

*A STUDY IN
CHRISTIAN
STEWARDSHIP*



AN OPEN BOOK FOR A GOOD LOOK

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Table Of Contents

Inside Cover.....	1
Table of Contents-----	2
How to study.....	3
Introduction.....	4
1. The ownership of God.....	6
2. Examples of Mature Stewards.....	11
3. Of our Time.....	14
4. Of our Bodies.....	18
5. Of our Gifts.....	22
6. Of our Possessions.....	26
7. To our Master.....	29

How to Study Your Bible

1. Begin in Prayer 1 Cor 2: 9-14
2. Read the Bible Neh. 8: 1-3
3. Study the Bible Neh. 8:8
4. Meditate upon it Deut. 6:6-9; Ps. 1
5. Pass the Bible on to others Heb. 5: 12

How to Study Each Chapter

1. The Theme
2. The most important verse
3. The most prominent word
4. The teaching about Christ
5. The command to obey
6. The promise to claim
7. The new truth learned Psalm 119:18

Also every verse or passage has at least 3 applications

1. Past: this is the historical application
2. Present: This is a devotional or spiritual application
3. Future: This is a doctrinal or prophetic application

The Christian and Stewardship

What is a Christian Steward?

Introduction

1. A steward is "a manager or superintendent of another's household."

We are stewards of all that God possesses.

What are his possessions? They include our money, our talents, our minds, our bodies, and the time we live in this world.

God owns everything as we see here in what Paul wrote to the Colossian church in Col. 1:15-17. Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

There is just one thing that God does not, strictly own – "you and I." We were created with a free choice to accept and serve him or not.

Initially everyone chooses the latter Romans 3:23 – "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

We should, however, praise God, those of us who have accepted Christ. Because we "are not our own, but are bought with a price." That price was Christ himself.

2. A Christian steward is one who realizes "we live, and move, and have our being" in Christ.

The whole of a Christian's life – personality, time, talent, influence, material substance, everything is to be dedicated to Christ. Why? Well Paul gives us an answer in the following to verses.

Romans 14:12 – "Each one of us shall give account of himself to God." Also 2 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the

judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad.

. So we should realize God really does own everything.

Therefore since we own nothing and are only stewards of what he gives us, God then holds the key to every material or spiritual blessing. The only reason we have had anything, or have it now or will have it is because God loves us enough to give it.

I. The ownership of God our Father

We need to see that it is important that we surrender everything we have to God, because we can rest in His ownership of all.

Solomon in 1 Chronicles 29:11 said this Thine, O LORD is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all *that is* in the heaven and in the earth is *thine*; thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all. You see he the wisest of all understood that all he had belonged to God the Father and that he was only a steward of those things.

One needs to read also Genesis chapters 1-3 in them we see the following.

A. Creation and fall of man

1. After what pattern did God create man? – Genesis 1:26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. This is often much debated, what the image of God is. Personally it is the fact of our tri-part nature, also it involves intellect Gen.2:19 And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof, emotion, and will Gen3:6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

2. What did man do to bring about separation the events are recorded here in Gen. 3:1-8? There is no immoral act involved, just an assertion of independence from God and His will.

3. How did the sin of man affect his?

- a. Intellect, one need only read Paul's words to the Corinthian church here in 2Cor.4:4 In whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not.
- b. Emotions these also were marred by man's rebellion as seen in

Jeremiah 17:9 “the heart is deceitfully wicked who can know it”

- c. Will, this was forever turned into sin Ro.5:12 “death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” Also Paul’s words in Ro.6:20 When ye were the servants of sin

4. How did this rebellion affect the world, lets go back and read all of Ro. 5:12 “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:” every one was born spiritually dead and the natural man was only capable of a tendency to sin.

B. RECONCILIATION

1. How did God bring us back to Himself? According to Paul in Ro.5:8-10 as we read below God used His only Son as the only means of reconciliation, as we see here in these precious words. “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

2. What has God given us to enable us to live for Him? Jesus gives us the answer in the following verses John 14:16-17 *And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.*

Another Comforter this is the Spirit of truth “He dwelleth with you and shall be in you”

3. God now has restored us to a position of fellowship as seen in this passage 1 Cor. 6:19-20 “and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price therefore glorify God”.

C. OUR RESPONSIBILITY

1. What, then, is to be our response to God? We start with these two verses from the book of Romans; Ro. 12:1- 2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. From this we can see that we are to give our selves to Him as willing sacrifices as opposed to a slave.

