

# LESSON 1

## Understanding Biblical Stewardship

**AS DISCIPLES OF JESUS, BIBLICAL TRUTH MUST DEFINE OUR ATTITUDES TOWARD MONEY, GIVING, AND MANAGING WHAT WE'VE BEEN GIVEN.**

Psalms 24 establishes that “the Earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it.” Your agreement with this statement depends on one simple thing: your belief that the Holy Scriptures, divinely revealed to its earthly authors and thus available to us today, is God-inspired, inerrant, living and active, eternal, and useful for teaching.<sup>1</sup>

Such belief defines the phrase “Biblical worldview,” which as followers of Christ forms the basis of our acknowledgement of Truth, our adherence to it through obedience, and our celebration of it through worship.<sup>2</sup> And the fruit in our lives reveals how serious we are about all three.

Our first lesson explores what the Bible has to say about stewardship and how our response to Truth reveals our heart.



**KEY CONCEPT: Biblical worldview defines stewardship for the believer.**

In general, “stewardship” involves the transfer of responsibility, to another by a trusting owner, of the management and development of the owner’s property, possessions, assets, and interests. Biblical stewardship, therefore, recognizes (a) that what we have, we’ve been given,<sup>3</sup> and (b) that the Giver expects and equips us to manage it well.<sup>4</sup>

God-honoring stewardship requires us to:

- Recognize Who owns title to all we have; everything belongs to God.<sup>5</sup>
- Acknowledge and count our blessings.<sup>6</sup>
- Understand that blessings flow through us at all times.<sup>7</sup>
- Pro-actively show that it is more blessed to give than receive.<sup>8</sup>



**DISCUSSION: What other worldviews do you encounter in today’s culture?**

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**DISCUSSION:** How do/don't they reflect Biblical principles with respect to money, financial priorities, and the value of people over things?

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A Biblical worldview assures us that we need not debate our role as His stewards. Rather, the question becomes, "How do we know what to manage, plus how & when to do so?" Biblical stewardship encompasses time, talent, and resources (possessions & income).<sup>9</sup> As His disciples, we are responsible to:

- Discern the things of God<sup>10</sup>
- Manage the resources He reveals in a manner that honors Him.
- Disperse His blessings with purpose and expectation.<sup>11</sup>



**DISCUSSION:** Assume we all agree that God is the source of what we have, and that He desires (requires!) us to work together to be good stewards. If we have different financial priorities and resources, how we do support a specific, common objective?

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**KEY CONCEPT:** Our response to Biblical truth about stewardship reveals our heart.

How we respond to Biblical truth:

- Shows our priorities.<sup>12</sup>
- Reveals whether something exerts control over your life that should not have that power (i.e. idols)
- Indicates obsessions (excessive pre-occupations) and/or materialism and exposes our distractions - particularly things we covet.

Functioning as productive, trustworthy stewards of the King's resources requires us to yield to His leading as well as His discipline and instruction.

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- The widow who gave all was fully committed to her gift and completely unconcerned with others' impressions. <sup>13</sup>
- We reap what we sow; are we paying attention to the seed, and to the soil? <sup>14</sup>

It does not take lengthy self-assessment to admit that as individuals, households, churches, companies, non-profits, governments, etc., we have room to improve in how we manage His resources. Bearing the "fruit in keeping with repentance" <sup>15</sup> means that something has to change, outwardly and with lasting effect.



### DISCUSSION: What does God expect of us? (individually and in general; also in regard to this campaign)

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### PERSONAL / HOUSEHOLD APPLICATION

#### DISCUSS

How do you/your family look at money & giving? Where is your treasure? Be honest and humble.

#### DECIDE

What changes will you make to pursue a life of holiness and obedience?

#### DO!

Repent and re-commit the fullness of your resources to His purposes. Set specific goals with respect to prayer, serving, and participation.

1	2 Tim 3:16	9	Eph 5:15-17, Matt 25:14-30, Luke 16:1-13
2	John 14:6	10	Eph 1:9
3	James 1:17	11	Prov 21:20, 3: 9-10
4	Luke 12:48b	12	Matt 6:21
5	Psalms 50:10, 8:6	13	Luke 21:1-4
6	Matt 6:31-33	14	Gal 6:7, Hos 10:12
7	Ecc 5:19, 1 Chron 29: 10-14	15	Matt 3:8
8	Acts 20:35		