

A BIBLICAL STUDY OF FAITHFUL SERVICE

CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP

Life, Time, Talents, and Treasure



**"IT IS REQUIRED IN STEWARDS,
THAT A MAN BE FOUND FAITHFUL."**

1 Corinthians 4:2

BEN M. BOGARD, LL.D.

IMBM FREE BOOKS LIBRARY

Harold M. Robinson
Rel. 7-11-66

Christian Stewardship

By

BEN M. BOGARD, LL. D.

Pastor, Antioch Missionary Baptist Church
Little Rock, Arkansas.

Author:

"Baptist Way Book"; "Do the Dead Live On?"

I Corinthians 4:2: "It is required in stewards,
that a man be found faithful."

I Peter 4:10: "As every man hath received the
gift, even so minister the same to one another,
as good stewards of the manifold grace of God."

Matthew 20:28: "The Son of man came not to
be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give
his life a ransom for many."

Price 15 Cents—\$1.20 Per Dozen

Published by

Baptist Sunday School Committee

214 East Broad Street
Texarkana, Arkansas-Texas

Christian Stewardship

By
BEN M. BOGARD, LL. D.
Pastor, Antioch

Missionary Baptist Church
Little Rock, Arkansas.

Author:

"Baptist Way Book"; "Do the Dead Live On?"

I Corinthians 4:2: "It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful."

I Peter 4:10: "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same to one another, as good" stewards of the manifold grace of God." Matthew 20:28: "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

"Price 15 Cents—\$1.20 Per Dozen

Published by

Baptist Sunday School Committee

214 East Broad Street
Texarkana, Arkansas-Texas

INTRODUCTION

Every child of God should recognize the fact that he is a steward of God and that he really does not own anything; his life and all his property, together with his natural ability, and acquired accomplishments, belong to God and should be used for God. Not a part of his time and a part of his money, but ALL OF HIS TIME AND ALL OF HIS MONEY belong to God and have been committed to him to use for God and the further fact that he must give account to God for the way he uses these things for God—he is a steward and not an owner—should be recognized.

It is well that study courses should be had in every church that will train the membership of the churches, especially the young people, in the doctrine of stewardship. The doctrine of stewardship is as plainly and as emphatically taught in the Bible as is the doctrines of grace and baptism, the Lord's Supper and missions. This book is intended to be used as a text book in the Training Course of the churches and is arranged in lessons that may be mastered in a ten days period under a competent teacher. Where there is no competent teacher, the class can study the lessons together. The pastor of the church should take pleasure in leading such a class, and it is a fact that many pastors need to study the lessons themselves for it is a sad fact that many pastors have never learned the lessons, and, hence, have not developed the membership in Christian Stewardship.

The author has directed several training courses in this subject and the book comes out of his experience as well as from his Bible study. He sends it forth in hope that it may develop many of the Lord's people in serving the Lord as stewards.

Lesson I

BIBLE DOCTRINE OF STEWARDSHIP

1. Stewardship means nothing more nor less than the management of that which belongs to another. The human family is accustomed to thinking and speaking of that which we have acquired and have in our possession to have and use and dispense with at our pleasure as belonging to us. Whereas, God is the architect of the entire world and all that dwells therein. All things are his by creation and preservation. The most high God is the possessor of heaven and earth, Gen. 14:22; Deut. 10:14; Job 41:11; Ps. jii; Ps. 89:11. These Scriptures clearly and fully teach that the whole material world belongs to God, and that he has not in any way surrendered his ownership. There is none to whom he could surrender it, for there is no other being fitted to direct it. In fact, only the power that created can control and manage creation. The whole material world belongs to God now, just as much so as when it was fresh from his plastic hand. The human family, all of it included, is His. The laws of reproduction and all that is brought forth by these laws are His. When God made man he climaxed all of His work, and gave him dominion over the entire material world. God has permitted man to use **and to** abuse this creation but not without an **accounting** for his stewardship.

There have been in all of the ages general **laws** of God, applicable to all men, which when violated have kindled His wrath and He has avenged these infractions in many ways as every Bible student knows, sometimes by famines, sometimes by pestilence, sometimes by the sword and otherwise. Men may, by their own choice, be in the possession of the Devil, but his claim is not a just one and those who yield themselves to the devil are robbing God. Such, God will avenge in due time.

2. Special Provisions. The Scriptures abundantly teach that, although God has permitted man to wander far from Him in all of the ages, He has reached out with a long arm and a mighty hand and has shown His fatherly interest in His disobedient and gainsaying people. When

God took from among the nations a people for His own name, He established them as a national people and gave them more specific laws to govern and direct them and required their obedience to these laws. He said, "Cursed be every one that continues not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them." The rest of the world seems to have continued under God, as from the beginning. When this element, who were not included in God's special provision, adopted and did (by nature custom, habit or practice) the things contained in themselves. It seems that God was well pleased with their efforts to do His will although they were not included in the covenant, and whatever they did that was required of Israel under the law and however well pleasing unto God their doings may have been, they did not become a part and parcel of Israel by the doing. For one must have been born in Abraham's house or bought with his money in order to become or be a full participant of these privileges and benefits and to receive recognition by the Israel of God. In these fuller and comprehensive instructions to Israel, God retained title to all of the lands and when for some cause they moved on, they could not give title to another. They were simply Stewards.

3. The Christian Age. We belong to God by redemption. Christ ransomed us from the fall. "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 his" (1 Cor. 6:19-20) "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity" (Tit 2:14). "For as much as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by the tradition of your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet. 1:18-19). "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law being made a curse for us" (Gal. 3:13).

We see from the above that God has even a higher claim upon us who are born again than that of creation, for we are the ransomed of the Lord. We are not our own, for we have been bought with the greatest price that could have been paid for us, that of the very life of

Christ. By every claim of equity, we are the Lord's, and all that we have and are belong to Him.

4. We Are His By Our Own Choice. We gave ourselves to God by our complete surrender when we trusted Him for salvation. To own Him as Lord is to put ourselves completely under His will and make Him the arbiter of our lives. Our hearts, minds, bodies and souls belong to Him. All that we have, or can ever expect to be are His. All of our life and time are His by right of creation, redemption and our own choice and volition. Our lives are not our own to live as we please. Our time is not our own to waste in sinful practices. Our money is not our own to spend upon fleshly lusts that war against the soul. To withhold any of these things from the, service of God is to iWb God of that which justly belongs to him. To speak as the Bible speaks, we are simply STEWARDS over all of these things that by every right of equity belong to God. Christian Stewardship acknowledges God as the rightful owner of ourselves, our time, all that we are, all that we obligation to use it as He has directed in His will and testament unto His glory, to see to it that none of these things are otherwise appropriated, and all of this to the very best of our knowledge and ability.

Christian Stewardship means that we belong to God. We are His every moment of our lives. Our brains are to think for Him; our hearts to love Him; our eyes to see the things of His kingdom; our feet to move about His business; our hands to labor for *His cause*; our mouths to proclaim His gospel and our tongues and voices to sing His praise.

5. We Are God's Tenants. To use our accustomed vernacular, it may be truly said that we are the lessees, tenants of God, servants of God and of Christ Jesus. In other words, God, it may be truly said, has leased to us whatever of this world's goods we have in our possession and are accustomed to call "our own." We may gather a fuller and more comprehensive idea of our true relation from Matt. 25:14-46, in which our Savior says, "the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man—who called his own servants and delivered unto them his goods." We observe it was HIS OWN SERVANTS, and

the kingdom of heaven or the church is like this very thing. Then it necessarily follows that what we have is not ours to squander and waste and consume upon our own lusts, but, instead, it is His for us to use as He directs, unto His own glory.

We have now come in this study to Christian "GIVING." There is more teaching in the Bible on the subject of giving than upon any other theme. There is more than twenty times as much teaching in the New Testament on the subject of giving, as there is on the subject of baptism.

God has definitely ordained that the church shall carry on the work of redemption for Him. This can only be done by preaching the Word. God says, He has ordained that they that preach the gospel shall live of the gospel. Funds must be provided for this work. The hungry must be fed, the naked clothed the fatherless and widows visited in their afflictions, and funds must be provided for this work. The poor and the sick are definitely the wards of the church, and funds are required for this work. When a congregation is established or started, the necessary outlay of funds has just begun. Housing quarters must be provided, equipped and maintained. As more people come into the church, more provision and supervision becomes necessary and to the expense of carrying on God's work there is no end. The need for funds to carry on the work that God's order has set up in the gospel is obvious to all of us alike. When we understand what it means to the human family to provide these necessary funds, it will cease to be a burden to all of those who acquire this understanding and we will esteem it a glorious privilege. In my understanding of the teaching of the Scriptures, the right, privilege and opportunity to provide funds into God's treasury is one of God's greatest gifts to man. It is in this way only that we place our treasures in heaven and provide for ourselves purses that wax not old. It is in this way that we minister unto Christ Jesus. Whatever we have in the way of earthly goods in our possession when we come to the end of the way, we leave behind. When the icy finger of death touches us and we are called to enter into that chasm that separates between the two great

eternities, all that we can hold in our cold, dead hands is that which we have given away.