2. Many try to compromise and give God less than total allegiance. How does Jesus regard this? (Matt. 12:30) He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad. Jesus makes it very clear you must be one or the other, full obedience or it is no obedience at all!

4. How does Jesus describe His attitude toward fence straddlers Rev. 3:15-16 “So then because thou are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot. I will spew thee out” Jesus would rather you be hot water or ice cold (dead) than to be like warm for being like that He would puke you out!

5. What logical choice did Elijah present to the people 1 Kings 18:21 “How long will you be halt between the two? If the Lord is God follow Him. If Baal then follow him”.

If Elijah’s logic is true, we must take one of the two positions. Either Jesus is Lord and God (if so we must serve him loyally) If not we should dissuade men from being Christians. It is one or the other.

D. A LIFE APPLICATION

1. Is there something in your life you’ve not surrendered to God? If so, how will you deal with it?

2. How much of your life are you willing for God to control?

3. What do you think God will do with your life if you surrender it all

to Him?

4. What blessings would you lose by going your own way? Isaiah has something for us here in Is.48:17-19 Thus saith the LORD, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I *am* the LORD thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way *that* thou shouldest go. O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea: Thy seed also had been as the sand, and the offspring of thy bowels like the gravel thereof; his name should not have been cut off nor destroyed from before me.

E. CONCLUSION

God does own us, every bit of our time, talents and treasure. Christ died for us, that we should not henceforth live unto ourselves, but unto Him who died for us and rose again as we see here in 2 Cor. 5:15 And *that* he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

To not acknowledge and act upon God's ownership of all we are and have is to rob ourselves of His blessing and make ourselves unfit for His service. Lets read what Paul says to Timothy in 2 Tim. 2:19-21 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, *and* prepared unto every good work.

We must decide whether we will be vessels of honor or of dishonor by refusing to submit to His will.

II. EXAMPLES OF PERFECT STEWARDSHIP

In this section we will look at some examples of perfect stewardship and endeavor to follow after those examples. These following passages reveal some of this stewardship lets read here

Jhn.8:28 Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things also; one need also read Luke Chapters 23 and 24; and Col. Ch. 1 and 2

A. STEWARDSHIP OF GOD THE SON

1. There is no greater example of proper stewardship of one's life than that of Jesus Himself as seen here in Phil. 2:5-8 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

These verses present us with acts of Christ that are indicative of his perfect stewardship. Look at these phrases "no reputation, likeness of men, a servant, humbled himself, obedient to death" one cannot escape the power of these in that they describe one who was totally obedient to the heavenly Father.

2. Christ had one supreme purpose in life as He so says in Jn 6:38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. It was also written by the prophet and recorded by Paul in Heb.10:7 "Then said, lo, I come to do thy will"

3. What was involved in God's will for Jesus; this is recorded in Jn 12:23-33 in particular verses 32, 33 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die. That is to go to the cross and draw all men to him.

In verse 24 a grain of wheat planted in the earth, shows us that there must be a death to bring fruit. In verse 25 we see how this applies to us "He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that

hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

Point of thought if, as a Christian you are unwilling to make any sacrifice to reach others for Christ. To suffer any hardship, to face any self denial, to suffer some persecution but rather you want everything to be comfortable, easy and effortless, how much fruit will you have? None

B. STEWARDSHIP OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

What are some of the duties the Holy Spirit performs as God's steward? Jesus in John 16:8-11 gives us some of His work "reprove of sin, righteousness, and judgment". Verse 13 says "He will speak to us only, what the Father says."

NOTE: In a general way, the Holy Spirit guides the believer into the realms of spiritual truth. In a specific way, He guided the apostles and early church in writing the New Testament scriptures. This is undoubtedly what Christ had in mind. Paul in Ro. 5:5 says The Holy Spirit spreads God's love into our hearts "because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." he also adds this in the following verses

Ro. 8:14 He leads those who are true sons. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God

Ro. 8:16 He confirms that we are truly saved. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:
Ro. 8:26 He helps us in our weaknesses. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities:

When the Holy Spirit controls a person or a group, the evidence is a glorifying of Jesus Christ. (Jn 16:14) He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. The spirit will always bring glory to Christ.

