy Spirit if it is a need or a greed.

Depending on circumstances a need can be a greed or a greed can end up a need. An example is drinking soft drink you purchase when you are dehydrated when there is water around to be had for free. That is a greed. But if there is no water then it is a need. Another example is Lobster. Eating it in a restaurant is a luxury but eating it in a survival situation is a need. This is where you need The holy Spirit to help you determine which is which.

## **Value of Worldly things**

How should we value the things of the world? We should value them as if we are walking away from them never to see them again. This does not mean we neglect them as we are stewards of them and must maintain them but it means we do not hold onto them when God tells us to let go. Look around you, this may be the last time you will see that scene and all that is in it.

We take our next step here because God allows us too and each step could be our last in this world. The things of this world pale in importance if we believe each step is our last and we may not pass that way again. Heaven and eternity then become our focus and our objectives then are directed towards doing everything we need to get there.

If we do not hold onto the things of this world God is able to remove them or have us give them to another and replace them for us as He needs and does so with something better suited to our needs than that which He removed.

If we do not hold onto things we can look ahead to that which is coming and deal with them in a way God wants us too without us being hindered by holding onto things we may never need again (Luke 9:62).

The challenge as a Christian is to be in the world and not hold onto the things of the world but be a good steward of those things you have been given to look after on behalf of God.

When you die everything you had and valued on earth will be left behind. You take nothing from this world with you when you die.

Remember God will always provide what we need to live and to minister on His behalf. All else is really superfluous and unnecessary to our Christian walk.

## **A Soldier Of The Kingdom**

### **Treasure**

#### *noun*

Accumulated wealth in the form of money or jewels etc.

Art highly prized for its beauty or perfection

Any possession that is highly valued by its owner

A collection of precious things.

#### *Verb*

Hold dear

Be fond of; be attached to.

Treasure is anything you hold to be of more value than the Will of God. Another name for it

would be an 'idol'.

*Matt 6:19-21 ¶ Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*

*1 Tim 6:6-8 But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.*

*2 Tim 2:3-4 Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.*

We are at was in hostile enemy territory (the kingdom of the world i.e. Satan's kingdom). Why should we expect the battle to be easy and not sustain any wounds or even to lose our life!

We serve a King (Jesus) who knows the master plan of the battle and who is directing us in the fight. Those who listen to the commander will do His Will in spite of what happens to them, as they trust the commander's provision during the battle and after when they are back in His Kingdom.

In what is to come, as The King unleashes His Weapons to attack His enemies, (wars, disasters, plagues, fire, drought, storms etc.) faithful, loving service to The King trusting in His Love for us is all that will really matter as nothing else will be certain.

Are you ready for The War to intensify?

A Soldier removes all that will hinder his ability to fight in a war so he can fight unhindered.

Have you removed all that is excess to your needs so you can fight unhindered? Or are you going into battle fat with trappings belonging to the enemy which are no use to you in the battle and which will only weigh you down.

You have been warned!

*Mat 6:24-34 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*

*Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?*

*And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?*

*Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.*

*But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*

*Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the*

*things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.*

You have been warned!!

The treasures you hold onto on earth may be the very ones that may lose you the battle or your salvation so as a soloier learn to travel light with only what your Master wants you to have.

### **What to do when others attack us unjustly**

*Rom 12: 19 Dearly beloved; avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine,. I will repay, saith the Lord.*

*Mat 5:38-39 Ye have heard that it hath been said; An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:. But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.*

These verses are in normal for the Old Testament where the Psalmist often cried to God for Him to remove their oppressor or vindicate them against evil doers.

Why are we not to take these things into our own hands and punish these people ourselves?

To do this would make us their judge in place of God. It would usurp His Authority and Stewardship over them and us and would show we do not understand our role in the Kingdom of God.

We represent God as His Ambassadors on earth, working in the enemy kingdom. This means we will be attacked unjustly at times but always with the approval of and within the limits set by God who will use these to test us and mature us through them. As we represent our King, complaints by the enemy must be made to him and this is what Satan does before the throne of God.

God then evaluates these complaints and if unjust will do what is necessary to uphold His Name (and we who are proclaiming it) and will deal with our accusers.

We are to rest in His Love and justice and continue to serve The King. In this case we continue to show His Love and servant heart to everyone and only avoiding people as directed by Him. This is usually for our own safety or because it is too early for us to serve Him in that area.

