

# **THE CHRISTIAN'S STEWARDSHIP**

## **Stewardship Recognizes Ownership**

I Corinthians 6:19-20

Someone was asked for the simplest definition of stewardship he knew. He immediately replied: HE OWNS IT ALL! Once we recognize this, most of our stewardship problems will be solved.

Listen to what the Bible says:

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" ... and "God created man in His own image." (Genesis 1:1, 1:27)

"The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." (Psalms 24:1)

"For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills." (Psalms 50:10)

"Your silver and your gold is mine." (I Kings 20:3)

This is clear. Everything is God's by nature of creation and He has not surrendered the title of ownership to anyone at anytime.

It is also true that ownership is His by our surrender to Him when we met Him. We know as the Bible teaches - "You are not your own. You are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are God's. (I Corinthians 6:19-20) We are "not redeemed with...silver and gold...but with the precious blood of Christ" (I Peter 1:18-19).

This sacrificial love of Christ for us is the motivating force that causes the Christian to surrender himself completely to the Savior. He becomes like the Macedonians who "first gave themselves to the Lord." (II Corinthians 8:5)

How many times have you seen a business with a large sign that says, "Under New Management." They are saying that the business is under new ownership. They are implying that things are different. Changes have been made.

This is certainly true in the Christian life. When it comes to obedience, the Christian must obey his Lord's command and follow His leadership. You give up control to Him.

An aviation cadet, stricken with blindness while on a practice solo flight, radioed the control tower of his critical situation. This message came back: "Follow my instructions implicitly." The control officer then kept the blinded cadet circling the landing field until it was completely cleared and an ambulance and other emergency equipment were waiting. Finally he radioed detailed

directions. By following each order as it was given, the cadet was able to make a perfect landing without injury to himself or to his plane or anyone on the ground.

God is in the control tower of our lives. Unquestioned obedience to him is essential if we are to avoid many evils, errors, and even disaster.

“Trust and obey, for there’s no other way, to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey.”

This life requires faithfulness. The New Testament says, “It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.” (I Corinthians 4:2) Jesus taught this in His parables. He concluded his teaching by commending the obedient ones - “Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things.” (Matthew 25:21ff)

Our faithfulness is measured by the use of our time, talent, touch, thoughts, treasure and testimony. This means everything when we realize we shall also give an account of our stewardship.

This is most obvious when seen in the stewardship of our possessions. The Bible is clear. We all know this and yet we look for ways to avoid or evade responsibility.

Like Ogden Nash we say: “Why did God give us agility. If not to escape responsibility.”

We forget (or try to forget) that all we have is His. He owns it all. We struggle with how much of “my money” should I give when we should be saying how much of “God’s money” should I keep. It is all His!

This story from the past has a searching message for today’s Christian.

Many years ago a man had the highly responsible position of caring for a lighthouse on a rugged coast. Each month he received a new supply of oil to keep the beacon shining to warn ships of their danger.

Visitors often called on the keeper. A woman from the nearby village came to him and pleaded for a bottle of oil to use in the stove to keep her children warm. A father asked for a little oil that his son might have fuel for the lamp by which he studied his lessons. Other visitors came and begged oil for various purposes, all of which seemed reasonable enough. The keeper gave a jar here and a bottle there of the precious oil until toward the end of the month he noticed that the supply tank was nearly empty.

One night the light of the beacon went out, because there was no more oil. It was a stormy night and that evening three ships crashed upon the rocky coast.

*Lord, I want to handle my life and everything in it as a steward.  
You own all and all of me. Help me to be a “well done” kind of steward.*

The Keeper was apologetic but the reply of the officials was firm, "You were given one task: you were stewards of the light! The tragedy is your fault."

And Jesus said, "Give an account of your stewardship."

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You own all and all of me. Help me to be a "well done" kind of steward.*