

STEWARD

Creation

“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.” (Genesis 1:1) After creating the world in five days, and seeing that it was good, God made man on the sixth day.

“God said, ‘Let Us make human beings in Our image, to be like Us. They will reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the wild animals on the earth, and the small animals that scurry along the ground.’ So God created human beings in His own image. In the image of God He created them; male and female He created them.” (Genesis 1:26–27 NLT)

The Earth is the Lord’s

When Adam and Eve were given this command, they loved God, were in harmony with Him and each other, and delighted in His presence. There was no sin and no rebellion. They had joy in carrying out His will for they recognized that they, and everything in the world, had been created by God. They agreed wholeheartedly with these inspired verses:

“All the animals of the forest are mine, and I own the cattle on a thousand hills. I know every bird on the mountains, and all the animals of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell you, for all the world is mine and everything in it.” (Psalms 50:10–12 NLT)

“The earth is the LORD’s, and everything in it. The world and all its people belong to Him.” (Psalm 24:1)

“Yours, O LORD, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, and the majesty. Everything in the heavens and on earth is yours, O LORD, and this is Your kingdom. We adore You as the One who is over all things. Wealth and honor come from You alone, for You rule over everything. Power and might are in Your hand, and at Your discretion people are made great and given strength.” (1 Chronicles 29:11–12 NLT)

Stewards

Before Adam and Eve sinned, they were in a wonderful relationship with God. They walked and talked with God daily. In addition to their walk with God, He gave them a task, or work. They were to be in charge of His physical creation. God was the ultimate owner, and they were to be faithful stewards of all that He owned.

“Then God blessed them and said, ‘Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground.’” (Genesis 1:26–28 NLT)

A definition of a steward as found in Noah Webster’s 1828 dictionary, states “A man employed in great families to manage the domestic concerns, superintend the other servants, collect the rents or income, keep the accounts, etc.”

Faithful Stewards

In a letter to the Corinthians, Paul teaches that the prime requisite of a steward, or manager, is faithfulness. “For all things are yours . . . and you are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s. This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful.” (1 Corinthians 3:21, 23–4:2)

The writer of Proverbs implies a faithful man is rare and hard to find. “A faithful man who can find?” (Proverbs 20:6) Moses is described as a faithful steward. “My servant Moses. He is faithful in all my house.” (Numbers 12:7)

Faithfulness

Faithfulness is the very nature of God. “God is faithful.” (1 Corinthians 1:9)

Jesus is called faithful and true. “Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True.” (Revelation 19:11)

As followers of Jesus, we are each called to be faithful stewards, or managers, of all that God has given us, both heavenly spiritual mysteries and earthly physical treasures. We recognize that all we have belongs to God, and that we are simply watching over what He has given us.

Mixed Bag

I confess that I do not always have the mindset of a faithful steward. Too often I think of my car and my house and all my stuff as belonging to me. In reality, all I have has been given to me by my heavenly Father. “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights.” (James 1:17)

I know in my mind that everything on this earth belongs to God, but I find it hard to remember this all the time. Life is a journey, and God is patiently helping me to grow in thankfulness for all our possessions and to take care of them as if I were simply managing them as His faithful steward.

Each year when I read Deuteronomy 8, I am convicted for not seeing all the good things God has given to many of us in the United States as gifts and a blessing from heaven. Here are a few verses that summarize this chapter.

“The LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing out in the valleys and hills . . . And you shall eat and be full, and you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land He has given you. Take care lest you forget the LORD your God . . . Beware lest you say in your heart, ‘My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth.’” (Deuteronomy 8:7, 10–11, 17)

Prayer

God, by Your Good Spirit, remind us daily that all the things we have are from You. Help us to remember that everything comes from You and help us to be wise and faithful stewards. Amen.

THE WORD OF GOD

Read the Bible Daily

As I have continued to read through the Bible, I have discovered hidden treasures from Genesis to Revelation. One book which has become a favorite is Deuteronomy. In the seventeenth chapter instructions are given to the king. One of the primary commands is to read the Bible everyday. When he follows through five amazing benefits will follow. Pretend you are sitting on the throne and see if you can discover them as you read through this section.

