

Extend  
Session 1

# Stewardship of Life

Updated: June, 2013

## FURTHER DIMENSIONS OF WITNESS

### STEWARDSHIP OF LIFE

Some people are very accountable – they report, they fulfill assignments, etc.

Others try to avoid accountability at all costs. But, their best efforts at avoidance will only be for a time. There is a day coming when everyone will be held accountable.

The Bible reveals that there are TWO JUDGEMENTS coming:  
All will appear at one or the other

- \* The “Great White Throne” Judgment - for all unbelievers  
There will be only one question here:
  - Did they commit themselves to Christ as Lord and Savior;
  
- \* The “Judgment Seat of Christ”- for Christ’s followers I Cor. 3:13  
Everyone’s work [deeds] will be judged for its value in the light of the Kingdom
  - What they have done
  - How they have done it, and
  - Their motivation in doing itWhat was really accomplished??

We have already learned that God has placed us here to be His stewards (managers, overseers). On that day He will ask us, “What did you do with what I gave you in the way of:

- Finances (material resources)
- Daily contacts (family, friends, and associates)
- Opportunities (to pray; witness and build relationships through deeds of love and mercy.)

Following Jesus gets us down into the everyday activities of our life.

In this session we will examine additional areas of stewardship for which we will be held accountable - areas that have a major impact upon our fulfilling His plan and calling for our lives.



## 1. OUR GOODS

- \* John the Baptist was preaching, - “repent, and produce the fruits of righteousness”
  - If you have 2 coats > give one to the poor
  - If you have extra food > share with the hungry

- \* For some of us money is easier to give than possessions.

- We have a tendency to view the possessions we have earned, bought or otherwise acquired as “mine.”

- The Lord wants us to consider our house, our clothes, and our other possessions as belonging to Him.

- If God wants to use any of it for the extension of His Kingdom, then we should be glad to share it.

- \* I John 3:17 – ties this down!!

- If someone has money enough to live well, and sees a brother in need, and won't help him – how can God's love be in him? (Living Bible)*

STEWARDSHIP OF LIFE

Built upon the foundation of tithing our income, these additional aspects must be part of our life of stewardship.

WE ARE ALSO TO GIVE AN ACCOUNT FOR THE USE WE MAKE OF:

1. OUR                     **GOODS**                    .  
*Neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common—Acts 4:32*

*“He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise”—Luke 3:11*

*Do not forget to do good and to share for with such sacrifices God is well pleased —Hebrews 13:16*

*But whoever has this world’s goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?—I John 3:17*

2. OUR                     **HOSPITALITY**                    .  
 Cheerfully sharing food, shelter, and spiritual refreshment with those God brings into your life.

*Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels—Hebrews 13:2*

*Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love...distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality—Romans 12:13.*

3. OUR                     **INDIVIDUAL ENDOWMENTS**                    .

(1) Our           **time**           is our           **life**          .

*This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no man than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends—John 15:12-13.*

*By this we know love, because He laid down His live for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren—I John 3:16.*

## **2. OUR HOSPITALITY**

\* Sharing kindness and caring for others by inviting them into our homes is a very personal way of giving food and shelter to others.

- Rom. 12:13- “Get in the habit”
- Heb. 13:2 - “guests and even strangers”

Illustration: - one pastor established a monthly “invite someone home for Dinner Day.”

\* Pray that the Lord will release you from strongholds which might inhibit your hospitality:

Heritage – I didn’t grow up that way

“My Private Domain” - It is the one place I can call my own.  
I’m selfish.

Pride - “My house is not good enough” or “I can’t cook that well.”

Illustration: One of our church families bought an old home about 15K out of town. They were restoring the house. All the walls were torn off. God spoke to them about hospitality. They invited all who wished to join them for a kettle of soup after church. For months 30 or more people would show up, sit on the floor and fellowship among the bare beams. It was a special time that many of us will never forget.

\* Hospitality comes from the heart and has nothing to do with how good your food is or how excellent your home is.

Just be yourself and share what you have, not what you don’t have.