C. CONCLUSION

We need to consider how we can best apply the example of Jesus to our lives. We also want to spend the necessary time to discover what the Holy Spirit desires to do in each of our lives now. The following are verses to help you co-operate in this area Acts 4:31 And when

they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness; Eph. 5:18-20; and Ro. 12:1-2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

III. STEWARDSHIP OF OUR TIME

It is imperative that we become good stewards of our time. Each of us has just 24 hours a day and just so many days. Paul told the Galatians how they should live each day look here at Gal. 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ

liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me; also read all of Romans Ch. 12

How should we pray, concerning the use of the time God has provided to each of us? Ps. 90:12 says “that we would have wisdom.”

A. RIGHT ATTITUDE ABOUT TIME

We start with Paul’s words to the Ephesians about what they should be doing with their time as we read in Eph. 5:16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. This tells us that as good stewards of time we will “redeem,” or buy up or take full advantage of our opportunities of time.

Next we read in James 4:14 where James tells us, why it is so important to use our time today properly “Whereas ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away”. Because we have no knowledge of tomorrow’s events, therefore we must use today to its fullest!

David in Ps. 62:8 gives us God’s demand of us in the stewardship of our time Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God *is* a refuge for us. Selah. That every minute of every day be one of trust; proof of which is pouring out our hearts to Him

This passage from Mark 13:33-37 shows us what Christ admonishes us to do as stewards of time until He comes again.

Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. Since we know not when Christ shall return we must be alert and on guard at all times.

Wise stewards, those who heed the command of God, will use their time according to what Eph. 5:15-16 says See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. We will be accurate, diligent, and careful, in the use of our time.

B. RIGHT RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

As wise stewards concerned over the use of our time, Paul in Eph 5:17 tells us what we need to understand Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord *is*. We need to know the will of God, not what is profitable, pleasurable, and honorable.

Then in Eph 5:18 Paul adds And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; This verse lets us know what is necessary in order to know what is the will God concerning the duties of our stewardship. To be filled with the Holy Spirit!

Jesus in Acts 1:8 shows us the Holy Spirits role in enabling us to be faithful stewards in performing our duties But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. He provides the power to be witnesses.

A good steward will perform these duties in the name of "Jesus" according to Col. 3:17. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

What should our attitude be as we utilize the time the Lord has made us stewards over. Here in Eph 5:19-20 gives us an answer, Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; We should go through the day rejoicing and giving thanks for every moment.

How would you describe such a useful and joyous life? In John 10:10b Jesus says it is "a life that is full of blessing and promises, abundant.

C. MOST IMPORTANT USE OF TIME

Mark 16:15 tells us what a wise and obedient steward will aggressively do with his or her time Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. We should tell everyone,

everywhere about the good news of Jesus.

Even Solomon has a Proverb on this use of time in Proverbs 11:30 tells us what God says about a soul winner. “He that winneth souls is wise. The wise man gains many souls.”

Mark 8:36 For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul. Here Christ gives us the value He places on one soul. A soul to Jesus is worth all the wealth in the world. What is the greatest thing you can do for someone else? It is bring them to Christ!

Let’s read Luke 15:7 I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance, and 10 Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth. Notice that these two verses tell us what happens in God’s presence when anyone repents and receives Christ as Savior. There is joy among friends, joy among angels, and there is the joy of Jesus.

How did Paul feel about those whom he had won to Christ? 1Thess. 2:19-20 gives us the answer For what *is* our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? *Are* not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? They were his crown, glory, joy, and hope before Jesus.

D. LIFE’S APPLICATION OF THE FACTS

How many hours are there in a week? There are 168 hrs in a week and they break down like this, 56 hrs for sleep, 40 hrs at least for work, 67 hrs for leisure and home, 5hrs for church.

Why it is that some may accomplish more than others as we all have the same amount of hours 24? It is proper stewardship of ones time.

As a test, if you’re willing write down how many hours each week that you spend

1. Devotional life
2. Christian service
3. Resting
4. Activities
5. Commuting
6. Recreation, social
7. Laundry and clean up
8. Employment
9. Miscellaneous

IV. STEWARDSHIP OF OUR BODIES

We now want to look at the stewardship of our bodies so we can learn to surrender our bodies to Christ from the heart read Ps. 139:23-24 Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting; one also needs to read Ps. 51; Gal. 5; Eph. 5

Stewardship of our bodies will allow God to search us.

A. THE SPIRIT AND THE BODY

Man is to be renewed in the spirit of his mind if he is to be

converted to Christ. Heb. 10:1-10 tells us how this conversion is possible. Paul also tells the Roman church this in Romans 8:9 "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" and 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. This will help us learn about the Christian's body. Living in the power of the flesh, the natural man will never be pleasing to God. Only living in the power of the Spirit is real living.