6. Giving. In the truest sense there is no actual giving when a steward uses the things intrusted to him according to the will of the owner. Our giving is such only in a relative sense and David expressed it correctly when he said, "For all things come from thee and of thine own have we given thee." By giving we mean the turning of one's means to another or others to be used for purposes outside our own financial interests, and from which we neither receive nor expect to receive any material return.

It is said in Acts 20:35, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." There are numerous examples of giving in the New Testament and the only reason that it is difficult to preach the truth about this so much neglected grace is because there are so many leaders in the churches who have never come into a full and complete understanding of the proper relation of giving in the great scheme of human redemption. Giving is a privilege like praying, singing, studying and teaching the Word of the Lord, faith, repentance, baptism, hope, charity and other things incorporated in the Bible. Every one is commanded to give as much so as he is commanded to do anything else.

In Acts 6, we have an account of the selection of brethren to look after the distribution of funds to some poor who were being neglected. In Acts 11:27-30 we have an account of an extended effort to raise funds to care for the poor in Judea when there was a great famine in the days of Claudius Caesar. In 1 Cor. 16, we have Paul's oft quoted instruction when funds were actually being provided for this very emergency. God has plenty of money today in the hands of his rich children, which they are holding in trust for their poor brethren, and He is looking for them to pass it on. Under this heading would come all objects of charity. Our Lord told us of the good Samaritan who lent aid to one who was the bitterest enemy to his father's house and said, "Go and do thou likewise." The Lord's charities know no racial nor sex

limitations. We talk about the "worthy poor," but the Lord talks about the poor.

Questions

1. What is Christian Stewardship?
2. Are we owner of our property or tenants?
3. If we fail to use God's property for Him, do we rob Him?
4. When we were saved did we choose to be God's property?
5. Who is the rightful owner of all we possess?
6. Are we living in the Jewish or the Christian age?
7. Is there as much or more about Christian Giving as there is about baptism and the Lord's Supper?
8. How should pastors and evangelists be supported?
9. Should church members help the poor?
10. Can you give a passage of Scripture concerning support of the poor?

Lesson II

THE STEWARDSHIP OF LIFE.

1. Life itself came from God and should he used for God. We owe our existence to God. Why were we not born a horse or a dog? Because God willed that we should be human beings and not beasts. Do you appreciate the fact that you are a human being and not a beast? If so, then you should use the life God has given you for God. Life is not an end in itself but a means to the end that God may be glorified. Jesus, our example, used His life for the glory of God and not for selfish purposes. Matt. 20:28: "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

While everyone's life belongs to God, the Christian life, enriched by the new birth, and thus receiving the Divine Nature, is especially valuable in the service of God. Jesus said: "As my Father hath sent, me even so send I you" (John 20:21). It is wonderful to think we can spend our entire lives serving God, and not a minute of it be wasted in serving the world and none of it used for self.. Life is an opportunity to serve God "in our bodies and in our spirits which are his."

The servants of God should not wait for a big event in which to serve God. What may seem like a poor opportunity may be used for God and cause wonderful results. The author was holding a revival meeting and one night it poured down rain, so much that the pastor suggested we omit service that night, for it was almost certain nobody 'would be there. But, seeing that someone had turned on the lights at the meeting house, we decided to go. We found six boys ranging in age from twelve to twenty years old and no one else was there. I preached to those six boys the same as if the house had been filled and ALL OF THEM WERE SAVED at that service, that we came very nearly omitting. That congregation of six boys was a wonderful opportunity and it would have been wicked to have refused to use it. The time Charles Haddon Spurgeon was saved was on a dark rainy night when it

was such bad weather that the pastor did not come to service and a layman conducted a short service in which he preached Christ, and the result was this boy was saved and through him many thousands were afterwards saved, for Spurgeon was the greatest preacher in the world during his wonderful life. We should spend our lives using each opportunity, no matter how unpromising an opportunity may seem to be. Doctor Richard Fuller, of Baltimore, many years ago went to his appointment one Sunday night and it was pouring down rain so much so that no one came to hear him preach and he went to the pulpit to read a passage from the pulpit Bible for his own spiritual benefit; he intended to read the passage and then offer a prayer and go home. But, just as he opened the Bible to read, he saw a boy slip into the room, evidently to get out of the rain, and Fuller read the passage aloud so that the boy might hear and then proceeded to preach the same as if he had a large congregation. The boy sat there in great astonishment until the sermon was finished and then slipped out of the door and got away. Some several years after that Dr. Fuller went to an association and a man came to him and said; "Dr. Fuller, you do not know me but I know you, and I wonder if you remember preaching one night when only one small boy was your audience?" He told him he did remember it and had often wondered about that boy. The man said: "I am that boy and that sermon was the means of my salvation. I never got away from that sermon, and I am a messenger to this association." Fuller used a very unpromising opportunity and the result was the salvation of a soul. Sometimes, the unpromising opportunity may be used Of God to accomplish wonderful results as we have seen in the cases just noted. The Sunday school teacher may be discouraged with a class of bad boys or silly girls but he may plant in the minds of these students seed thoughts that will mean their salvation. Our time belongs to the Lord and every minute of it should be used for Him. Not a minute of our life is unimportant, and we should not judge by appearances which minute is the most important; therefore, we should **USE EVERY MINUTE FOR HIM**, not knowing which shall prosper most whether this or that.

2. Our Life is fuller now than was the life of our fathers. We have the fast mails, the telephone, the mighty printing press, and other means of service that were not known until a few years ago. Books, papers, magazines, pamphlets, and tracts may be sent out by the millions now, and we can use the telephone and the radio in spreading the good news of salvation. All of these things should recognize God's ownership of all these things and should make the most of be used for God's glory. He gave them to us as stewards of God; we should use them. The door is wide open to the whole world now. The radio will enable us to go into territory where there are no preachers, no churches, and thus lead souls to Christ. By means of the printed page, we can go anywhere the mails go and thus reach multiplied millions of people where we could not reach them face to face.

As we have greater facilities, greater opportunities, every church as an organization and every individual should use them for the advancement of the Lord's work. If you cannot run a printing press yourself, advancement of the Lords' work. If you cannot run a printing press yourself, you can help pay the printer to scatter good literature, and, if you cannot preach over the radio, you can pay the expenses 'of the radio while someone else preaches. Those who pay the expenses of the printing and the radio work will share the rewards for all the work done. Those who labor with their hands and make money to bear the expenses of the work are just as much a part of the work as the preacher, and they will be so recognized by the Master when He rewards His stewards for the way they have used what He has put into their hands to use for Him. You may not be permitted to use the spectacular things, and be in the public eye, but your unseen work is seen by the ALL-SEEING EYE and He never forgets; many who have been unknown in their service here will be told: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant (steward). Thou has been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord" (Matt. 25:21).

"If you can not cross the ocean,
And the heathen lands explore,
You can find the heathen nearer;
You can help them at your door."

One who will not serve in a small and obscure way would be unfit to entrust with a larger position. If one will not lead souls to Christ in his own locality, he would be unfit to send to heathen lands. If one will not spend his dimes and dollars for the Lord at this time, he would not spend his millions for the Lord if he should get them. A man who will not give twenty-five cents to the cause of Christ now would not give twenty five thousand dollars if he should get that amount. Each minute and each dollar belongs to the Lord.

3. Since God gave us all we are and all possess, we owe everything to Him. gve all we have to us as a trust and we bold it in trust for Him and as stewards we handle it for Him. A man was heard to say that he did not owe a cent in the world, and a friend said to him that if his debts were paid he would not have a cent on earth. The man was indignant and asked an explanation and the explanation was that God gave him all he had and hence he owed all of it to God, and, therefore, if he paid his full debt to God he would have nothing left.

We should consider what has been handed down to us from past generations. Our forefathers cleared the land, opened up the farms, built the houses, established the railroads, and our entire economic system; they discovered the radio and we did nothing to get any of these things—just fell heir to them and all of it was according to the PROVIDENCE OF GOD. How grateful we should be, and we should show our gratitude by using our inheritance for the glory of God and the advancement of the Lord's cause. To treat with contempt our inheritance and to fail to appreciate our blessings would be selfishness indeed.