3. **OUR INDIVIDUAL ENDOWMENTS** – made available for all of us to use

**TIME** = your most priceless possession. It IS the one thing you can't get back. Every minute of every day is gone and you can't reclaim it.

\* What you do with your time is the sum of your life!

- In reality your problem isn't the amount of time you have but it is in your priorities.

\* What has first place in your time?"

- Doing a "time analysis" may be as important as doing a spending analysis.

Do a TV analysis also - Do you watch 10, 20, 30 hours a week?

(If it is more than a few hours a week the Lord will not consider it the best use of your time.)

\* Your problem may be all the other things you do.

- You can fill your schedule totally full with many good things, but they may not be Jesus things. They may be excellent in themselves, but out of place in your life. So, they become "time robbers."

\* As you grow in the Lord you will discover that your time priorities should be:

- Your spouse,
- Your children,
- Your service for the Lord

Someday Jesus will hold you accountable; so:

- Don't be selfish with your time
- Don't feel resentful if the Lord calls upon you to lay down your time for Him and for your brothers and sisters

(1) Your **TIME** is your **LIFE** – John 15: 12-13 and I John 3:16

*Time is the coin of your life. It is the only coin you have and only you can determine how it will be spent. Be careful lest you let other people spend it for you*

~ **Carl Sandburg**

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(2) OUR STRENGTH AND ENERGIES

- \* Matt. 10:8- Give of yourself as freely as you have received
- \* Phil. 3:13- Gather together the life forces of your being and invest them in His Kingdom - not just now and then, or when comfortable or convenient.
- \* Rom. 12:11- Does this describe the way you serve the Lord?
  - Don't you love an enthusiastic person?
  - It is discouraging to me when people are half-hearted in their service. If they put that kind of effort into their job they would be fired the next day!
  - We should reserve far more of our energy and enthusiasm for God and for the work of His Kingdom than we do for our employer.
- \* Be assured; Jesus will ask you some day about what kind of energy and enthusiasm you manifested in serving Him.

(2) Our energies.

*Freely you have received, freely give—Matthew 10:8*

*But one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead.—Philippians 3:13*

*Not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord  
—Romans 12:11*

(3) Our talents and abilities.

vs. 4: *For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function*

vs. 5: *so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.*

vs. 6-8: *Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given us, let us use them: If prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith Or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness—Romans 12:6-8*

*As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever, Amen.—I Peter 4:10-11*

*“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.” —Matthew 25:29*

(3) **OUR TALENTS AND ABILITIES**

\* There are some gifts we receive from birth and then there are those special abilities which the Holy Spirit gives to each of Jesus' followers

- Rom. 12:4-8 – let's look at these verses:

v. 4 no exceptions here. Each member of Christ's body has some function.

v. 5 - each follower has different work to do, but all belong to each other and need each other.

v.6-8 diligently seek out what God has given you to do well for Him.

- You may not preach a sermon, but you may be the kindest, most helpful person around. You may not lead worship, but you can put out the chairs every time God's people gather for a meeting.

- God made you; He knows you; and He has called you into His Kingdom work. If you are not to sing or teach than maybe your role is to make people feel welcome, or maybe it's to help keep God's House beautiful and spotless, or maybe teaching others how to cook or (best of all) maybe it's just to help cheer up those who are discouraged.

(The rest of the verses on p. 69 list various gifts God makes available. Study them over and let the Holy Spirit show you where your abilities fit in.)

\* Never forget Matt 25- the parable of the talents.

- The person with the least was held just as accountable as the one with the most.

\* We are responsible for what He has given us, not for what He has given someone else.

- Whatever He has given you, be assured that one day He will require an accounting from you for the talents and abilities you were given.

(2) Our energies.

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(4) **OUR SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES** Matthew 25: 31-46

\* It is striking to consider the criteria Jesus used to distinguish between the sheep, who would be welcomed into His kingdom, and the goats, who would be cast into Hell.

- Did you feed those who were hungry?
- Did you give drink to the thirsty?
- Did you clothe those who were naked?
- Did you visit those who were in jail?

