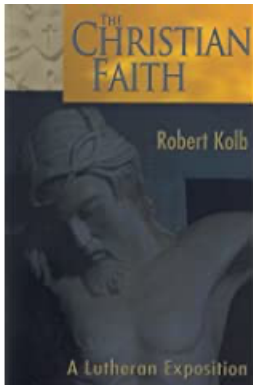


Faith Aflame: 360 Degrees



Living as God's Child A Christian Steward

Session Two – Part One



Introduction: A steward is someone who has been entrusted with the care of someone else's property. The steward will, at some time, be required to account to the owner for the management of the owner's property. A Christian steward is one who is called by God to manage His property for His purposes. A steward is always a manager and never an owner.

The purpose of this session is to help the individual Christian steward understand that he/she is a steward by God's grace, live as His disciple, and manage all that God entrusts to him/her with joy and generosity all so that God's purposes are accomplished and His mission enhanced.

Three things are necessary to live the abundant life Jesus came to give:

- A sense of identity
- A sense of meaning
- A sense of security

God is the only source of our **ultimate** identity, meaning, and security.

Bible Study: Matthew 13:44 "The Hidden Treasure"

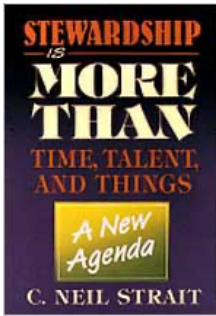
Stewardship Questions:

1. Who is this God we serve?
2. What do I manage?

A Christian Steward

We are all stewards. In the Old Testament a steward was one who administered the affairs of a household. Joseph is a good example of a steward. (Genesis 39:1-6a) In the New Testament the concept was the same. (Luke 19:11-27) As time went on the term broadened to refer to an officer of the royal household. It was a position of considerable importance. Turner Clinard writes in *Responding to God*, "But never in history did the steward own the things with which he worked or which he invested; he was always responsible to his master for his care of them." (Page 11)

I am a Christian steward. In Holy Baptism God calls me to be His own. He gives me an identity. I am a Christian. I am a disciple. I am a steward. *What does this mean?*

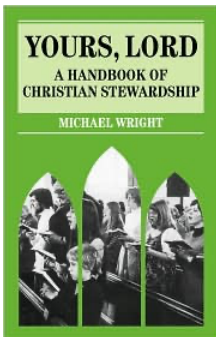


“Stewardship,” writes C. Neil Strait in *Stewardship is More Than Time, Talent, and Things*, “asks us to review our agendas. It asks for radical changes in accountability where the things of God are being misused or ignored. It asks us to shift the emphasis from getting to giving, from accumulation to accountability, and from what we give to why we give. God wants us to use and enjoy His gifts, but He knows this will only happen where He retains ownership.”

So...let’s review our agendas!

1. What about accountability? To whom am I accountable and for what?
2. Where do I see the things of God being misused or ignored?
3. Am I more concerned about getting or giving?
4. How do I determine the use of the time God has given me?
5. How do I determine where and when I will use the talents God has given me?
6. What percentage of my current income do I return to the Lord through the church to which I belong? How do I make that determination?

If we are to grow in this area of personal stewardship it will likely mean a change in thinking, in values, in relationships, and in behaviors.



Michael Wright, in *Yours, Lord: A Handbook of Christian Stewardship*, writes, “Our service to God is not just in church or on church business. We serve God at work, in our home and family life, in our involvement with voluntary service, in local government, politics, unions and business organizations. We can serve God by the behavior we show and the views we explain in social gatherings and in our leisure pursuits. There is no part of life which is not God’s.” (page 6)

Wright continues, “Christian stewardship is:

- Thankfulness and praise to God for the whole of his creation;
- To regard the resources of the earth as riches to be used responsibly to benefit all mankind;
- To regard our lives, our powers, and our possessions as gifts from God to be enjoyed and used in his service;
- To be responsible for sharing in Christ’s mission to the world, helping others to come to Christ, and together with us, sharing in the work of Christ today.” (Page 9)

How are you growing in your personal stewardship in each of the above areas?

