

“Responsible Stewardship”

Becoming the People God Wants Us to Be #3

INTRODUCTION

God has called us to be good stewards. But this may require us to “rethink” our attitudes toward what we “own” and what we only “manage”. Stewardship extends to all aspects of our lives including our relationships, our abilities, our time, our money, our body and even our planet. In this study we will consider how to live as good stewards of all that God has given us.

Ice Breaker (Optional):

Can you think of an example of a company, business or brand that has suffered because of poor stewardship (or management)?

STUDY QUESTIONS (45 MIN)

Focus

Q1. Read Psalm 24:1; Colossians 1:16; 1 Corinthians 4:7; Deuteronomy 8:18

In the process of becoming a good steward we may need to change our focus. One of the keys to getting started is to have a clear understanding of what belongs to God. What do Psalm 24:1 and Colossians 1:16 tell us about the extent of God’s ownership? We may think of ourselves as self-sufficient, but what do 1 Corinthians 4:7 and Deuteronomy 8:18 reveal about our dependence on God? What do you find to be the hardest thing to relinquish to God’s ownership?

Begin

Q2. Read 1 Peter 4:10; Proverbs 27:23, Matthew 25:14-34

One way to begin is to understand the “ends” that Jesus has for us in the various areas of stewardship. What “ends” did each of the three servants experience and why? Let’s apply this to the stewardship of our abilities. What are the purposes God has expressed in 1 Peter 4:10 with respect to our “gifts”? How would you describe how well you are doing in fulfilling those purposes? What is the first step you can take to use your abilities as God intended you to?

Practice

Q3. Read Hebrews 5:14

Once you have begun good stewardship you will need to apply it

consistently in order to improve your stewardship skills. What improvement did the believers find when they practiced discernment in Hebrews 5:14? What is one area of stewardship you have been consistent in observing? Share with your group the difference you’ve seen over time as you practiced good stewardship.

Excel

Q4. Read 2 Corinthians 8:7; Galatians 6:9; Hebrews 12:1

As we take on the challenge to steward all that God has given us, and to regularly practice our stewardship, we will excel (2 Corinthians 8:7). Along the road to excellent stewardship there will be challenges. What does Hebrews 12:1 encourage us to do when we encounter distractions? Perhaps one of the greatest challenges is simply growing weary. What reason did Paul give the Galatians for not giving up (Galatians 6:9)? What can we do to guard against discouragement as we pursue excellence in our stewardship?

WRAP-UP

Responsible stewardship means becoming better stewards. To become a better steward we need to change our focus to recognize God’s ownership of everything. We begin where we are and aim to accomplish God’s purposes with what he has entrusted us by diligently practicing good management. And if we do not grow weary, and remove whatever hinders us, we will excel in caring for all God has gifted us with, and we can in turn share those gifts with others.

Memory Verse

The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it;

Psalm 24:1 NIV

PRAYER (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life: _____

Pray for your group members’ needs:

Challenge: In question 2 we applied the first step of good stewardship to our abilities. Now apply it to stewardship of your Heart (Proverbs 4:23), Body (1Corinthians 6:19-20), Time (Ephesians 5:15-17), Money (Proverbs 3:9), Relationships (John 13:34) and Gospel (Psalms 71:18)

Q1.

Psalm 24:1 NIV - 1 Of David. A psalm. The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it;

Colossians 1:16 ESV - 16 For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities--all things were created through him and for him.

1 Corinthians 4:7 ESV - 7 For who sees anything different in you? What do you have that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it?

Deuteronomy 8:18 ESV - 18 You shall remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your fathers, as it is this day.

Q2

1 Peter 4:10 ESV - 10 As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace:

Proverbs 27:23 ESV - 23 Know well the condition of your flocks, and give attention to your herds,

Matthew 25:14-34 -Read in your Bibles

Q3

Hebrews 5:14 ESV - 14 But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.

Q4.

2 Corinthians 8:7 NIV - 7 But since you excel in everything--in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you--see that you also excel in this grace of giving.

Hebrews 12:1 NIV - 1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us,

Galatians 6:9 ESV - 9 And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.

Prayers Con't: _____