The child of God who does nothing to pass his blessings on to others fails to do the work of a steward and defrauds both God and men. To be a beneficiary of the sacrificial service of our fore-parents and then show no appreciation is to be an ingrate.

In the Dead Sea, nothing lives. The reason is that it takes in all the time and gives nothing out. There must be an outlet if water stays fresh and pure. A stagnant pool breeds miasma, malaria, death. A mountain stream seems to be trying to give itself all away as it rushes on and on, but it is constantly fed from above and stays fresh and pure. Had you not rather be laughing, rushing mountain rivulet than to be a stagnant pool? All income and no out-go will make a stagnant pool of your life. The Bible says, "the liberal soul shall be made fat" (Prov. 11:25). Let your life be like a mountain stream and it will be always fresh and clean and be a real blessing to mankind and be pleasing to God. Christian Stewardship produces such a life.

4. Using opportunities create other opportunities.

When we use the five talents we have, they increase to ten talents (Matt. 25-27). When we fail to use what the Lord has entrusted to us, we lose all. Our opportunity unused will be taken from us and given to one who will use it (Matt. 25:28). Our lives will, be longer as well as happier if we keep them busy in serving the Lord. Machinery will rust out faster than it will wear out. A machine that rusts out benefits nobody while one that wears out stays bright and beautiful and benefits all who use it.

As riches increase, our liberality and usefulness should increase with it. I knew a man who when he was poor gave five dollars a month to his church. He began to prosper and finally grew rich and still continued to give five dollars a month to the church. It never occurred to him that his contributions should

increase with his ability to give more. It is not so much what we give to the Lord's work as it is what we have left after we give. As a man moves in a larger circle of his fellowmen, he should increase his activity to win souls to Christ. The more he comes into contact with his fellowmen, the larger his opportunity becomes, and with it his responsibility increases. As the Lord gives him more money and a larger circle of acquaintances, he becomes steward of larger things.

We can only give out what we take in. What are you taking into your, life? Are you filling up on the Word of God? Are you reading good literature? Are you associating with good people and in that way improving yourself for service of the Lord? Or do you fill up on the trashy literature, jazz music, and frivolities such as shows, dances and card. parties? Remember you can give out only what you take in and hence the responsibility concerning our IN-TAKE. Life is too short to fritter away. It is long enough to accomplish much for the good of humanity and the glory of God. "So then, as we have opportunity let us work that which is good toward all men, and especially toward them that are of the household of faith" (Gal. 6:10). Once we get the idea ingrained into us that our entire life belongs to God, and we are stewards who must give to our Master and account of the way we have used our lives, it will transform us.

Questions

1. Why is life a trust committed to us, by God?
2. How can we enrich our natural lives so as to be worth more to God?
3. If we use our opportunities will they be increased?
4. Why have we greater opportunities now than our foreparents had?

5. Name some of the great opportunities we now have to serve God.
6. What should induce us to give the Gospel to others?
7. If you take in all the time and give nothing out what is the result?
8. If we fail to use our opportunities, what will become of them?
9. If we use our opportunities, what will be the result?
10. If our wealth and social circle enlarge, what should we do?
11. What had you rather be, a mountain rivulet or a stagnant pool?

Lesson III

THE STEWARDSHIP OF TIME

Eph. 5:16: "Redeeming the time, for the days are evil."

Our time is given us by the Lord and, as he deals it out to us moment by moment, we should use it for Him. There is a popular idea that one day in seven belongs to the Lord and that six days out of the seven belong to us. The fact is, all our time belongs to God. The one day in seven is specially set apart for rest and worship, but it is no more religious to rest and worship than it is to work in our every day vocation. The Roman Catholic idea that we may do MORE THAN OUR DUTY is dangerous.

Every minute of our time should be for God. We are stewards of our time.

1. Our Time Is Short, Job 14:1-2; "Man that is born of woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down; he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not." In Psalm 89:47, "Re-

member how short my time is; wherefore hast thou made all men in vain?"

The longest life is short. Old people say that when they look back over their lives it seems like only a few days. It is too short to waste any of it. Yet it is long enough to accomplish all of God's purpose in us and long enough to bring ruin, disgrace and damnation. It all depends on how we use the time allotted to us.

2. The Standard Average Life is Three Score Years and Ten—Seventy years. Something is wrong when a man or woman falls short of the allotted time. Read Psalm 90:10: "The days of our years are three score years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be four score years, yet is there strength, labor and sorrow; for it shall be soon cut off, and we fly away."

The normal life should average seventy years. Many die younger than that, but all such cases are abnormal. The majority die young because of sin, irregularity, dissipation. Our eating, drinking and all our habits have a direct relation to our lives, and our time is shortened or lengthened by these habits. There is just as much evil in overeating as in drinking intoxicating liquor. Some very intemperate people would be insulted if you told them they were intemperate. Intemperance in eating shortens life. Our life belongs to God, and all our time should be used for him. We have no time that can be used for intemperate practices. Herein is the evil of card playing. There is no harm in the pieces of pasteboard called cards. But the time fooled away playing the games is wasted time and we are stewards of our time and none of it should be wasted.

3. We must work while we have time, and if we fail to do so, we must lose all. John 9:4: "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work."

Had it occurred to you that your day will soon be over? When the night of death settles on us, it will be too late to work. Shall our lives be wasted by failure to

properly use our time? There is only a certain length of time for each of us. What shall be done with it? We are stewards of every moment of our time properly use our time. When asked to engage in anything that is evil, a fine answer is: "I do not have time." We should never have time for any evil practice.

4. We should be sure that what we do is pleasing to God. Prov. 14:12: "There is way which seemeth right unto a man, but the ends thereof are the ways of death." We can't afford to use our time on uncertainties. Why should we use our time walking in the ways of death? When one has wasted his time in living a wicked life, the end is terrible. Prov. 11:7: "When a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish." Every normal man or woman has expectations that he cherishes. If you waste your time, your expectation shall perish. With such a man death, will end all so far as this world is concerned, and of course there is nothing but ruin in the next world for those who wasted their time here.

5. We should not become entangled in worldly affairs so far as to take our time away from God's Service. II Tim. 24: "No man that warreth entangleth himself the affairs of this life; that he may please Him who has chosen him to be a soldier."

The soldier's time belongs to his country. We are soldiers of the cross, and our time belongs to the Kingdom of God, not a part of our time, but all of it. The soldier who walks off from the army and comes back when he pleases will be subject to court martial, and, under certain circumstances, it is death. His time is not his own ...it belongs to his country. So all of time belongs to God, and he wants us to use every moment of it in his service. This is a high ideal, but those who recognize it and adopt it as a life practice will find satisfaction and joy in such a life. Those who try to serve both God and Mammon will have hard sledding.

6. The importance of using the present moment is emphasized in the Bible, II Cor. 6:2: "Behold, now is the accepted time: behold, now is the day of salvation."

We have no promise of tomorrow. NOW IS THE TIME to accept Christ, and, when saved, NOW is the time to serve Him.

You cannot lay time away and use it later as we do money. It must be used right now or never. It is a thing that can't be hoarded. Time FLIES.

7. Our rest and recreation should be under the direction of our Master. Mark 6:31: "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile." The disciples were weary in the work but not weary of it; tired in the work but not tired of it. They needed rest, and the Lord recognized that fact and told them to come out into the uninhabited place (desert place), get away from the people and rest. Time used in resting in order that we may do better service for the Lord is time well spent. I have known preachers to breakdown because they would never stop to rest. There are many besides preachers that need rest. It will prolong their lives and enable them to do more in the service of God. But all our resting should be as stewards of God. Our time belongs to Him and should be devoted to Him.

The sooner he enters the service of the Lord the more time he can spend in His service. It is a shame to waste the best of our lives and then offer the fragment of a wasted life; hence, the boys and girls should become servants of Him as soon as they are accountable for their actions to Him. He should have all our time. A young person saved means a life saved as well as a soul, while an old person being saved means only a soul saved. It is better to have the soul saved and the life also, so that all the life may be devoted to Him as stewards, of the time He allots us.

Questions.