“For when you did it to one of these my brothers, you were doing it unto me,” He said.

- Even a cup of cold water given in Jesus name -won't lose its reward -  
Matthew 10:42

\* In Galatians 5:13 Paul declares – Now you are free, not to do wrong, but to love and serve each other. And, in chapter 6 he lists these priorities for our service:

- 1st. - those who teach and spiritually feed you
- 2nd. - those who are with you in the household of faith
- 3rd. - with whatever time and energy you have left, meet the needs of others

\* You are either serving yourself or you are serving others

- Stop and think for a minute. What would be your “Servant Number” on a scale of 1-10? #1 being – “I never serve anyone” or #10 being – “I serve everyone all the time.” Would you be a 3 or a 8?

- Now, turn the question around. Evaluate the time you spend serving yourself. Would you be a 7, serving yourself quite a bit of the time? Or, would you be a 2, serving yourself very little?

\*Let's never forget that the greatest in the Kingdom is the one who serves the most  
—Luke 22: 26.

- How much do you serve those in your family?
- How much do you serve those who live in your community?
- How often do you lay aside things you would like to do so that you can serve someone else?

Someday Jesus is going to ask you these very questions!

(4) Our service opportunities.

*“All the nations shall be gathered before Him and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right hand ‘Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’ Then the righteous will answer Him, saying ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink?’ When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison and come to You?’ And the King will answer and say to them ‘Assuredly, I say to you, in as much as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.’”—Matthew 25:32-40*

*He who is the greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves.—Luke 22:26*

*You have been called to liberty...do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.—Galatians 5:13*

4. OUR OCCUPATION.

*Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; not with eye service, as menpleasers, but as bond servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with good will doing service, as the Lord and not to men. —Ephesians 6:5-7*

*And whatever you do, do it heartily as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.*

*—Colossians 3:23-24*

5. OUR INVOLVEMENT in the needs of society in the name of Christ.

*“You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. You are the light of the world, a city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.” —Matthew 5:13-16*

#### 4. OUR OCCUPATION

Most of the people in your churches work for an employer. They need to accept their employment as a Kingdom opportunity. It's part of their stewardship before the Lord.

\* Each one needs to ask, "Am I going to work each day for my employer or am I going to work each day for Jesus?" - Eph. 6:5-7

I love the way v.7 is put in The Message translation:

*"and work with a smile on your face, always keeping in mind that no matter who happens to be giving the orders, you're really serving God."*

- \* Go to work with the goal of being His Witness all day long in your work place.
  - Letting Jesus shine forth
  - Proving what a good worker you can be
  - Showing how faithful God's people are
  - Blessing people with the loving attitudes you display

Illustration: Red Cap at Grand Central Station in New York City.

People were thoughtless and treated him badly. He hated his work. Then the Lord showed him how he was to be there in that railroad station as a representative of Christ enthusiastically doing the Lord's work every day. His attitude change was amazing. He began to hum and whistle hymns and choruses. He spoke kind words to everyone. Over the next forty years he helped many give their hearts to the Lord. Suicides were avoided, marriages were saved, lonely, hurting hearts were comforted and burdens of all kinds were lifted. Now, Jesus Red Cap was thrilled to go to work each day - not for the NYCRR, but for the Lord Jesus Christ.

- \* When you stop going to work for the company or for your foreman and go to work for Jesus instead, what a difference it will make in your life. Because then:
  - The Lord is your boss
  - You are not afraid to be an active witness
  - The Lord is your source; you are looking to Him for provision

\* Never forget Colossians 3:24 - "whatever you do"

(Cleaning, sitting at a press, waiting on a customer, working on the road, clerking in an office, keeping your house, or raising your children)

Do heartily as unto the Lord!!!

(4) Our service opportunities.

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—Colossians 3:23-24*

5. OUR INVOLVEMENT in the needs of society in the name of Christ.

*“You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses it’s flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. You are the light of the world, a city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.” —Matthew 5:13-16*

**5. OUR INVOLVEMENT** in the needs of society

Mt. 5: 13-16. We are to be salt and light to the world!