Turning the other cheek does not mean we are not to defend ourselves (God's property they want to misuse in some way). We are being good stewards if we prevent them damaging God's property of which we are a part of.

We must trust that God is a good steward of us and all that happens is under the control of His Stewardship and is also for our best. So if we are martyred or lose everything it is because He deems it best for His Kingdom and will replace these things with things that are better for us.

Praise and thank God for people regardless of what they have done to you (He is using them in your life in some way). Praise God for who they are (people He died for and wants in heaven with Him). Let God deal with them. They are His problem not yours. Affirm God's promises to you : salvation, peace, joy, provision, etc. Praise God and remind yourself of His Love, Provision, Mercy for each day, His Control and all that is happening for your eternal best.

### **Self-esteem**

(We can only be a good steward of our life if really know who we are in Jesus).

Self-esteem is really a bad word as the proper term is really "correct self-appreciation": Proper self-esteem is an appreciation of our strengths and weaknesses in relationship to the requirements of Jesus and not to those of the world. It is seeing us ourselves as God sees us! It is a part of the stewardship of whom we are!

This concept is so important and many people do not really understand it.

People usually get their self-esteem from personal achievements or what others think of them.

You cannot rely on results or achievements as God may ask you to do something knowing full well you will fail, for example, the purpose of the exercise may be to show corruption or error in other people by their rejection of the truths you are confronting them with. A part of the work of The Kingdom is to expose evil in people as guided by The Holy Spirit in the hope they will repent and turn to Jesus.

You cannot rely on the opinion of others as few people can unbiasedly evaluate another as they are usually also protecting their own 'self-esteem.

### **Where do you get self-esteem?**

Self esteem is derived from the fact that God loves you and sent Jesus to show you how to love Him then die for you to make a relationship with Him possible. Remember that salvation is a correct relationship with Jesus and The Father, being guided by The Holy Spirit. You are important to God and have value as a person in the eyes of God because of this relationship!

You have self-esteem because you are important to God.. No one has any right to criticize you if you are doing His Will as He alone is your judge and often the criticism is for a wrong motive. The people criticising you need to show they are superior to you because they feel so inferior about themselves and get their esteem from apparently being better than others.

### **You are Important to God**

#### **Why are you important to God?**

He gave you life and brought you into existence. He is a God of Love and Loves you as you are His child. This is why He sent Jesus to die in your place so that the barriers between He and you were removed so you could enter into a personal relationship with Him if you wanted too. This relationship would survive death and continue into eternity.

You must be a good steward and do your part of the relationship to obtain the benefits of it. By this you show your Love for Him and that you are worthy of this relationship.

You are not important because of anything you achieve in this life. You are important because God values the relationship He has with you and Loves you as His Child!

### **On Work**

Why Work? There are at least two reasons:

*Eph 4:28 Thieves must give up stealing; rather let them labor and work honestly with their own hands, so as to have something to share with the needy.*

*2 Th 3:10 For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.*

Anyone who eats of what another has laboured for without a valid reason for doing so is stealing from them. Anyone who will not work without a valid reason is stealing from those who feed them and ultimately from God.

Anyone who uses something that is entrusted to another without a valid reason for doing so is stealing from them and ultimately from God.

### **Work Ethics**

If you do your work wholeheartedly as a good steward of it, to please Jesus you do not need to fear what man thinks as Jesus, who is your judge, is satisfied and will take responsibility for the results of your labour. If applying God's principles to your work loses you anything then remember that God will replace it with better.



Remember! You are working for more than wages or the approval of man! You are also working towards your eternal destiny!

If you have proper self esteem and self-worth you will work as you should otherwise your work will reflect your inadequacies.

### **Gambling**

God requires you to work for your living and will not allow you to win at gambling to circumvent this principle (Gal 6:7-8). The devil will gladly help you win for a time when gambling till you are addicted and cannot stop. Then you will lose all you have and including possibly your salvation (which of course is his objective).

### **Self-worth reviewed**

You are worth a price beyond value!

God thought you were important enough to bring into existence.

The Father thinks you are important enough for Him to meet all your needs.

Jesus thought you were important enough to die for.

The Holy Spirit thinks you are important enough for His Presence to be in you and guide you

This is how valuable God thinks you are!

No person can ever value you more than that!

### **In Summary**

Stewardship pervades all you do. Happy is the man that understands this and puts it into practice in his life.

When he faces God he will hear:

*"Well done thou good and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of your reward."*