Paul in I Cor. 6:19-20 gives us some additional reasons for being a good steward of your body "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." We do not belong to ourselves we have become a temple of God a dwelling place for the Holy Spirit.

B. INDIVIDUAL PARTS OF THE BODY

WE start with the Tongue

James in James 3:2-6 tells us why it is so important to be a good steward of the tongue For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same *is* a perfect man, *and* able also to bridle the whole body. Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body. Behold also the ships, which though *they be* so great, and *are* driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth. Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue *is* a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. An untamed tongue can cause a cancer of unrighteousness. What should you know concerning its use? Let's look at Matt.12:36 But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give

account thereof in the day of judgment. Jesus says that every idle word that men shall speak they shall give account there of in the Day of Judgment.

Next there is the HEART

One must look first at Jeremiah 17:9 as this gives us the most important clue about the heart. “The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked: who can know it? In light of what Jeremiah says, what should a steward of God pray for continually? Listen to David again in Psalm 139:23-24 “Search me O God and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts”. David’s desire was for God to search out every part of his life even those areas that David would on his own keep covered over. In Psalm 51:17 David describes the condition of the heart God is looking for. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.”

Then there is the MIND

What is man’s responsibility as a good steward, where the mind is concerned? Here are Peters words on the what to do with the mind 1 Pet 1:13 “wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end.

Whose mind and what qualities there of should you have? Paul describes it for us in Philipians 2:5-8 here we are told it is a mind like Christ. Paul in 1Cor. 2:12-16 says it is one controlled and lead by the Spirit. What happens when you keep your mind stayed on God? Here is Isaiah’s take on this from Isaiah 26:3 “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace.” This is a peace that goes beyond our understanding. How can you keep your mind on Him? We have our instruction on this in Ph. 4:6-7 “In everything use prayer and entreaty (pleading). Solomon adds Pro. 4:20-22 “My son attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings Let them not depart”.

SEXUAL EXPRESSION

1. What kinds of sins do 1 Cor. 6:9b "Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind," and also 13-18 involve? They involve illicit sex, idolatry, adultery, etc.

2. God considered David a man after His own heart, yet David's sin was one of sexual misconduct as seen in 2 Sam. 11:14-15,26-27 adultery and he added murder on to it to cover the adultery.

1 Cor. 6:10 gives us God's stern judgment against those who misuse and abuse their bodies Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

3. How serious is sexual lust, according to Christ? Matt. 5:28 Says if you look (with intent to create in your mind a scene that is impure) then where Jesus is concerned you have already committed that sin. Hear His words "But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart"

The following verse will give us application on how to overcome sexual lust; read and take heed to Phil. 4:8 "Think on what is good, pure, true, lovely, good report." David adds his thoughts on how to overcome in Ps. 119:11 "Thy Word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." Let's read also these two verses by Paul 1 Cor. 10:13 "God always makes a way out with temptation." And Ro. 6:4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. At salvation we walk in a new life, Christ life

D. LIFE'S APPLICATION

1. How does the stewardship of each individual part of the body affect the other parts? Failure in one area puts strain on the other, and could bring the whole body into an attitude of sinful

failure.

2. Let's look at 1 Thess. 5:22 Abstain from all appearance of evil and apply this verse to the use of our tongue? Always try and speak what is good. What are we to do with our heart? We are to keep our hearts purified. The use of our mind? Our minds are to be filled with God.

V. STEWARDSHIP OF OUR GIFTS

1COR. 12: 1 Now concerning spiritual *gifts*, brethren, I would not have you ignorant

In this portion, I want us to come to recognize our talents and abilities and to surrender them to God for His use and glory.

God created man with a variety of talents. The Christian church is composed of people endowed with different gifts and abilities. All that the Christian possesses should be dedicated fully to God to be used as He directs. The scriptures refer to the church as the body of Christ. Christ the head of the body 1 Cor.12:27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. Just as your body has many specialized parts each having its own function as the church is composed of many individuals, each with his own special

function to perform- and contribution to make- to the rest of the body. Every Christian possesses both natural and spiritual gifts. All men have natural gifts (abilities & talents) for they come to us at birth. Spiritual gifts are special abilities imparted by the Holy Spirit to Christians. These enable Christians to minister to others in behalf of Christ.

Let's take and do some BIBLE study on our gifts!

