

Who is a good and faithful steward?

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Information notice board

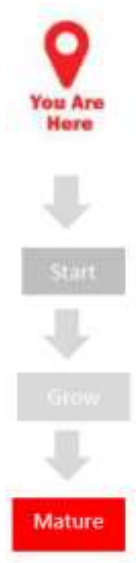
1) **Pray for us!** Without the Lord, our effort is in vain. Pray that we remain faithful, humble.

2) **Subscribe to** our [YouTube Channel](#) and keep up with our videos which support the website.

3) **Looking for a ministry to partner with (pray, volunteer, give)?**

Support World Vision. [Sponsor a vulnerable child](#) and change their life.

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Basics

As an auditor by profession, when we complete our work on a set of accounts, I often sign the audit report which often says that they are “True and fair”. In giving that opinion, we look at the numbers to tell us how well the owners’ capital has been managed. Was profit added, were assets added? Were liabilities managed? Will it survive for another year or is there a “Going concern” problem?

The human life we live from God’s perspective is probably like this. We hope our life, our hopes, our dreams, our complexities will be summed up as: “good and faithful servant” and there is no risk of “weeping and gnashing of teeth in the outer darkness”?

Christian Stewardship is similar to working in/for a company....

- **Bible** = policies and procedures, employment contract.
- **Talents/Your purpose** = your job description - what you must do, using your skills.
- **Profit** = Salvation of others. *Preach: Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand (Matthew 4: 17). Convert, baptise, disciple others(Matthew 28:18-20).*
- **Employee/manager** = you and your leaders (e.g. Pastors, Teacher).
- **Owner/shareholder** =God.

Now the last two above about God being the shareholder and us being the Employees/manager is one of the first lessons I learned before or just shortly after I got saved.

On 29/3/17, I wrote in my spiritual journal (a useful tool you must have) an early lesson from a devotional I was reading: *“We are only stewards. The Lord says, ‘The land is mine... you reside... as foreigners and strangers’. This is how we should regard property and possessions. They belong to God. They are on loan to you. God was teaching his people that there is no such thing as permanent wealth.”*

Lesson to learn: Stewardship begins and ends with the understanding of God's ownership of all for he says:

- "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End." (*Revelation 22:13*)
 - "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it." (*Psalms 24:1*)
 - "To the Lord your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it." (*Deuteronomy 10:14*)
 - "The land must not be sold permanently, because the land is mine and you are but aliens and my tenants." (*Leviticus 25:23*)
 - "Who has a claim against me that I must pay? Everything under heaven belongs to me." (*Job 41:11*)
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Are we really so bad at stewardship?

Insubordinate

Do you act "insubordinate" - acting like the owner ("my money", "my house", "my planet") yet you are a manager ("pastor", "prophet") or an employee ("sheep")?

Do you read your bible daily, and meditate on it (Psalms 1: 2)? Undertaking "Continuous Professional Development (CPD)" or training to get better in handling Gods work?

We don't study the word of God - so we don't understand what is required of us. We are not skilled and approved workers.

Work hard so you can present yourself to God and receive his approval. Be a good worker, one who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly explains the word of truth. (2 Tim 2: 15 NLT).

Lazy

Have you taken stock of your talents to help you know your purpose and how to use them (Matthew 25: 15)?

We procrastinate. We work harder at our "normal jobs" and as for the Lord's work, we are not efficient and don't do it with enthusiasm.

Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically (Romans 12: 11 NLT).

We are lazy and don't want to learn time management skills. So tasks builds up. We don't learn money management skills and so we are in debt and thus have become slaves to lenders. We have no savings, no emergency fund. We cannot therefore feed others, give to the kingdom of Heaven, build treasures in heaven using "evil money" (Matthew 6: 19)?

*Take a lesson from the ants, you lazybones.
Learn from their ways and become wise!
Though they have no prince
or governor or ruler to make them work,
they labor hard all summer,
gathering food for the winter.
But you, lazybones, how long will you sleep?
When will you wake up?
A little extra sleep, a little more slumber,
a little folding of the hands to rest—
then poverty will pounce on you like a bandit;
scarcity will attack you like an armed robber. Proverbs 6: 6 -11 (NLT)*

The Verdict..

Straightaway you can see, if you don't get to know the basics, you are going to be a bad employee, an even worse manager so:

Given all the above, if we don't generate a profit or add to the assets of the King, what good are we as a manager or employee?

As a boss, I would say to a bad employee: "you are fired".

Likewise God as owner would say "throw him out into the darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth Matthew (8:12, 22:13, and 25:30)"

So if bad stewardship is like being a bad employee, not simply being a bad owner - for we are not owners, what does the "Owner" – God Jesus have to say?

Roles and definitions. Who is who?

First off, who is a Steward? A Steward per the Cambridge dictionary means:

A person whose job it is to organize a particular event, or to provide services to particular people, or to take care of a particular place. ⁱ

It therefore involves "organising" "serving and "taking care". As an example, a steward on a plane, ship, train is called a "cabin attendant". One job description for airline cabin crew describes it like this:ⁱⁱ

*The role can be **physically and emotionally demanding** and there is a high degree of responsibility involved. Cabin crew are expected to deal with all passengers **diplomatically – even when feeling the effects of travelling through time zones and spending extended periods of time on their feet**. Many airlines require cabin staff to live within close proximity of a particular airport and crew members may have to go to work at short notice if on call. Working hours may involve **long shifts and unsociable hours, and it may be necessary to work during public holidays**. However, many cabin crew members enjoy the chance to interact with a wide range of people and the opportunities to explore and enjoy global destinations are almost unparalleled.*

As a steward you are therefore a servant and that comes with your discomfort – for the sake of others.