1. How much of our time belongs to God?
2. Are man's days on earth many or few?
3. What is the standard average life designated in the Bible?
4. How may we lengthen or shorten our lives?
5. What is the time called allotted to us? Read John 9:4.
6. Can we be deceived as to what is good or evil in our lives?
7. Does death end our opportunity?
8. Since we are soldiers for God, what should we do? Read II Tim. 2:4.
9. Can you lay away time like we do money or property?
10. Does God give us more than ONE MOMENT at a time? - -
11. Have we time to waste playing cards, dancing, and such like?
12. When is the best time in life to be saved?

Lesson IV

THE STEWARDSHIP OF CALLING OR VOCATION.

Eph, 4:1-2: "I beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another, in love."

The idea that nobody is called into work or life calling except preachers has done a great deal of harm. Everyone has a calling, called into something that nobody else can do for him. In the purpose of God; he is assigned a particular place and he owes it to God. to fill that place to the best of his ability.

1. All we do should be done in the name of Jesus Christ. Col. 3:17: "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name Of the Lord Jesus?" When we do a thing in the NAME of another, it means what we do it by His authority, since everything we do should be done in the name of Jesus, it follows that our position in life is by His authority. We have no right to occupy a place or to engage in work without the authority of Jesus, our Master.

2. Everyone is definitely called into His work. Col. 3:17: "Ye are bought with a price; be ye not servants of men. Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God." This passage teaches that since we are the Lord's property, having been bought with a price, we should recognize this fact by staying where the Lord wants us to serve.

3. In choosing a vocation we should find what God wants us to do. I Cor. 4:7: "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?" God gives the ability to fill a position, and He wills that you occupy the place He designs and recognize Him in all that you are and do. Too many never give a thought of God in deciding what they shall do in life. This is a

serious matter for young people. Their entire future depends upon the decision made. It should be decided in view of the will of God.

4. When we have chosen our life work or calling we should recognize God as our senior partner. I Cor. 3:9 : "For we are laborers together with God." That being true we should never engage in any enterprise nor set out on any undertaking without finding the will of our SENIOR PARTNER. Too many leave God out of their calculations. All subordinates should consult their superiors in every transaction of importance.

5. Failure to properly use our life for God will cause us to lose our power. Matt 5:13 "Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost it's savor wherewith shall it be salted? It thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out, and trodden under foot of men.

There are many who have failed to use their lives for God, and they are like salt without saltiness. If all our energies, all our work, all our bearing is directed toward God 'it means power and success in the true sense. Otherwise final failure will be our portion.

6. We should have zeal in our calling: In John 2:17 we read of Jesus: "The zeal of mine house hath eaten me up." The Lord set the example of being zelaous. Half-heartedness is detested by the Lord. He rebuked a church in Rev. 3:15: "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would that thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." God is here represented as being nauseated with the Laodiceans because they were lukewarm. Is God sick on the stomach because of your lukewarmness? Better to make a mistake in over-zeal than to be careless and lukewarm.

7. The things we possess are the tools of our vocation. Our PERSONALITY, and our TALENTS, along with our OPPORTUNITIES, and any other thing

we have received from God, are to be used in our life work for God Just as the carpenter has the hammer, the saw, the plane and other tools with which he works, even so all Our possessions are tools with which we work for God. Where we use these possessions for worldly and wicked purposes, our life will be wasted. The end of such a life will be ruin. Luke 19:13: "He called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said: "Occupy till I come." Do you use your Lord's pound as a steward? Pound means material.

8. Your life is a light that should shine to benefit man. Matt. 5:16: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is Heaven." What we do reflects what we are, and we let our light shine by what we do. In your business you should not forget that you are a representative of Jesus. The people do not read the Bible, but they read you, and they read me. We should reflect the light of Jesus among men and thus lead them to.

9. If our vocation or calling is held for God, it means all We have and all we are will be dedicated to the service of God.

The Shumanite woman dedicated her home to God. (2 Kings 4:9-10).

Mary, Martha, and Lazarus used their home for the Lord (John 11).

Timothy's childhood home was used for God. (2 Thu. 1:5).

With our homes, our stores, our shops, our professions, our occupations all used for God as His stewards, we shall have the ideal of Christian Stewardship. In everything we shall ask if this is God's will. Everything we do will be for His glory. ALL LIFE APPEARS DIFFERENTLY WHEN WE RECOGNIZE THAT EVERYTHING WE DO IS DONE AS A TRUSTEE, AS A STEWARD.

10. What is your aim in life? Surely you are not aimless. But just what is that aim? When you decide

what your calling shall be, what purpose have you in it? Is it simply to make money? It is all right to make money, but when you make money for its own sake you are headed for a terrible fall. I Tim. 6:9-10: "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition."

To live for self means final failure. To live for God, recognizing the fact that you are God's steward, God's trustee, means final success. What shall the end be? is far more important than any temporary success. I knew a man who lived strictly for himself. He was industrious and made money. He used the money to buy more land and more equipment for the farm. He kept on at this; disregarding the Lord's day he worked Sunday as well as the rest of the week. He did not attend church . . . "he was too busy." He piled up an immense fortune, and finally he was stricken down with disease. The doctor came and said his case was hopeless, that he must die. He was in agony. He begged for help, but no help could be given., The poor man who was rich in this world's goods but flôt rich toward God became frantic and .begged for help. He raved. Over and over again he cried out begging them to hold him, saying, "don't let him get me, don't let him get me." He said he saw the devil who had come for him. Poor man. Whose shall all these things be that he had accumulated? His life was a failure. All fail who do not surrender to God and become His stewards.

Questions.

1. Has God called everyone into some particular work or occupation?
2. In whose name should we do all our work?

3. In choosing our vocation, whose will should we consult?
4. Whom should we regard as our partner in life?
5. If we fail to use our opportunity, fail to fill our place, what will be the result? Read Matt. 5:13.
6. Should we do the Lord's work earnestly or indifferently? Read Rev. 3:15.
7. What are the tools of our vocation?
8. Should we practice concealing our good works, or should we do good work openly before men? Read Matt. 5:16.
9. Should we dedicate our possessions to God?
10. What is your aim in life?

Lesson V

THE STEWARDSHIP INFLUENCE

Heb. 10:24-25 "Let us consider one another and provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."

When Cain killed Abel, he said to God, when asked where his brother was, "Am I my brother's keeper?" The fact is, we are our brother's keeper in a very important sense. God will hold us responsible for our influence over our fellow men.

1. A Church Has Influence Over Other Churches.

Rom. 1:8: "I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world." That church had influence over others.

A church cannot live unto itself, it makes an impression on all who know it. A church is a steward of its influence.

2. Our Conduct Should Be With regard for Others. Rom. 14:21: "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or made weak." This principle observed would cause us to forego a pleasure, even if the pleasure is innocent, if it causes a brother to offend. Somebody is watching me, and that fact should influence me to never do anything that will cause the watcher to be scandalized. The word for offend is the Greek word "scandelos" meaning to become scandalized. Our selfishness should not cause us to engage in anything that will injure others even if we do no wrong.

3. Our Influence Is Being Broadcast Every Day. Drop a pebble in a lake and it will form a circle that will get larger and larger until it reaches the shore on all sides. So with a single act of our lives. Some scientist said that the mere movement of your hand will start an impetus that will never stop. If you influence a child to be what he should be and the child under that influence becomes a man or woman and in turn influences others, there is no stopping place for it. C. H. Spurgeon was influenced to accept Christ by an obscure preacher in a small chapel on a rainy day because Spurgeon stopped in the little meeting house to get out of the rain. But it meant the salvation of his soul. Little did that obscure preacher know what a wonderful influence he was starting. It is going on to this day.

4. By Walking In Love, We Influence Others. Eph. 5:1-2: "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children. And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us." Our every day walk has more power than our talk. What a man IS sometimes sounds so loud that we can't hear what he says. A quiet father of two wayward boys went on his way serving the Lord. He was not a talker. His boys refused to take his advice. He was the janitor of the little church, and he faithfully rang the church bell every Sunday and quietly worshipped God and prayed for all men, especially his wayward boys. He passed away, and of course it grieved his boys, but they were still unsaved. One Sunday morning they

were rigging up to go fishing, and, when they heard the old church bell ring, they were reminded of their father and one said: "Do you hear that?" Of course the other heard it. They dropped their poles and went to church. The memory of their father overcame them, and through his godly influence they were saved. About all he was seen to do was to ring the bell, but that small service faithfully done saved his boys. He walked in love and did not live to see the result of his influence.

5. We Should Walk Circumspectly. Eph. 5:15: "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil." To walk circumspectly means to walk looking around, watchfully. A misstep on our part may destroy some soul. We are stewards of our influence, and we should watch our step so that our example will be good. Better look around before walking into a bootleg joint, or into a dance hall. Somebody is watching and by your ungodly walk may be ruined.