First we will look at NATURAL GIFTS

- a. What are some talents and abilities you have?
- b. How did you acquire them? They came to you at birth, genetically, or through training.
- c. According to 1 Cor. 4:6-7 our attitude about our natural gifts should be? And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another. For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?
- d. Paul in Col 3:17 lets us know how to apply ourselves in the stewardship of our natural gifts? And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

We must obey the Lord in using our natural gifts in his service as part of our duty.

B. SPIRITUAL GIFTS

There are four major passages that describe spiritual gifts.

First there is Eph. 4:4-16

Secondly there is 1 Peter 4:10-11

Thirdly there is 1Cor. 12:1-31

Fourth there is Ro. 12:3-8

We need now to look at each list of spiritual gifts using each passage and we will be starting with Eph. 4:11-12 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

Apostle- one chosen directly by Christ for a special mission

Prophets - What we call Evangelist today. They deliver messages from God to man either generally or specifically

Evangelist- Traveling missionaries today

Pastors - Shepherds of the flock

Teachers - One gifted to expound the Word

Hospitality - Gifted to receive and look after others

Minister- One who serves others

Word of Wisdom - The gift to share the truth of God in simple language

Knowledge - Gifted to make practical application of the things of God

Faith - This is not for salvation, but the kind that moves life's mountains, to do great things for God.

Healing - Healing of sick, the emphasis is on the results not the process. It does not produce healers but healing

Miracles - This is beyond the realm of human ability.

Discerning of spirits- This is a gift of knowing the difference between the false and true. This gift in some measure is needed

by all.

Tongues - Speaking a language not naturally learned.

Exhortation - One who deals with the heart of another. It is a highly necessary ministry to strengthen and encourage.

Giving - one gifted to generate money and give it to the Lord. Ill. Mr. Letourneau, the Welch family and others

Ruling - some are gifted to lead

Mercy - Practical deeds of kindness

These gifts may be even further sub divided at times.

The passage in Ephesians 4:11-16 gives the reason God gifts men and women are to grow up, to bring unity of spirit, to move out of childhood, so the whole body is fitted together.

Why do two people with the same gift not exercise them the same way? 1 Cor. 12:4-6. Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all Gifts are given by the Spirit, used in ministry by the Son, energized by the Father.

Some gifts seem to be of greater value than others. Paul however stress's a refraining from personal pride because of a gift. 1Cor. 13, and 12:12-26

Romans 12:3-8 gives us valuable principles on our attitude toward our God given gifts. For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, *let us prophesy* according to the proportion of faith;

c. APPLICATION

1. Realize that you have at least one spiritual gift maybe more 1Cor. 12:11 But all these worketh that one and the selfsame

Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

2. To find out what your gift is, pray and ask
 - a. God to reveal His gifts for you, to you
 - b. what brings the greatest joy
 - c. ask other mature Christians
 - d. seek to always develop your gift in the Holy Spirit
 - e. take spiritual responsibility, as you are accountable to God for stewardship of your gifts(s)

VI. STEWARDSHIP OF OUR POSSESSIONS

Luke 16:13 No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

We are wanting in this portion to learn how to surrender all our material wealth to God and to give in joy and gratitude. For further reading 2Cor. Chapter 9; Matt. 6:19-34; 25:14-30; Luke 12:15-21

Let's look first at Money - and the old standard

What did God command under the laws Mal. 3:8-10 Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye *are* cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, *even* this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour

you out a blessing, that *there shall not be room enough to receive it.*

We are to bring the tithes to God's house. Listen to Jacob in Gen. 28:22 And this stone, which I have set *for* a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.

What would you say the "storehouse" is? Well it doesn't matter what we think it is the Bible that has the answer for instance in Duet. 16:11 And thou shalt rejoice before the LORD thy God, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite that is within thy gates, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are among you, in the place which the LORD thy God hath chosen to place his name there and 12:5-6 But unto the place which the LORD your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come: And thither ye shall bring your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, and your tithes, and heave offerings of your hand, and your vows, and your freewill offerings, and the firstlings of your herds and of your flocks: now this gives the answer. The temple is the local church today.

How much is the tithe in Heb. 7:2 Abraham gives the answer to that question "To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace" The tithe then is 10% of what the Lord has blessed you with.

Now let's look at Money - The new standard

As believers in Christ, we are under grace, rather than law. Where as the law in and of itself could not provide eternal life Gal. 2:16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified; and 3:21-22. We have received life by the favor of God - though we do not deserve it.