Jesus was deeply moved by the spiritual and physical needs of men and He gave of Himself without measure to meet those needs. Now, He sends us to minister in His place.

He will hold us accountable for the influence we exert on the society of which we are a part.

It's easy to decry all of the evils and abuses, but what light are we shedding?? What difference are we making?? In the following arenas:

- Orphans
- Pornography
- Sex slaves and prostitutes
- Pollution control
- Better Education
- HIV epidemic
- Local and state politics

John 15 – Of course we will be challenged.

Many will try to put out our light since we are the children of God shining forth in the midst of a world which lies in the lap of the Evil One.

The day will come when Jesus will ask, “In the face of all this immorality, poverty and addiction, unethical behavior and humanistic educational system—what difference did you try to make??”

(4) Our service opportunities.

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6. **OUR OBEDIENCE to the Great Commission Mandate**

(1) Wherever we go we are on the King's business today!!!

\* Since we have switched Kingdoms, God wants each of us to be His Ambassador from Heaven. An ambassador represents his own country in a foreign land.

\* Each day we go out into a world where we are aliens now (I Peter 2:11-12) as representatives of the King of Kings pleading with men to be reconciled to God (II Cor. 5:20)

Illustration: "Good Morning Mr. Ambassador!"

For the next 60 mornings look in the mirror and greet yourself with a smile as you say, "Good Morning, Mr. Ambassador!"

(2) Jesus' World-Wide Commission is repeated in the first 5 New Testament books.

\* Acts 1:8 gives us the road map.

- Most of us, however, are locked into our own little location here on earth; our own circle of relatives and friends.

- But our home town is just "Jerusalem." The rest of our state in India is "Judea," while Nepal or Sri Lanka could be "Samaria." And then, the commission extends from there to "the end of the earth."

(3) Copy Oswald J. Smith's famous question into your notes on p. 71

**Why should anyone hear the Gospel twice;  
until everyone has heard it once?**

Read together the last paragraph on p. 71. Let the Father press His heart upon you.

- God is going to hold you accountable for the missionary burden of your heart.

*“If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for My name’s sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me.”—John 15:20-21*

6. OUR OBEDIENCE to the Great Commission Mandate.

Jesus gave one final, stirring command to His followers just before He left this earth which He has never recinded. God will hold us accountable for what we have done with the “Good News” of the Gospel.

(1) We are Heaven’s Ambassadors to Earth.

*God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not “imputing” their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us; we implore you on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God. —II Corinthians 5:19-20*

*Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul. having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.—I Peter 2:11-12*

(2) Christ’s followers are under a world wide commission. Each time Jesus’ final orders to the church were recorded, the scope was always the same.

Matthew 28:19-20  
Mark 16:15

Luke 24:45-48  
John 20:21

*“You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth”—Acts 1:8*

(3) The Supreme Task of the church is the Evangelization of the World.

Why should anyone hear the Gospel twice  
until everyone has heard it once?

Pray the Lord will give us a “Missionary Heart”—a heart that beats for a world of lost men. This is Christ’s heart. If we want to be in fellowship with Him, we must be with Him where He is, sharing His concern, involved with Him at the front line of the battle with the Evil One, contesting for the souls of men.

- (4) He wants each of us to become involved in reaching out to the whole world – Deliberately, Intentionally, and Sacrificially

This will mean different things to different people. Do as He leads you!

- Some will be able to “go” (short term, long term, tent makers, etc.)
- Others will be able to “Give” some of their resources
- We all can “Pray” for specific people and mission projects

- (5) 2,000 years have passed and still Jesus’ last command has not yet been fulfilled.

This generation could complete the task. We have the technology, the man power, and the resources to do it. But, even that is not enough.

We will need to seek and accept the **same supernatural empowering** that the 1<sup>st</sup> century church walked in.

And, we will also need to manifest the same **supreme commitment** to see the task completed as they manifested.

Supernatural power is needed for a super-human task if the job is to be accomplished in these last days.

- (6) READ Matt. 24:14 (p.72) It holds the KEY!!!