6. The Influence of Prayer Is Wonderful. I Thes. 5:17: "Pray without ceasing." This does not mean that we should always be in the act of prayer, but it should be a constant habit, be always in the spirit of prayer. Peter was delivered from prison by prayer. (Acts 12:1-17). John 15:7: "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." This is great inducement to pray. We can move people by prayer and we are stewards of the influence of prayer.

7. Our Influence Should Reach Throughout the Whole World. When you pay for the food eaten by 'a missionary and his family, you are influencing the heathen through the missionary. It is wonderful to think that your influence can be felt all over the world.

8. None Live Unto Themselves. Born. 14:7: "For none of us liv eth to himself." Is your influence for good or evil? Remember you must account to God for your influence.

Questions

1. Was Cain responsible for his brother?
2. Does one church influence another?
3. Is our influence going out every day?
4. Does our daily walk influence others?
5. What is meant by walking circumspectly?
6. Do our sincere prayers influence others?
7. How far out does one's influence reach?
8. Is it possible for anyone to live to himself?
9. When you fail to attend church services, do you injure others?
10. What if your influence should start someone in the wrong way?

Lesson VI

STEWARDSHIP IN MATERIAL THINGS

I Cor. 16:2: "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him."

Simplicity of Stewardship. The doctrine of Christian Stewardship is very simple. It is clearly stated by Christ and fully explained by Paul. It holds, that man is not an owner of these earthly possessions but a trustee. Christian Stewardship requires that one hold himself responsible for the way he gets his money and also the way he uses it. The test of his character is found here and not in his professions and his prayers. The stewardship of money is the answer to that socialism which says "all thine is mine." Unless we learn the lesson of stewardship, that kind of anarchic socialism is going to increase.

Good sense demands that of a man's annual income some part must be used to meet the needs of himself and those dependent upon him. These needs are many, and it is easy for us to let them grow into

extravagances. Some part of the income is required to make provisions for the future. This will vary according to circumstances. Some part must be used for others. ALL MUST BE USED FOR GOD.

Do we ever sing, "I love thy church, oh God, the house of thine abode?" Suppose a man goes to the city, buys a \$2,000 automobile, a \$75 suit of clothes, a ten dollar pair of shoes, a ten dollar hat, then buys his wife a cotton dress and comes home singing, "I love my wife, I do."

A problem in stewardship is to get the right proportions. We will never get that right proportion by luck, and we will never drift into it. We have to think it out, dictated by a conscience that is true to God and the right. As a rule, when we begin to estimate what we shall give it will take the form of percentage. Whether it shall be ten per cent or fifty per cent must depend on our own conscience enlightened by prayer and the spirit of service. The man with \$10,000 income who uses nine-tenths for himself looks rather shabby besides the person who has an income and uses only nine-tenths of his income for himself. But no one will have much trouble with the problem if he really comes to grips with it.

Stewardship of Property. If a person has not become a steward of what he possesses in property, he has not learned the meaning of stewardship. A man is not spiritually right when he fails to recognize God in his handling of money and property of other sorts. If we recognize the fact that all we possess really belongs to God, then we shall not be found using the LORD'S MONEY to buy liquor, or tobacco, or to pay for tickets to the shows and other worldly entertainments. When one goes into a liquor joint to buy liquor, he should, to be consistent, walk up to the counter and tell the liquor salesman that he wants to spend some of the Lord's money for liquor. It IS THE LORD'S MONEY and when spent for liquor it goes out of the Lord's service. If we buy a suit of clothes we should remember we are spending the LORD'S MONEY and hence should not

dress for show or to out-shine our neighbor. When we build a house we should remember that we build with the LORD'S MONEY, and the house should be for comfort and to be used in order that we may better serve the Lord. "Whatsoever ye do, do all for the glory of God" (I Cor. 10:31).

Stewardship in Earning Money. Stewardship starts in getting money and continues you engaged in? What sort of position do you hold? What kind of a job is yours? Is your occupation such as will honor God? Remember we are "laborers together with God" and do you work at your job or in your position with the thought that "GOD IS WITH ME IN WHAT I AM DOING?" We have no right to engage in an enterprise nor to enter upon any career without thinking of God as a partner. Does God endorse what I am doing to make money? (I Cor. 3:9-11).

Stewardship in Investments. A Baptist deacon bought a stock in hotels, and the hotels sold liquor. He received dividends from the income of the hotels, a part of which was derived from the sale of liquor. We are responsible to God for our investments. Can't excuse ourselves by thinking that we personally do not sell liquor in the hotels because we are responsible for the way our money is used. Every child of God should think seriously when making an investment and ask himself if he believes God will be pleased with his investment.

Our Use of Money in the Lord's Work Should Be Cheerful. To contribute our money because we think GOD REQUIRES IT or with the idea that we are HELPING GOD in some way is to miss the WORSHIP THAT SHOULD ACCOMPANY GIVING. We worship God in singing and in praying, in preaching, and in reading the Bible, and giving our money is an act of worship and should no more be bound by legal rule than prayer should be bound by legal rule, or that we should sing a certain number of songs as a duty. Such as that would be absurd, and so is giving money by RULE OR LEGAL REQUIREMENT. Our giving should be cheerful, happy and as someone has said we should give "hilariously". "God loveth a cheerful

giver" (II Cor. 9:7). "Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase" (Prov. 3:9). Those who merely "chip in" for the sake of appearances and do not contribute from principle are acting the hypocrite and such contributions displease God.

There is a Reward **Promised in This Life to Conscientious Stewards**. "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together and running over shall men pour into your bosom," Luke 6:38. While we should not give in order to get a reward, but should give for the **GLORY OF GOD**, yet it is a pleasure to know that God recognizes our faithfulness and gives abundant reward even in this life, "good measure, pressed down and shaken together." The more we give from the right motive, the more God gives to us.

God wants our best, and is our best too much? Remember how our Lord poured out His soul for us—He gave us HIS BEST.

Questions

1. Who really owns what we possess?
2. Are you right in spirit if you fail to use your property for God?
3. How can we be stewards in making money?
4. Should we choose a calling or accept a position without God?
5. Should we give by RULE or LAW or give joyfully?
6. In what ways may we worship God?
7. What day in the week should we cast up and see what the Lord has done for us?
8. Should we give God the first and best or only give Him what is left?
9. Is there a reward for faithful stewardship?
10. What did Jesus give for us?

Lesson VII

STEWARDSHIP OF INDIVIDUALITY

1. Individuality Defined. Who are you? To give your name does not answer that question. A little negro boy was talking to a white lady and she said: "What is your name?" He answered: "George Washington-." She said: "Do you try to be like George Washington?" The little boy said, "Of couse I does, for that is who I is". Indeed he was George Washington, but in a very important sense he was NOT George Washington. Who are you? Are you a child of God or a child of the Devil? Are you a good citizen or a bad citizen? Personality—INDIVIDUALITY — is a most important thing. Our bodies will die and molder to dust but our INDIVIDUALITY will live on forever.

Our Lord uses individuals. In reality he built no organization. He established his church, but the church He established lacked nearly all the characteristics of a worldly organization. The church is a brotherhood of individuals bound together not by rule, not by organization, but bound together by love. A church stays together because the members WANT TO STAY TOGETHER and not because any outside force binds them to each other. To forge chains that bind would enslave the individuals, but the love of God shed in the hearts causes the members to enjoy the fellowship with one another and they stay in the church because they WANT TO and not because they are afraid to get out.

The stewardship of individuality is more important than stewardship of material things. Material things will perish, but individuality will live on, and what we ARE IS FAR MORE IMPORTANT THAN WHAT WE POSSESS. Therefore we should determine to BE SOMEBODY—not just another person. Nobody can be that somebody but you. The SOMEBODY you are is different from any other somebody in the world, and hence each of us should develop our individuality to the limit. Had you not

rather be a mountain stream or a beautiful lake than to be a mere drop in the ocean? Had you not rather be a giant oak than to be a shrub in a thicket? As a steward, you should develop the possibilities God put in you. And God will hold us accountable for what we become or what we fail to become that was possible for us. WHO are you anyway, and WHY ARE YOU WHO YOU ARE?

