

Lesson Three Stewardship: It's A Matter Of Trust

Objective: To realize what God has entrusted to us and to be trustworthy of His gifts.

Read: Matthew 25:14-30; Luke 16:1-13

When was the last time you handed something to someone else to take care of for you? Perhaps you've experienced handing over something precious of your own to someone else for safekeeping - a house, a pet; or even a child. Most parents are anxious the first time they leave a child with a baby-sitter, even if the sitter is a grandparent or a close friend. We are constantly entrusting others in our daily lives.

Every time we deposit money at the bank, we trust the teller not to embezzle what we place in their trust. Every time we eat at a restaurant, we put our trust in those who prepare the food in that business. Every time we step on an airplane, we trust the pilots with our very lives. We all appreciate good stewards. So does God!

The more valuable a thing is to you, the harder it will be to hand it over to anyone else. Most parents will experience some uneasiness - if not outright fear - entrusting the family car to a 17 year-old with a brand new driver's license. We cannot learn to become good stewards unless someone is willing to trust us first.

Bible Study

In Luke 16:1-13, Jesus tells a parable about a steward who is required to give an account of his stewardship. It is a story that could have appeared on the pages of this morning's newspaper. It involves a dishonest employee who if brought to court today, probably would be convicted of his actions.

But Jesus' telling of the story of this dishonest steward takes a surprising turn. From this man's bad example, Jesus draws some good lessons on stewardship.

Read the story of the unrighteous steward in Luke 16:1-13.

From **verse 1**, what can you tell about this man's position and performance?

The steward faced losing his job because of his poor performance.

What happened to the steward in **verse 2**? When have you been asked to be accountable in your own life?

As a result of being fired, what was the steward's plan to prepare for his future? (vv. 3-8) How would you feel as this steward's master?

In **verse 8**, the unrighteous steward is praised because he acted shrewdly. In what ways are his actions commended?

In **verse 9**, Jesus says good stewards use the temporal things of this world to influence people in eternal ways. As Christians, how can we use our material resources to influence people in spiritual ways?

Personal Reflection

- In 1 Timothy 4:10, Paul told a youthful Timothy that it was no small thing to be entrusted with the gospel. Sharing the Good News was going to involve *"toil and struggle."* But the rewards would make the effort worthwhile.
- In 2 Timothy 2:2, Paul told him, *"What you have heard from me through many witnesses, entrust to faithful people who will be able to teach others as well."*
- What is the Christian's role in passing the Gospel down to the next generation? What are some specific things you can do to assure that the next generation is faithful to the call of God?

- What is the most important gift God has placed within our trust?

- List areas in which you need to trust God more:

