

Lesson 5: Stewardship

Introduction

Savings vs. Investments – which is better?

Proverbs 27:23-24 – “Know well the condition of your flocks...for riches are not forever...”

Investment – putting money into a business endeavor in hopes of a profit (“return on investment”)

Rather than which company has stocks that will sell, better to focus on which company do I believe in?

Even better, how will this investment “make friends” for heaven—an eternal investment?

Luke 16:1-13 – The Parable of the Unjust Steward

Definition: “steward” = a manager of another’s property

What are some aspects of stewardship that we find in this parable?

Sample Answers:

Resources – As a steward, everything you “have” really belongs to God (1 Chronicles 29:14).

If you doubt it, try to keep it (1 Timothy 6:7). We really own nothing.

Authority – As a steward, you can do whatever you please with God’s property—remarkable!

The shrewd steward *wasted* possessions (v. 1) and then cut deals with them (vv. 5-7).

Accountability – As a steward, we will answer someday to Him for what we did with His property.

The master said, “Give an accounting of your management” (v. 2).

Bottom Line: “It is required of a steward that he be found *faithful*” (1 Corinthians 4:2).

Main trait of stewardship: *Faithfulness* – everything is *entrusted* to his management:

1. Loyalty – a firm commitment to the owner and his well-being (relationship)
2. Honesty – a firm commitment to the truth

Matthew 25 – The Parable of the Talents

A *talent* is a weight, a bar of precious metal, such as gold or silver.

Typical estimate of worth: 6000 denarii – about 15 to 20 years of day labor.

Approximate worth: \$500,000 – and the first servant received five!

Now do you understand why the third servant felt scared of not losing it—how could he pay it back?!

Are you intimidated by the responsibility of adulthood or thrilled with its potential?

Is the Master really a “hard man” with unreasonable expectations (v. 24)?

Do you see now why this lack of productiveness is ultimately due to unbelief?

Do you see why the Master rightly called this man “wicked, lazy,” and “worthless,” and threw him in hell?

Should we not maintain *both* an attitude of the fear of the Lord and the love of His name?

Illus. Maple Grove, Minnesota – pondering this parable in the parking lot of Wendy’s

Application

First, make friends for yourselves in Eternity.

Impress *people* with the goodness of faith in your *vocation* (Titus 2:9-10).

Invest in *people* directly with the aim of their *salvation*.

Second, take little tasks seriously.

The kind of person you are with the little things indicates what you will be with the big things (Luke 16:10).

If you do not take high school tasks seriously, what makes you think you’ll do better as an adult?

You are still the same person!

Therefore, take the opportunities of *two more summers* to prepare well for your adult callings.

1. Be faithful with what little you have—the key is your character, not the size of your bank account.
2. If you are faithful with little, you will be entrusted with more—and ultimately, with what is your own.
3. Stewardship is exhilarating or terrifying! Heaven or hell is on the line.
4. None of it is yours—how liberating! You just have to manage it.

Illus. “God’s house burned down, not mine” (John Wesley).

Sum: *Where are your savings? Where are your investments?*