3. Stewardship of Individuality is Based On God's Ownership. Isa. 43:1: "Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by my name; thou art mine." I Cor. 6:19-20: "Ye *are* not your own, for ye are bought with a price." The Jews were charged with robbing God when they did not give the best of what they had but paid their tithes in moulded bread, crippled sheep, and sick animals (Mal. 1:13-21). What shall be said of a Christian who does not devote his individuality to God? Then suppose he brings on sickness, or a maimed condition of his body by wrong living and uses that crippled body for the Lord instead of being his very best? A child is taught to respect his parents and not bring reproach on them, and shall not a child of God respect his heavenly Father and not bring reproach on Him and His cause? Does it occur to you that you should say: I shall not do that bad thing because I belong to God? The President of the United States has sons who have served as soldiers in the United States Army, and naturally we expect MORE OF THEM because of that fact, and should the world not expect more of us because we are children of God? The fact is the world does expect more of us because we are children of God. It is a responsibility we should measure up to.

The church is a training school to develop individuality in the membership and each member should "study to show himself approved unto God a workman that needeth not to be ashamed." Even the pastor of the church should not be content with his college training but should constantly seek to improve himself in his preaching and in his personal influence. To be content and stop growing is to dry up and become unfruitful. The pastor should seek to be the BEST PREACHER IN THE WORLD, and, if he should succeed

in becoming the best preached in the world, he should then seek to become the BEST PREACHER WHO EVER HAS BEEN IN THE WORLD. He should never be satisfied with his attainments, not in order to outshine others but to be of the most service to God. He should not have worldly Ambition to outstrip others in the world, but he should have SPIRITUAL AMBITION TO OUTSTRIP ALL OTHERS IN USEFULNESS in the Kingdom of God. The pastor is an example for the members of the flock and each of them should follow him as he has followed Christ, for all of them belong to God.

3. To Become a Christian One First Surrenders to God and Becomes His Bond-Servant.

"They first gave themselves to the Lord" (II Cor. 8:5). In the Old Testament Joseph as a servant of Pharaoh is a fine type of steward. "Joseph found favor in his (Pharaoh's) sight, and he ministered unto him. And he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put in his hand—and he left all that he had in Joseph's hand." (Gen. 39:4-6).

God blessed Pharaoh because of Joseph, and all the time Joseph PRESERVED his own individuality and never forgot his higher duty to God. When Potiphar's wife set her voluptuous eyes on Joseph and sought to ensnare him into wickedness, he was TRUE TO PHAROAH and felt his responsibility to God at the same time. He suffered for being a true steward for his master and was thrown into prison, but God used that for the carrying out of His glorious purpose concerning the Jews. God overrules our suffering for His glory, and we should remember that just as God overruled the wicked act of Pharaoh's wife for Joseph's advancement and through the formation of the Jewish nation, even so God will overrule our suffering for the advancement of His cause. The thing we should constantly, bear in mind is that we are God's stewards whether we are in jail or perhaps, ruling a great nation as we see illustrated in Joseph. Joseph was faithful as he handled the affairs of the king, and, when they put him in jail because of his fidelity, he was a faithful steward in jail and won the favor of the prisoners for

the glory of God. Whether he was in a prison or a king's palace, he was ALL THE TIME A STEWARD.

Daniel was another fine example of stewardship. (Read the book of Daniel). He was true to God even UNTO DEATH. Putting him in a lion's den did not stop him in, his devotion to God. All the time, whether in favor or disfavor of others, Daniel expressed his INDIVIDUALITY and made it count for God. He did not betray his trust whether in prison or in the presence of the king, whether in his own dwelling or in a lion's den. We should dare to be a Joseph or a Daniel. Very few have ever developed such wonderful personality, have become such decided INDIVIDUALS as did Joseph and Daniel, but we should take them as our example and leave it to God to make our individuality really count.

Questions

1. Who are you?
2. Have you a real individuality?
3. Do you realize that you are responsible for developing individuality?
4. Which is the most important, what we are or what we possess?
5. Which will continue longest, our individuality or our possessions?
6. Who gave themselves first unto the Lord?
7. Can we be Christians unless we first surrender to God?
8. Who were two Old Testament ex-dimples of stewardship?
9. Are we responsible for the preservation of our bodies and minds in a state of good health?
10. Should each one seek to make the most of himself?
11. What kind of a preacher should each one try to be?
12. Should the ambition of the pastor be to outshine others in the world or to excel all others in usefulness?
13. Should the members of the church follow the pastor as he follows Christ?

Lesson VIII

STEWARDSHIP OF ABILITY AND OPPORTUNITY.

1. Life's Powers and Resources Belong to God.

By the grace of God, I am what I am. Who made you to differ from another? Why were you born a white man or a Negro? Why were you born in America or Europe? Why are you male or female? What have you naturally that you did not receive? (I Cor. 4:7). All we have, and all we are came from God, and we are stewards of all of it. Why *are* you intelligent naturally and another has less mental ability than you? Both you and your less fortunate neighbor are responsible to God for what you are and who you are. All that God has given us should be used for Him. No one is excused because his ability is small and opportunities few. Governor Doneghey, who was a very successful business man and who acquired a large fortune in his business and became governor of Arkansas two terms and who was held in the highest esteem by those who knew him, had a motto or slogan: "DO WHAT YOU DO WITH WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO WITH". Governor Doneghey was not an educated man in the sense school men use that term, and his grammar was not good as is seen in the slogan, "do what you do with what you have to do with". But the idea was excellent. He did not sit down and wait for a great opportunity, but he availed himself of such opportunities as came his way and did the best he could with what he had to do with. His first chance to earn money was by nailing boards on a shed roof at fifty cents a day. He nailed the boards the best he could and gradually advanced as a carpenter until he became a great builder. He built several of the greatest office buildings in Little Rock, and the largest of them is now known as the "Doneghey Building". He built the two great concrete bridges across Arkansas River at Little Rock. He led in the building of the three million dollar State House, the

pride of Arkansas. He did the small things that came his way, and, as larger things came, he used them. He became governor of a great state by the same methods, "do what you do with what you have to do with". That motto adopted by all would mean success in life in every particular. The man who waits for a BIG THING before doing anything will never get the big thing to do.

Eld. H. I. Shockley, a Baptist preacher, was called into the first World War. He was at Camp Pike and one night he was trying to sleep, but the boisterous soldiers kept him awake. They were cursing, swearing, and telling vulgar stories. His righteous soul was vexed. The lights had been turned out, but the blasphemies continued. He arose from his army cot and said in a loud voice, "Men, I would like to sleep and cannot for the confusion. I want to ask that all of you be quiet long enough for me to offer a prayer. They immediately quieted down and he prayed aloud and as earnestly as he could. He prayed for himself and then for the rough men who were quartered there with him. He prayed for the people back home, the homes where the boys had lived and from which they had been taken in order to be in the war. He prayed that these boys might consider God and submit to Him and then said "Amen." Everything was quiet as death and soon all were asleep or at least quiet. But some did not sleep well because their consciences hurt them. He heard later of several who were converted to God by that simple testimony he made there in the dark, and all of them respected him. He could have allowed his timidity to keep him quiet in the face of such conduct as the boys engaged in. But he did what he could with what he had to do with and God blessed him. He was a steward and was faithful to his Master.

2. The Small or One Talent, Man Should Use That Talent. In Matthew, 25th chapter, we have the account of the men with the talents. The two who used their talents had them doubled and received the blessing of their master. The one talent man decided that he could do nothing worth-while with just one talent, and the result was he received the severe rebuke of his master. The ones who use their talents were praised for their

faithfulness, and the one who refused to do anything because he could not do big things was severely rebuked by his master. We are not rewarded for our SUCCESS but for our FAITHFULNESS. If the one talent man had used his talent, it too would have doubled like the others and he would have received the blessing from his master.

A well to do man, a Baptist, read a good book, and he was very strong in his praises of the good book. He said it did him more good than any other book had done and he wished everybody could read it and said: "If I had a million dollars, I would scatter them among the people by the thousands." A little boy listened intently at this praise of the book and noted what he said about scattering them by the thousands "if he were worth a million dollars" and the little boy said: "Uncle Jay, don't you think you could buy and give away a dozen of them?" The boy's question stunned the dear man. Certainly he could have bought and given away dozen, in fact he could have bought and given away a thousand if he had re4r wanted to do so. If you won't give .away a dozen good books with the money you now have, you would not give a thousand away if you were worth a million dollars. If you won't use the twenty-five cents you now have for the Lord, you would not use twenty-five thousand dollars for the Lord. If you are not faithful in little things, you will not be faithful in larger things.

3. You May NOT Be Able to Preach But You Might Build Houses. Moses was honored of God to give the law at Mt. Sinai, but Bezaleel was selected to build the Tabernacle according to the pattern given Moses on the mount. Ex. 31:1-5: "And God spake unto Moses, saying, See, I have called by name Bezaleel of the tribe of Judah; and I have filled him with the spirit of wisdom, and in understanding and in knowledge, and in All manner of workmanship, to devise skilful works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass and in cutting of stones for setting and in carving of wood, to work in all manner of workmanship."