“The Kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness....” (Romans 14: 17, NIV).

Who is a good steward?

Good stewardship per Jesus in Luke 12: 42 – 47 is described as this:

And the Lord replied, “A faithful, sensible servant is one to whom the master can give the responsibility of managing his other household servants and feeding them. If the master returns and finds that the servant has done a good job, there will be a reward. I tell you the truth, the master will put that servant in charge of all he owns. But what if the servant thinks, ‘My master won’t be back for a while,’ and he begins beating the other servants, partying, and getting drunk? The master will return unannounced and unexpected, and he will cut the servant in pieces and banish him with the unfaithful.

“And a servant who knows what the master wants, but isn’t prepared and doesn’t carry out those instructions, will be severely punished. But someone who does not know, and then does something wrong, will be punished only lightly. When someone has been given much, much will be required in return; and when someone has been entrusted with much, even more will be required.

The example verses above, for those of you who are curious is within the larger context of Luke 12 where Jesus had in response to a question from the crowd:

1. Told the parable of the Rich Fool (Luke 12: 13-21) ... and then shortly thereafter told his disciples:
 2. Not to worry about accumulating money and possessions (Luke 12: 22-34); and
 3. Be ready for the Lord’s coming (Luke 12: 35 – 48).
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Therefore being a good steward should be seen within the context of this:

Judgment is coming. How will you be evaluated? Will you be called “Good and Faithful” or be thrown out “into the darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Knowing therefore that judgment is coming, Jesus’ teaching shows you should set about:

1. **Knowing the instructions (v. 47).** So you get to do bible reading and bible training. You meet others (fellowship). You read books from others (unity of the body of Christ). This way you understand both the character of the Master and your particular role.
 2. **Carrying the instructions out (v. 47).** So you dedicate time and resources to undertake the work you have been given. You become very skilful, like David, Daniel, and Joseph. You cultivate an attitude of obedience. *For disobedience is like the sin of witchcraft (1 Samuel 15: 23).*
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3. **Managing other servants and feeding them.** (v. 42). You advance beyond the basics of being a “baby craving milk for yourself” to a “mature Christian who teaches others.” (*Hebrews 5: 12*).
 4. **Having an “always ready” attitude** as the master can come anytime (v 45-46).
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Stewardship is therefore all about planning, management and execution of money/resources to reach a common known goal – in the best interests of the shareholders, just like a company. So there is:

A. Understanding: What does the master want? Do bible training and bible study.

B. Planning: What resources do you have in your hand? What skills do you have? Like others before you:

- Moses had a shepherd’s rod in his hand which he offered to God (*Exodus 4: 1-3*).
 - A boy had 5 small loaves and 2 small fish which he offered to Jesus (*John 6: 9*).
 - A Widow had the last oil which she offered to Elijah (*1 Kings 17:12-14*).
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C. Organising: Divide the tasks you have to do into:

- **Primary** - Feeding others. You separate the mature (sheep) from the young (lambs). This is primarily preaching and spreading the word of God. It is prayer.
 - **Secondary** - Managing others. You then handle the other tasks of for example organising small groups to go on mission trips, visiting the sick/prisoners.
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D. Day to day management: As stewardship is like management of someone else’s property you would do some of the following:

1. **Learn money management skills.** For example Dave Ramsey’s 7 baby stepsⁱⁱⁱ for coming out of debt include: *Save for a starter emergency fund (\$1,000), pay off all debt (except your mortgage), save 3-6 months of expenses in a fully funded emergency fund, invest 15% of your income into retirement, save for your children’s education (college fund), pay off your mortgage early and then finally build wealth and give.*
 2. **Maintain books of accounts.** Are the assets growing and are the liabilities/expenses reducing. Do you have regular “spiritual check-ups” – Do you regularly pray, read the bible to grow in intimacy with God? Do you go to church, meet others, give to build the body of Christ, build treasure in heaven? Do you regularly ensure you are handing over your sins to the Lord so you can grow in holiness and reduce the enemy’s foot hold in your life? Are you serious about overcoming certain sins and bad habits and so are willing to fast?
 3. **Know to expect audits.** Both planned and at any time. Are you open to the Lord’s discipline (*Hebrews 12:6*) Are you accountable to someone else to compare notes and ensure your doctrine is sound? (*Galatians 2:2*).
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4. **Protect the shareholders' interests and know the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).** How are you doing on Jesus' great commission in Matthew 28 to preach the gospel to everyone, to baptize to make disciples who you teach everything he commanded? How many new members, how many mission trips, how many testimonies).
 5. **Delegate/Train others.** Have you found the best assistants and trained them, if necessary to be worthy overseers and assistants (*1 Timothy 3: 1 – 13*).
 6. **Have Standards.** Do you have in place standard guiding principle? For example a church charter?
 7. **Find resources to help.** Does your team have access to other resources if it needs? For example:
 - **Questions:** gotquestions.org
 - **Free bible training at a seminary level):** biblicaltraining.org
 - **Experts on stewardship:** [Christian Stewardship Network](http://ChristianStewardshipNetwork.org)
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Next steps

Start at the beginning of your stewardship journey.

1. Ensure you have developed a regular bible reading/study program.
 2. Evaluate what your Job Description is (purpose) and what skills you have to do the job.
 3. Get training if you need be. This might include the practical aspects for example time management and money management but also the spiritual aspects.
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Notes

ⁱ <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/steward>

ⁱⁱ <https://targetjobs.co.uk/careers-advice/job-descriptions/277171-airline-cabin-crew-job-description>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.daveramsey.com/dave-ramsey-7-baby-steps>