Someday His kingdom gospel will be preached in all the world and He will come!

Do you want Him back soon??

The Key = get involved in getting the message out to the whole world, (make disciples and He Will Come)

- We Have Waited So Long

*For all creation is waiting patiently and hopefully for that future day when God will resurrect His children...for we know that even the things of nature, like animals and plants, suffer sickness and death as they await this great event. And even we Christians, although we have the H.S. within us as a foretaste of future glory, also groan to be released from pain and suffering. We, too wait anxiously for that day when God will give us our full rights as His children including the new bodies He has promised us...Rom. 8:19-23*

(4) Each Christian is responsible to be involved:

- Some will “go.”
- Some will “give.”
- Some will “pray.”

(5) 2,000 years have passed and Jesus’ command has not yet been fulfilled. The task will be completed before Jesus returns—but it will require the 20th century church to:

- Accept the same supernatural empowering.

*And now I will send the Holy Spirit upon you, just as My Father promised. Don’t begin telling others just yet—stay here in the city until the Holy Spirit comes and fills you with power from heaven.*

—Luke 24:49

In the early church the real presence of God was evident in the midst of His people. The “gifts of the Spirit” were manifested. Unbelievers were attracted and received the Gospel when they saw the sign of God’s power. Most of the known world was reached during the first century.

- Manifest the same supreme commitment.

*And the disciples went everywhere preaching, and the Lord with them and confirmed what they said by the miracles that followed their message.—Mark 16:20.*

Supernatural power is needed for a super-human task if the job is to be accomplished in these last days.

(6) The key to our Lord’s return is the completion of the Great Commission in the amazing move of God’s Spirit and the diligent efforts of the 21st. Century church. The task is nearing completion! Many feel it can be accomplished soon.

*And the Good News about the Kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, so that all nations will hear it, and then, finally, the end will come.—Matthew 24: 14*

**CONCLUSION:**

You will be accountable for the Stewardship of Your Life!!

When Jesus calls you into His kingdom, He calls you to a style of life like His: radical, demanding, exciting, rewarding. But, it will take daily dying out to yourself so that His life might be reproduced in you.

Most Christians have no idea the extent of the Stewardship which Jesus is expecting from them and for which they will someday give account to Him!

- POSSESSIONS
- HOSPITALITY
- TIME AND ENERGY
- \* TALENTS AND ABILITIES
- OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE
- OCCUPATION
- INVOLVEMENT IN THE NEEDS OF SOCIETY
- OBEDIENCE TO THE GREAT COMMISSION

(4) Each Christian is responsible to be involved:

- Some will “go.”
- Some will “give.”
- Some will “pray.”

(5) 2,000 years have passed and Jesus’ command has not yet been fulfilled. The task will be completed before Jesus returns—but it will require the 20th century church to:

—Accept the same supernatural empowering.

*And now I will send the Holy Spirit upon you, just as My Father promised. Don’t begin telling others just yet—stay here in the city until the Holy Spirit comes and fills you with power from heaven.*

—Luke 24:49

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FULL LIFE IN CHRIST - Group Leaders Suggestions  
EXTEND - "Developing Our Witness" - Session #1

FIRST - Show & Tell

- Let the group share from James 1:2-15. Collect this weeks sheet and hand back the one's you have looked over.
- Does anyone have an answer from their "prayer list" or an excerpt from their journal to share?
- Did anyone miss a meal this week in order to pray? Tell us about it.

NOW

Discuss - "Vocation" (Ephesians 6:5-7)

Ask - In what practical ways would "going to work for Jesus" change your outlook on your job?

Encourage any to share personal examples they have observed or experienced.

NEXT - Read together John 13:1-5

Why was Jesus secure enough to take the role of a slave and wash his disciples feet?

Could the level of our service to others reveal something about our own security or insecurity?

THEN - Brainstorm

What special talents and abilities do you see residing within each other in your group?

Let the group suggest specific ways in which each one might use these talents and abilities in serving the Lord.

ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK

- "Eat" Colossians 3:5-17
- Complete Study Question Sheet #1