“When he sits on the throne as king, he must copy for himself this body of instruction on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests. He must always keep that copy with him and read it daily as long as he lives. That way he will learn to fear the LORD his God by obeying all the terms of these instructions and decrees. This regular reading will prevent him from becoming proud and acting as if he is above his fellow citizens. It will also prevent him from turning away from these commands in the smallest way. And it will ensure that he and his descendants will reign for many generations in Israel.” (Deuteronomy 17:18–20, NLT)

Notice the five benefits of reading the Bible daily.

1. The king will “learn to fear the LORD.”
2. He will become more obedient “by keeping all the words of this law. . . and doing them.”
3. He will be a humble king, as this practice will “prevent him from becoming proud and acting as if he is above his fellow citizens.”
4. Keeping that copy with him will help make him careful and “prevent him from turning away from these commands in the smallest way.”
5. When the Word of God is diligently read daily, his family will also be blessed, as his “descendants will reign for many generations in Israel.”

Love the Truth

Perhaps you love the Bible and maybe you don't. After reading Psalms 19 and 119, I recognized how much the authors of these Psalms loved Scripture. Psalm 119:97 says, “Oh how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day.” When I was younger, I was concerned about my attitude towards the truth because reading the Bible every day was becoming more of a duty than a desire of my heart. Then I came across this encouraging verse, “because they received not the love of the truth.” (2 Thessalonians 2:10, ASV)

I paused and reflected that the language of this passage implied that the “love of the truth” was a gift that God was offering to me. I prayed and asked God to give me a “love for the truth.” He answered my request. My love for the truth is increasing to this day just as my love for God is growing.

The Bible Is Alive

The Bible is not just another book. It is a living document and each word is inspired and profitable for followers of Jesus.

“The Word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires.” (Hebrews 4:12, NLT)

Every Word Is Inspired

“All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.” (2 Timothy 3:16–17, NLT)

“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.” (Matthew 4:4)

“The instructions of the LORD are perfect, reviving the soul. The decrees of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The commandments of the LORD are right, bringing joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are clear, giving insight for living.” (Psalms 19:7–8, NLT)

Abiding in the Word is a Mark of a Disciple

“Jesus said to the Jews who had believed Him, ‘If you abide in My word, you are truly My disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.’” (John 8:31–32)

Scripture points me to Jesus, Who is called the Word of God

“You search the Scriptures because you think they give you eternal life. But the Scriptures point to Me!” (John 5:39, NLT)

Jesus Is the Word

“I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems, and He has a name written that no one knows but Himself. He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which He is called is The Word of God.” (Revelation 19:11–13)

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.” (John 1:1, 14)

Every Word Is Eternal and Life-Giving

“The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.” (John 6:63)

The Words of God are Eternal

“Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.” (Matthew 24:35)

“The grass withers and the flowers fade, but the word of our God stands forever.” (Isaiah 40:8, NLT)

The Commands of God Are Doable

“This command I am giving you today is not too difficult for you to understand, and it is not beyond your reach. . . . No, the message is very close at hand; it is on your lips and in your heart so that you can obey it.” (Deuteronomy 30:11, 14)

Obeying the Word Blesses Our Descendants

“Oh that they had such a heart as this always, to fear Me and to keep all My commandments, that it might go well with them and with their descendants forever!” (Deuteronomy 5:29)

The Word of Christ Builds Faith

“Faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the Word of Christ.” (Romans 10:17)

The Truth Makes Us Clean

“Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you.” (John 15:3, also Ephesians 5:26)

God-Breathed Truth Is Liberating

“You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” (John 8:32)

Holy Words Sanctify

“Make them holy by Your truth; teach them Your word, which is truth.” (John 17:17, NLT)

The Word of God Is Powerful

“Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.” (Ephesians 6:17)

The Scriptures are Inspired by the Spirit of God

“Men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.” (2 Peter 1:21)

“When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth.” (John 16:13)

Prayer

Give us a love for the truth. We know this is Your will for each of Your children and we ask in faith that You would quicken us and give us an appetite for Your inspired words, like the writers of Psalms 19 and 119. Amen.