

"STEWARDSHIP"

Zoe Christian Fellowship of Whittier
Bishop Edward A. Smith

INTRODUCTION TO LESSON

Life Group Lesson Objective: Understanding and applying the principle of godly stewardship.

Life Group Leader preparation and meditation:

Scripture says: The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it. – Ps 24:1

Psalms 104:1-5 – We are stewards, not owners. We simply manage what He has established, based upon His values and missions. – John C. Maxwell

Read Matt 25:14-30: We should all want to hear what the Lord says in verse 21: “Well done, good and faithful servant! You were faithful with a few things. I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your Lord.”

In Colossians 3:23-24 Paul writes: Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

Riches and honor come from You, and You are the ruler of everything. Power and might are in Your hand, and it is in Your hand to make great and to give strength to all. – *1 Chronicles 29:12* of lights; with Him there is no variation or shadow cast by turning. – *James 1:17*

Last month in October we studied Fruitfulness, this month lets look at how we can manage our fruitfulness as “Good Stewards”. We learned “we all have the capacity to bear fruit”.

- Gen 1:22 and God blessed them and said be fruitful.....
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- Every generous act and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father

Week #1: God’s instruction to the rich.

Group Discussion Questions: God is not a respecter of persons. Should we take heed to the principle that Paul instructed to Timothy regarding the rich?

I Tim 6:17 – We should...not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy.

- Do good that you be rich in good works
- Ready to give, willing to share
- Storing up for yourselves a good foundation

A steward is one who manages the possessions of another. We are all stewards of the resources, abilities and opportunities that God has entrusted to us, and one day each of us will be called to give an account for how we have managed what God has given us.

- Our children & spouse
- Ministries, businesses
- Opportunities
- Things and stuff, etc

What other godly motives are important for “good steward”?

Let’s be honest – Discussion: On a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being perfect) how would you describe your stewardship? How can you improve?

Week #2: For I am the Lord, I do not change

Group Discussion Questions: Have you strayed away from your stewardship of what God owns, how can we become more mindful of our obligation of a steward (manager)?

Malachi 3:6-12: the blessing of the tither.

Everything belongs to God...including the tithes.... the people had gotten away from being good stewards of the tithes and God told them they would be cursed with a curse! Vs 8-9;

- God says if we practice good stewardship he promises to bless us greatly. God wants to prosper his people.
- The people complained harshly – Mal 3:13
 - Remember we are stewards of what God owns
 - If we disobey he will allow the devourer to destroy what we produce.
 - We only manage God’s resources

God expects us to be good stewards in every area of our lives, not just money.

Let’s be honest – Discussion: Share areas of stewardship and how are you personally managing it/them? How does faith affect your stewardship?

Week #3: All of our work matters to God

Group Discussion Questions: Share how your work matters for the Kingdom.

Whether our work is paid or volunteer – God will reward us when we manage the opportunities he has given us.....

During this Week of teaching please place a strong emphasis on stewarding the lives of the young growing believers in Christ. We should all be admonished to be engaged, be intentional and faithful in growing disciples Dedicated followers of Christ who can eventually teach others also – Bishop Ed Smith

- Changing lives – is what God has called us to do at Zoe!

Colossians 3:23-24: “**Whatever you do**, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

Timothy, my dear son, be strong through the grace that God gives you in Christ Jesus. You have heard me teach things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Now teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others.” 2 Timothy 2:1-2 NLT

You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.” John 15:16 NKJV

Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.” I Corinthians 4:2 NKJV

His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord. Matthew 25:21 NKJV

The Bible shows us in the parables of the Kingdom that faithful stewards who do the master’s will and are faithful with the master’s resources can expect to be rewarded.

Opportunities for ministry are great ways to exercise good stewardship

- Jesus said “go ye therefore into all the world and make disciples”. He also gave us authority....to lay hands on the sick, cast out demons.... Mark 16:17-18

Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!

Let’s be honest – Discussion: Understanding that all our work matters to God, how can we make sure that it matters in a godly way, give clear example?

Week #4: Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus

Discussion Question: Does the mindset of a steward come easy for you?

According to Paul, here is the mindset of Christ. “(He) made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men” (Philippians 2:7).

- Thought it not robbery to be equal with God
- Took upon himself the form of a servant
- He humbled himself and became obedient unto death (even the death of the cross)

When Paul says boldly, “I have the mind of Christ,” he is declaring, “I too have made myself of no reputation. Like Jesus, I have taken on the role of a servant.”

- And Paul says that the same holds true for every believer: “We [all can] have the mind of Christ” (1 Corinthians 2:16 - but we have the mind of Christ)
- A servant serves his master, he doesn’t have his own agenda.
- Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.
 - He emptied himself (to serve and manage what God had called Him to do)
– Philippians 3:7

We should look forward to hearing Jesus say WELL DONE GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT!

Let’s be honest – Discussion: on a personal level do you have the mind of Christ as it pertains to be a “good steward”?