Thus we see God had a place for Moses and ptil another place for Bezaleel. If God called you to be a Moses, be just that, but, if he wants you to be carpenter or brick mason, be that. If he wants you to be a housekeeper, be the best housekeeper possible. Have you musical talent? Use that music for the glory of God. There is no room nor reason in the Kingdom of God for the SACRED and the SECULAR. Everything is sacred if devoted to the service of God. Everything is religious if we do all we do for the glory of God. Whether we dig d i t c h e s (somebody must dig ditches) or paint mansions, or rule a nation, all should be done for the glory of God, and, if we do that, then digging ditches is just as honorable and JUST AS RELIGIOUS AS PREACHING. "Whether therefore ye eat or drink or whatsoever ye do, do all for the glory of God" I Cor. 10:31. Such, a life does away with the SECULAR AND THE SACRED. Everything is sacred if devoted to God.

4. We Are Stewards of Our Aibffity to Lead Others.

We need better leadership, and some have ability to lead others, and we are trustees of that ability because it was given us by the Lord. I Cor. 15:10: "By the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." If God gave you ability to lead, you are responsible to God for your leading others. Your neighbors are watching you, and they will follow you if you lead them in the right way. We have power with God and men and should not waste it. How are you using the power God gave you? The author saw the Trinity River at Dallas, Texas, when it overflowed its banks and spread out all over the land on both sides of the river. It destroyed property, injured land and ruined crops and made the roads impassible. What mighty power wasted! There was enough power in that river to run all the mills in Texas, but it was wasted. How much Christian power is wasted when it might be used to direct the work of the Lord? The priest and the Levite

passed by the poor man who had been robbed (Luke 10:30-32). They did the unfortunate man no harm, but they wickedly failed to do him any good. The Samaritan came along and USED HIS POWER to save the poor man's life by taking him to a place of safety. Do you use your power to assist fallen humanity or do you waste it? Are you LEADING or MISLEADING?

Questions

1. What is meant by talent?
2. Who endowed you with ability to serve the Lord and humanity?
3. Are you using your talents or have you decided to bury it?
4. Does God reward us for success or for faithfulness?
5. Are we responsible for our ability to lead others?
6. Is it possible to waste our power?
7. Does God have work for us to do besides preaching?
8. Does God expect the carpenter to build houses for His glory?
9. Does God call men to do what is commonly called secular work?
10. If we do all that we do for the glory of God, will not everything we do be sacred?

Lesson IX

STEWARDSHIP OF CALLING

"Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God." I Cord 7:24.

In God's purpose everyone has a specific calling, and he should, in choosing his life's work, be sure to get into the place God wants him to be in and not choose something else and thus fail to carry out what God intended in his life.

1. This Idea of Life Makes us Partners With God.

"We are laborers together with God" (I Cor. 3:9-11), and should feel the importance of doing what God wants us to do. There has been many a misplaced life and, in that way, many have been unhappy and have failed to be useful in the kingdom of God. Working where God wants us to work and working in the WAY God wants us to work dignifies life and everything in life becomes sacred. The battle is the Lord's, and we have been called to fill the place in the Christian warfare that pleases God and where we can make a success. Failure is certain if we are out of place. He who falls in with God's purpose in his life, and lives within God's will is sure of happiness and is certain of final success.

2. We Should Seek to Excel As a Steward of God in the Place He Has Called Us to Fill. You cannot do a good thing too well. It is impossible to do more than you ought to do. Our very best is demanded, and we are held accountable for failure to do our best in the calling wherewith God has called us. It is a lifetime work, and there is no place to stop. No one should ever retire in the service of God. We may get tired IN THE WORK but we should never get TIRED OF THE WORK. Eccl. 11:6: "In the morning sow thy seed", and in the evening withhold not thy hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good."

A man is never old until he gives up his activity and begins to live in the-past. If he continues to build air-castles lives for the future, and plans great things for God, he will remain young until the end comes. Old age is a relative term, and men are "old" or "young" according to their state of mind. Keep working; if the load gets too heavy, lighten the load and keep going.

3. As Stewards, We Should Guard Against Deterioration. There is such a thing as salt losing its savor, and there is a possibility of our light becoming darkness (Matt. 5:13). It is a pity to see one outlive his usefulness, and it need not be. The way to prevent it is to keep busy. If one field closes on us, we should enter another. Dr. A. D. Sears was an active pastor in

Clarksville, Tenn., at the age of ninety-six. He began that important pastorate at the age of seventy and continued steadily until he died an accidental death. But for the accident, he bade fare to continue as pastor until he reached a hundred years. The trouble with many is they fail to study the Bible and fail to keep in touch with mankind and lose interest in the work and, as a result, the salt loses its savor and their light becomes darkness. As stewards of God, we should use our calling to the end of life. We should avoid getting into a rut or moving around in a circle. Plan new things and undertake still greater things and thus keep fresh.

4. As Stewards, We Should Have a Fixed Aim. What is your purpose in life? What have you decided to do? What object do you have in view? Are you just, drifting with the current? Why not pull up stream against the current? If you are in the place God wants you -to fill, make the most of it. A high purpose and a lofty aim gives character to our lives. Is it your purpose to make money? If so why? What are you going to do with the money when you make it? Money is good as a means to an end, but it is very bad and dangerous when money is the end instead of the means to an end. Jesus had need of money to buy clothing and food. Churches need money to build church houses and support missionaries. Everybody needs money, but to live for money is wicked and dangerous. What is your aim in life? If you have no aim, then you are only a piece of driftwood floating down the stream of time and will never be useful for anything. (I Tim. 6:9-10).

5. When Choosing a Calling, We Should Ask, "Is This the Thing God Wants Me to Do?" However humble the calling, it should be regarded as sacred and be adjusted to God's soul saving work. If you are a merchant, you should sell goods in order to win souls to Christ. If you are a lawyer, you should practice law for the purpose of winning souls to Christ. The practice of medicine gives wide and great opportunity to win souls to Christ. A merchant in Lebanon, Ky., won one of his clerks to Christ by being strictly honest. A lady came

into the store to buy some goods, and she asked the clerk if the goods would fade. He told her the goods was a fast color and would not fade. The merchant overheard the clerk tell this falsehood and he walked over and said: "This goods will fade and the clerk should have told you the truth." He lost the sale of the goods by telling the truth, but the clerk was so impressed with his honesty that he decided that his employer had something that he needed and he was convicted of sin and soon accepted Christ. The merchant LOST A SALE BUT WON A SOUL by telling the truth. Whatever occupation a child of God has, he has but one business, for he is in the business of winning souls to Christ. The famous missionary, Wm. Carey, said he mended shoes to pay expenses while he worked at, the business of winning souls. Every child of God should cautiously, consistently, and determinedly decide to engage in no occupation that will in the least hinder him from soul winning. Soul winning is the ONE IMPORTANT THING. All else should be a means to that end.

Questions

1. Why is it important to choose a life work in harmony with God?
2. What should be the governing motive in choosing a life occupation?
3. How long should we work in the place God wants us in?
4. What relationship are we in when we work with God?
5. Can we win souls to Christ by selling goods or practicing law?
6. Is there danger in living for the purpose of making money?
7. How can one stay young?
8. When does one become really old?
9. Can we do a good thing too well?
10. How may money making be made to serve God?

Lesson X

ONE HUNDRED PERCENT STEWARDSHIP

New Testament stewardship requires an ALL-OUT service—every part of our being should be devoted to the Lord's service.

Rom. 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. 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."

Stewardship calls for all that is in us, nothing reserved, for all we have and all we are came from God and is a TRUST that we should use for His glory. God smiles on such service. Somebody said: "The world has yet to see what may be accomplished by a man wholly devoted to God." It should be the ambition, the passion of all of God's stewards to be wholly devoted to God.

OUR FEET should be shod "with the preparation of the gospel of peace." Eph. 6:15. Since our religion is a going religion, we should have our feet prepared, properly shod, for going into all the world as evangelists of mercy. The writer of the 19th Psalm said: "I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies" (Psa. 119:59). We sometimes sing:

"Are you walking in his footsteps, Are you
always doing good, Do you follow after Jesus,
As sincerely as you should?"

"Do you travel in the pathway, That will shine with
brighter light, Till you reach the mansions yonder,
In the land of pure delight?"