Therefore, do we have a higher or lower motivation and standard for stewardship of our possessions, than those under the laws? This is so easy we have a much higher standard to live by.

How did Jesus regard a person's responsibility in that area? Matt 23:33 "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell." Those who refuse to obey are to be judged.

Paul gives the church a good outline in 2 Corinthians chapters 8 and 9. In this passage, Paul attempts to encourage the Corinthian church to properly give to the Lord's work. He used the Macedonian church as example

What did they do before they gave 2Cor. 8:5? *And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.*

In light of this verse, what is God interested in? Our willingness to give in a sacrificial way!

Nevertheless, why is giving of money an important part of our Christian life? 2Cor. 8:7 *Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also.*

Since they have been blessed they are expected to give back to God what is His, in a diligent and bountiful way.

Who is a great example of giving? 2Cor. 8:9 For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich Jesus gave more than we can comprehend.

What kind of giver does God love? 2 Cor. 9:7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, *so let him give*; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. A cheerful one the word "cheerful" means with laughter and joy, hilarious. Giving is a delightful experience.

3. OTHER POSSESSIONS

A. To whom do you and your possessions belong?

1 Cor. 6:19-20 - "Ye are not your own, bought with a price."

B. What is to be our motive in the use of whatever we possess 1 Cor. 10:31 "do all to the glory of God."

4. LIFE APPLICATION

A. Ask yourself, "Is my heart attitude one of joy and gratefulness as I give?"

B. Consider your income and possessions. What should you keep for yourself as God's steward?

VII. STEWARDSHIP : ACCOUNTING TO OUR MASTER

We need to recognize our ultimate accountability to God 2Cor. 5:10 Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences. Also Luke 19:12-27; Matthew chapters 24&25.

We shall see what our Bible Study can tell us.

First we see the Christian at Christ's coming according to our starting verse 2Cor.5:10 what will Christ do when He comes again? He is going to deal with each of us according to what was done for Jesus.

Paul says "we must all" who is this referring to primarily? All believers everywhere in the world and from the beginning of the church until Christ return.

Note: A believers sins have already been judged in Christ Ro.8:1 *There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

The judgment here is of his works since he became a believer.

Go to 1Cor. 3:11-15

For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

Judgment is always represented by fire. God's judgment of our works is compared to the reaction of certain materials to fire. According to this passage, what is God most interested in regarding the works we do for Him.

Verse 14 gives the answer. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. Good work (Christ honoring) brings reward.

Bad works brings loss. How is it then possible for us to spend long hours working for God, but have no reward whatsoever? Working without proper motivation that is, any reason other than for bringing glory to God and souls to Christ.

A Christian's works may be rejected, but what can he himself still be sure of? Verse 15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

That he will suffer loss, but he will be saved, though smoked. This is not about relationship but stewardship.

The Time of Christ Coming

The judgment of the Christian will take place when Christ comes again.

When will that be? Read here Jesus answer to the Apostles on this same question Acts1:6-7 It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

When the Lord is ready He will come, it could be any moment.

Upon what should we concentrate until He comes again? Acts1:8 and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

We must focus on being witness's to the gospel until He comes.

Why has Christ waited so long already before coming? 2 Peter3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

Because the Lord is long-suffering (patient) not wanting anyone to perish.

The Earth at Christ Coming

Turn to Mark 13. This chapter foretells the world's conditions as Christ's coming approaches. As we see the world today becoming more like this we know His coming is drawing nearer.

1. What will we see happening in religion look at verses 5& 6?
And Jesus answering them began to say, Take heed lest any man deceive you: For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.
There will be a standing away from the truth of who Jesus is.
2. What will the world situation be again read verses 7& 8? And when ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars, be ye not troubled: for such things must needs be; but the end shall not be yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and troubles: these are the beginnings of sorrows.

Constant hearing of real and imagined wars

3. What will occur in nature (8)? Increasing frequency of natural calamity

4. What will the attitude be toward true believers these two verses 12 & 13? Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

There will be a lack of loyalty between family and friends, especially believers

5. Verse's 26-27 describe what Christ coming will be like! And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven. He will come and gather all who are His to be with Him.

D. Life Application

1. What should a believer do as Christ's coming draws near verse 33 Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. Watch (be alert) to what is happening. Use every moment as a good steward, pray for His soon coming as John did!
2. How will obedience to that instruction affect your employment? You will be more efficient. Your social life? You will be friendlier. Your Worship? It will be more exciting.

