

# What is stewardship?

A steward takes care of what belongs to others on their behalf.

Everything we have comes from God.

*Matthew 5:44-45 But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.*

When we combine this scripture in other context, it does not say being good does not matter because good and bad get taken care of the same...just in case any of us may use this as an excuse to be a little lax in doing our part.

We are all stewards because God made and owns everything. Things put together by man use core ingredients made by God.

There is a joke about some Beings who decided to challenge God and show that they can create life also. When the demonstration began, they reached for some dust to begin the process, and God said, "No No...get your own dirt."

There is no getting around this. If God owns everything the only way anything can truly be ours is if He gives it to us. If we do not use what He provides for us responsibly, we will not be blessed with the greater abundance God wants us all to have. This abundance refers to eternal blessings, and can also include our present life.

God provides us with things like food and shelter to use, and other things like children, employees, and resources to look after. This is all part of his plan since creation.

So, everything we consume, use, build, store up, and have authority over can be considered to require some act of stewardship.

Many of us have not spent much time directly thinking about the principles of stewardship. This could be because we tend to take things for granted and consider what we have in terms of "entitlements". When God says He will freely give, He does not mean we can willfully disobey him and still be eternally blessed.

Actually, when we do think about being a steward we sometimes lump it together as part of another name; **works**. When we don't practice good stewardship it makes it difficult to do good works. Because we are instructed to do good works, we by default are required to be good stewards. When we talk about one, we have to include the other even if we don't mention them both.

Our responsibility concerning stewardship results in works when we practice it, and sin by omission when we don't. This is because we all are part of God's plan, including the work he has set aside for each of us. Without His help in addition to our cooperation, we are all bad stewards and incapable of doing good works.

Some common things we associate with stewardship based on our limited understanding are:

### **Money**

We are told to tithe. Far too many of us are not even this far. But it does not end there. How do we use the rest, and for what purpose?

The better we handle what we have, the more we will be trusted with. On the flip side if we do nothing with what little we are given, even what we had will be taken from us.

### **Time**

We each have the same number of hours in a day, just a different number of days.

How each day is spent obviously determines how one lifetime can produce more than another even if the greater producer lives a shorter life. Realizing that this is an incredibly obvious statement, the fact is that such an important thing as this is somehow totally overlooked or ignored by too many of us.

### **Materials**

Jesus tells us we should share what we have. This does not mean to give everything away and be in a constant state of absolute poverty, it just means we should be willing to help others when the need comes up.

In the context of stewardship it would then stand to reason that having an abundance of God's bounty in order to be able to share it with others in need is good stewardship.

Material possessions become idols when we gather them for the sake of keeping everything for ourselves.

### **Those under our authority/guardianship.**

People in authority over others are held accountable to God for the way they exercise that authority. What we do here not only affects us, but everyone we are responsible for.

This form of stewardship is evident in the actions we take, or don't take, in every aspect of our lives. Family, Employee's well-being, Duties on behalf of Employers, etc.

**Are we liable?** Simply put, yes. To add to the confusion, usually stewardship involves combining one or all of these things when we cooperate with God in his plan. We can view this as: **A completed work is results and stewardship is the method and framework for delivery.**

If we hoard everything we acquire we are not good stewards. If we give away everything, including our time, we are not good stewards. Examples of this would be those who would give you their last dime, then turn around and borrow more than that from someone else. It is a good thing to have a big heart, but a big misguided heart clearly follows one guideline at the expense of another.

The desirable end result then would be to hear “Well done, good and faithful servant.....”

Everything else is but the trials we face to get there.

**Confirmation:** The principle of Stewardship is actually intertwined with all things we do with and for God. This is evident from Genesis to Revelation. So again, we find its definition in the application of every action we take or don't take relative to our relationship with Him.

So, for confirmation of what is written here see *The Holy Bible* in the entire context of scripture. The issue of stewardship is that big.

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