

SESSION ONE

UNPACKING STEWARDSHIP

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Before we dive deeper, let's pause for a moment. Stewardship is one of those words we think we understand, but often it carries a much bigger meaning than we realize. Today, we mostly hear "stewardship" when people talk about finance... maybe the environment.

What about you?

When you hear the word "stewardship," what pops into your mind first?

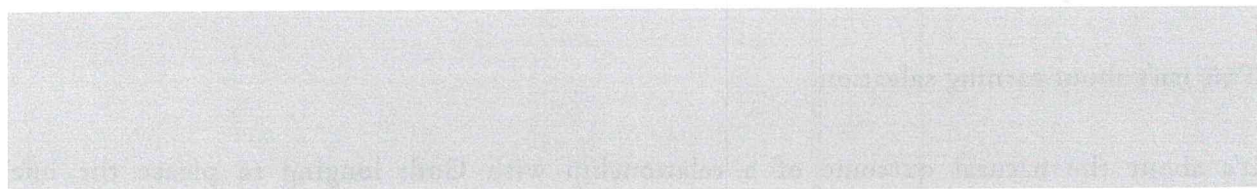


If your answers were still in the realm of your wallet and the world around us, you're not wrong! However, the biblical concept of stewardship stretches the idea even further, from our talents to our time, our opportunities to our relationships.

For our purposes here, we've summarized the essence of Biblical Stewardship as "the deep conviction that all I have is on loan from God, and my job is to grow everything given to me with vibrant faith, sustained inner joy, and unselfishness."

To put it bluntly: *"You own nothing. But you are responsible for everything you have."*

How does that idea land on you? What emotions, thoughts, or questions does it stir up?



If you struggled to answer that question, or if you're feeling tension, you're not alone.

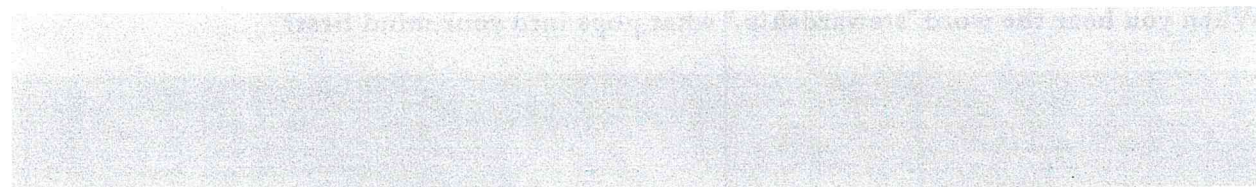
Questions naturally bubble up: Does God really have a claim over every part of my life? How can I be responsible for things that aren't truly "mine"? Is it even possible to live up to God's expectations?

Scripture doesn't shy away from these tensions. In fact, some of the closest friends of God

wrestled through them and found deeper intimacy on the other side.

Tension can be beautiful. Consider a tightrope walker. The tension in the rope makes the dance possible. Think of a guitar string. Without tension, there would be no music.

Can you describe a season when the tension or doubts you faced eventually led to deeper faith or growth?



That's the heart of stewardship: intimacy with God.

When we steward well, we aren't just managing resources. We're preparing to hear the words, *"Well done, good and faithful servant."*

In Jesus' parable of the talents, two servants heard that beautiful affirmation and entered into their master's joy.

But the third steward... buried his talent out of fear and was sent away.

As I grow older, I can't help but wonder: How many of us, today, are living more like the third steward—hiding, hesitating, shrinking back—instead of multiplying what we've been given? Will our lives please God?

This isn't about earning salvation.

It's about the natural outcome of a relationship with God: longing to please the one who loves us

C.S. Lewis put it like this:

"It is not pride or stoicism, but humility, to have the pleasure of being praised by God. For a real conscious being, it would be impossible to be indifferent to the approval or disapproval of the Most High. Indeed, it matters infinitely less what we think of God than what He thinks of us."