



**4 PRINCIPLES
OF
BIBLICAL**
stewardship



Every faculty you have, your power of thinking or of moving your limbs from moment to moment, is given to you by God. If you devoted every moment of your whole life exclusively to His service, you could not give Him anything that was not in a sense His own already.

“What does stewardship look like in our lives today?”

Unfortunately many Christians today only associate the idea of stewardship with sermons they have heard about church budgets and building programs.

The idea of biblical stewardship is about something much more expansive. I believe it is where the concepts of faith, work and economics intersect.

There are four important principles about biblical stewardship we must understand.

THE PRINCIPLE OF OWNERSHIP

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THE PRINCIPLE OF OWNERSHIP

The psalmist begins the 24th psalm with,

- *The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.*
- In the beginning of Genesis, God creates everything and puts Adam in the Garden to work it and to take care of it. It is clear that man was created to work and that work is the stewardship of all of the creation that God has given him.

THE PRINCIPLE OF OWNERSHIP

- This is the fundamental principle of biblical stewardship. God owns everything, we are simply managers or administrators acting on his behalf.
- Therefore, stewardship expresses our obedience regarding the administration of everything God has placed under our control, which is all encompassing. Stewardship is the commitment of one's self and possessions to God's service, recognizing that we do not have the right of control over our property or ourselves.

THE PRINCIPLE OF OWNERSHIP

- Echoing Deuteronomy 8:17, we might say: “My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.” But Deuteronomy 8:18 counsels us to think otherwise:
- Remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth.

THE PRINCIPLE OF RESPONSIBILITY

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THE PRINCIPLE OF RESPONSIBILITY

- Although God gives us “all things richly to enjoy,” nothing is ours. Nothing really belongs to us. God owns everything; we’re responsible for how we treat it and what we do with it. While we complain about our rights here on earth, the Bible constantly asks, What about your responsibilities? Owners have rights; stewards have responsibilities.

THE PRINCIPLE OF RESPONSIBILITY

- We are called as God's stewards to manage that which belongs to God. While God has graciously entrusted us with the care, development, and enjoyment of everything he owns as his stewards, we are responsible to manage his holdings well and according to his desires and purposes.

THE PRINCIPLE OF ACCOUNTABILITY

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THE PRINCIPLE OF ACCOUNTABILITY

- 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 our care, and one day each one of us will be called to give an account for how we have managed what the Master has given us.

THE PRINCIPLE OF ACCOUNTABILITY

Matthew 25:14-30

“For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. 15 And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. 16 Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. 17 And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. 18 But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord’s money. 19 After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them.

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“So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, ‘Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.’ 21 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.’ 22 He also who had received two talents came and said, ‘Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.’ 23 His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’

24 “Then he who had received the one talent came and said, ‘Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. 25 And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.’ 26 “But his lord answered and said to him, ‘You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. 27 So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. 28 So take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents.

29 'For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. 30 And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

THE PRINCIPLE OF ACCOUNTABILITY

- This is the maxim taught by the Parable of the Talents. God has entrusted authority over the creation to us and we are not allowed to rule over it as we see fit. We are called to exercise our dominion under the watchful eye of the Creator managing his creation in accord with the principles he has established.

THE PRINCIPLE OF ACCOUNTABILITY

- Like the servants in the Parable of the Talents, we will be called to give an account of how we have administered everything we have been given, including our time, money, abilities, information, wisdom, relationships, and authority.
- We will all give account to the rightful owner (God) as to how well we managed the things he has entrusted to us.

THE PRINCIPLE OF REWARD

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THE PRINCIPLE OF REWARD

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.

THE PRINCIPLE OF REWARD

- The Bible shows us in the parables of the Kingdom that faithful stewards who do the master's will with the master's resources can expect to be rewarded incompletely in this life, but fully in the next.

We all should long to hear the master say what he exclaims in Matthew 25:21:

Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.

THE 4 PRINCIPLES OF STEWARDSHIP

- As Christians in the 21st century, we need to embrace this larger biblical view of stewardship, which goes beyond church budgets or building projects, though important; it connects everything we do with what God is doing in the world.
- We need to be faithful stewards of all God has given us within the opportunities presented through his providence to glorify him, serve the common good and further his Kingdom.