

# LESSON 1

## Understanding Biblical Stewardship

**As a disciple, your attitudes toward finances and giving must be rooted in acknowledgment of Biblical truth.**

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.



**A 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>



**Share specific examples from your lives, of how your worldview has impacted decisions you’ve made (financial or otherwise).**

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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>

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**If we agree regarding stewardship, but have different financial priorities and resources, how do we support a specific, common objective?**

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**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.

- 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 effect.



**What does God expect of you? (in general, and in specific 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.
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| 1  | 2 Tim 3:16                                     |
| 2  | John 14:6                                      |
| 3  | James 1:17                                     |
| 4  | Luke 12:48                                     |
| 5  | Psalms 50:10, 8:6                              |
| 6  | Matthew 6:31-33                                |
| 7  | Ecclesiastes 5:19, 1 Chron 29: 10-14           |
| 8  | Acts 20:35                                     |
| 9  | Ephesians 5:15-17, Matt 25:14-30, Luke 16:1-13 |
| 10 | 2 Cor 2:14                                     |
| 11 | Proverbs 21:20, 3: 9-10,                       |
| 12 | Matt 6:21                                      |
| 13 | Luke 21:1-4                                    |
| 14 | Gal 6:7, Hosea 10:12                           |
| 15 | Matt 3:8                                       |

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### Additional Study

Utilize these supplemental studies during the week, following each lesson. Deepen your appreciation for all you've been given, by seeing it in the total framework of God's amazing plan for your life. His blueprint calls for your faith-filled stewardship of His resources, which produces an abundant harvest in your life, in the Body, and in the world around you.

### Lesson 1: Understanding Biblical Stewardship

The following statements, as supported through the accompanying passages, give a quick glimpse into Biblical stewardship. Read the passages below in context and look for common themes and attitudes between the different situations, authors, and subject matter.

**PSALM 8:6, 50:10**

Recognize Who owns title to all we have; everything belongs to God.

**MATT 6:31-33**

Acknowledge and count our blessings.

**ECC. 5:19, 1 CHRON 29: 10-14**

Understand that blessings flow through us at all times.

**ACTS 20:35**

Pro-actively show that it is more blessed to give than receive.

These are not exhaustive by any means, so look for footnotes and related passages for further prayerful study.