David said: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." (Psa. 119 105). In that light we should:

Walk to see the sick, walk to help the needy, walk to the house of God, walk WITH GOD. "Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him." (Gen. 5:24).

OUR HANDS should be dedicated to God's service. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goeth" (EccI. 9:10). We sometimes sing:

"Take my life and let it be
Consecrated, Lord to thee:
Take my hands and let them move
At the impulse of thy love."

OUR EYES should be used in the service of God. Jesus said: "The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness" (Matt. 6:22). The eye has much to do with our living. With the eye, we can see the danger signals; with the eye, we can see the sign boards that point the way; with the eye, we can see the pitfalls that are set for our destruction; with the eye we can read God's Word, and with the eye, we can see the work that needs to be done. Jesus said: "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields for they are white already to harvest" (John 4:35). With the eye, we may commit sin. Jesus said: "Whoso looketh upon a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matt. 5:28). We should avoid the appearance of evil.

OUR HEARTS should be brought into harmony with God. We should love God with our whole heart (Mark 12:30). Jesus said that the "pure in heart shall see God" (Matt. 5:8). Jesus said that where our treasure is there will our heart be also (Matt. 6:21). We should be sure to lay up treasures in heaven so our hearts may be directed away from the things of the world. It is with the heart that we believe in Jesus and OBEDIENCE, IF PLEASING TO GOD, IS FIRST IN THE HEART. Since God sees the heart, he knows whether we are at heart obedient. By

"heart" we mean affection, love, joy, gladness. All stewardship is motivated by the heart, and the service is gladly done.

OUR EARS should be used as a trust from God, and a good steward will use his ears in the service of God. With the ear, men give heed to false doctrines that lead to bad conduct; "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils" (I Tim. 4:1). But with the ear, we can hear God's message to the churches; "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" (Rev. 2:29). Our Saviour said: "Take heed how ye 'near" (Luke 8:18). We can hear more and hear better what God wants us to hear if we really WISH TO HEAR. Hence, we should give attention when God's Word is read in our presence and when it is preached from the pulpit, for God will hold us accountable for what and how we hear.

WE WERE CREATED IN THE IMAGE OF GOD and that divine image has been marred by sin. In the new birth, it has been partially restored, and it will be fully restored when our bodies are raised from the dead. With the spirit restored to God's image by the new birth and with the promise that the body shall be restored to that image in the resurrection, we should endeavor to reflect God's image so far as we possibly can while we still live in the world. Gen. 2:27 says: "God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him." The human race is the crowning work of God's creation, and we should use what God has bestowed upon us for His glory.

OUR TONGUES should be used in the service of God. Jesus said: "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." (Matt. 12:37). In Proverbs 21:23 we read: "Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles." James 1:26 calls attention to the fact that we should control our tongues. A single word may cost the life of a human being and even plunge a nation into war. A single word may cause disturbances in a family or a church.

Hence all should remember that they are stewards of God and should be careful to use the tongue for God's glory. Always pause and think what good or evil will come from what you are about to say and do and what effect it will have on the church. Loose talk may do untold damage.

With all that we have and all that we are, we should keep in mind that we are stewards of God. Prov. 3:6 reads: "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." In I Chron. 29:12-13 we read: "Both riches and honor come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name."

Our tongues should be used to praise God and to thank Him for all the benefits He has bestowed on us, for all we have comes from God. Praise for it all is an important part of worship.

Exact Obedience In Stewardship. To be accurate, to be exact in all of our behavior is very important and the following illustrations of inaccuracy will help in this study. A newspaper reporter gave a glowing description of a wedding and in describing the costume of the bride said her shoes reminded one of "fair boots" and the printer made it read "FERRY BOATS". Just a little inaccuracy, but the bride was insulted. A writer of an article on the resurrection said the Bible taught that those who are alive and remain when the Lord shall come back to the earth "will be changed" but the printer made him say that the ones who are alive when Jesus comes will "BE HANGED". A small change but enough to ruin the sense and make the article ridiculous. Another inaccuracy was in a newspaper account of the action of the City Council that "all wires must be put under the ground". But the printer made it read "all WIVES must be put under the ground," a rather drastic order.

The Bible should be accepted EXACTLY as it reads and not one addition or subtraction should be made. To change a letter in the Bible may change the meaning of a passage. A little girl committed to

memory the first chapter of James and recited it in her Sunday School class room. She misunderstood a word and where it said "when he is TRIED he shall receive a crown of life" and she made it read: "when he is TIRED he shall receive a crown of life". In Rev. 22:18 we are told that "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book." It is also said that if any man "take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life." (The word "book" in this passage means, according to the Greek in which it **was** originally written, TREE—part taken from the TREE of life).

The winning of souls is the most important thing in the world. Prov. 11:30 reads: "He that winneth souls is wise." We should be sure to win souls in the exact way taught **in** the Bible. It is done by showing the need of a Saviour, and showing Jesus Christ **to be** the Saviour. Social reform never saved a soul, and external performance of ceremonies never saved a soul. But all who **accept** Christ by faith are saved. Hold up Christ as Saviour and leave results with Him.

"Go win some soul to God to-day,
That in the darkness long has trod,
Go win some soul to wisdom's way,
For every soul is dear to God."

A true Christian steward puts soul winning first in all his plans. We owe it to the world. Paul said: "I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise" (Rom. 1:14). Jesus gave the commission to the church directing us to go teach all iations—make disciples of all nations—thus putting emphasis on soul winning. As stewards, we should do exactly that.

The church is the most important institution on earth unless it be the family. The church and family should be in harmony and both work for the salvation of

souls and living by the GOLDEN RULE instead of the RULE OF GOLD. The church should teach the Word of God accurately; the whole truth, yet nothing but the truth. We should do exactly what the Bible says do and STOP at that, and not be wise above that which is written.

"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded." (Matt. 28:20). We are held responsible for the lost about us, and, if we fail to warn them, their blood shall be upon us. Ezek 3:18. "When I say unto the wicked thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thine *hand*". Can we truly say we are "free from the blood of all men"?

Soon will the season of rescue be o'er,
Soon they will drift to eternity's shore,
Haste then, my brother, no time for delay,
But throw out the lifeline and save them to-day."

Stewards of God should never seek to be rich just for the sake of ease and comfort or for show. But it is a good thing to use riches for the glory of God. Some quaint preacher preached a sermon with the following divisions:

"Make all the money you can; Save all the money you can, then GIVE ALL THE MONEY YOU CAN. With that sort of money making, God is well pleased, for, in that way, we are laying up treasure in heaven. But **to** hoard a fortune here means that we must leave all we have possessed when we die; we cannot take a penny with us. When a rich man dies, he LEAVES ALL—there are **no** pockets in a shroud.

Stewards who live exactly as Christ would have them live are the salt of the earth (Matt. 5:13-14). If there had been only ten righteous persons in Sodom, God would have spared the city (Gen. 18:20). The

prayers of righteous people avail much with God. (James 5:16-18). The example of good stewards is very valuable to the communities in which they live. If Noah had not been true to God, the whole human race would have been blotted out; we owe our existence to his being a good steward. Through the faith of Abraham, the whole world has been blessed and will be blessed to the end of time (Gen. 28:14). The church at Rome was made up of faithful stewards, and their faith was "spoken of throughout the whole world" at that time (Rom. 1:8).

Questions

1. Are we doing exactly what God wants us to do?
2. What is the harm in not being exact?
3. Have we a right to substitute for what God has commanded?
4. What are the greatest and most important institutions on earth?
5. What is the greatest and most important work we can do?
6. What can a church made up of God's stewards do?
7. What illustrations show the value of Christian influence?
8. What can you say about the example and prayers of Christian stewards?
9. What church lived so well that it was spoken of all over the world?
10. Should anything we have be withheld from God's service?
11. Name some of the things we use every day that should be used in God's service.

FOUND FAITHFUL

Christian Stewardship calls every believer to recognize that life, time, abilities, possessions, and influence belong to God and must be used for His glory.

Written as a practical church training course, Ben M. Bogard develops stewardship as a Bible doctrine. Its lessons move from God's ownership and Christian giving to faithful service, church responsibility, soul winning, and exact obedience to Scripture.

Study questions throughout the volume make this historic work useful for personal study, Sunday school classes, and church training.

THE STEWARD'S CALLING

- Recognize God's ownership
- Use every gift for His glory
- Support the work of the church
- Serve faithfully and win souls

A historic Baptist training text

INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY BAPTIST MINISTRIES

books.imbm.world

FREE BOOKS • THEOLOGY & MINISTRY