

# ALL THE GOLD IS MINE:

## A Biblical Study in Stewardship

Clive Staples Lewis in his classic demonic dialogue between Screwtape and his understudy Wormwood plays out an intriguing conversation. In it the elder reveals the importance of [stewardship](#) to the life of faith. Screwtape counsels;

A sense of ownership in general is always to be encouraged. The humans are always putting up claims to ownership which sound equally funny in Heaven and Hell and we must keep them doing so. Much of the modern resistance to chastity comes from their belief that they “own” their bodies....we produce this sense of ownership not only by pride but by confusion. We teach them not to notice the different senses of the possessive pronoun; finely graded differences that run from “my boots” through “my dog”, “my servant”, “my wife”, “my father”, “my master” and “my country”, to “my God”. They can be taught to reduce all these senses to that of “my boots”, the “my” of ownership.

And all the time the joke is that the word “Mine”, in its fully possessive sense, cannot be uttered by a human being in relationship to anything. In the long run either Our Father or the Enemy will say “Mine” of each thing that exists, and specially of each man. They will find out in the end, never fear, to whom their time, their souls, and their bodies belong- certainly not to them....At present the Enemy says “Mine” of everything on the legalistic grounds that He made it: Our Father hopes in the end to say “Mine” of all things on the more realistic and dynamic grounds of conquest.

[C.S. Lewis](#) Screwtape Letters p.109ff

The subject of [stewardship](#) raises perhaps the greatest concerns for spiritual life as it begs the question of ownership. Who is rightful owner of all that is around and within me? To that the Bible responds with clarity.

[Haggai 2:8](#) The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, says the Lord of hosts.

[Deuteronomy 8:18](#) Remember the Lord your God for it is he who gives you power to get wealth.

[Psalm 24:1](#) The earth is the Lord's and the fullness therein.

[I Corinthians 4:7](#) And what do you have that you did not receive?

The basic claim in scripture to ownership of all things is clear; God owns it all. It finds support in both testaments and from every major biblical author. None of us own anything. What we have has four primary characteristics:

1. It is owned by Someone else
2. The owner sets the expectations for its use
3. It is in my possession temporarily
4. Its effective use is a primary indicator of spiritual maturity

This biblical perspective on possessions is magnified with another teaching. How one integrates God's ownership of everything into a personal system of values and priorities leaves an eternal impact.

## CREATION AND [STEWARDSHIP](#)

From the very beginning of Genesis the biblical writers seek to give insight into the implications of creation relative to God's ownership of all things.

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth and over all the creatures that move along the ground. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. [Genesis 1:26-27](#)

Biblical scholars have long pointed out the significant relationship that exists between creation of mankind in God's image and the charge to "have dominion" over the created.

Gerhard von Rad comments:

Just as powerful earthly kings, to indicate their claim to dominion, erect an image of themselves in the provinces of their empire where they do not personally appear, so man is placed upon earth in God's image as God's sovereign emblem. He is really only God's representative, summoned to maintain and enforce God's claim to dominion over the earth.

Genesis: A Commentary Philadelphia, Westminster, 1961 pp.57-58

Early on the Bible addresses the implications of God as creator. Mankind is assigned the role of reflecting the rightful rule of God over all things. This was understood clearly by the earliest readers of the Genesis account. The biblical story goes on to describe how mankind is given "dominion" over the fish, birds and every creature. While this giving of dominion did not cease when the world fell into sin, it did suffer from severe distortion. Man, in his desire to be god, began to interpret "dominion" as "ownership of."

Genesis reiterates the concept of "dominion over" even after the flood washed over the world as God's judgment. ([Genesis 9:1ff](#)). [Psalm 8](#) advances the same thought:

When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars which you have put in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? You made him a little lower than the angels and crowned him with glory and honor. You made him ruler over the works of your hands and put everything under his feet. vs.3-6

The Old Testament teaches us that within the design of creation is a call to view God as rightful owner of all things and us as simply managers or care takers of His world. Much of the religious practice of Israel was to underscore this simple truth. In [Leviticus 23](#) where the prescriptions for the Feast of the Firstfruits are recorded we find preparatory words that were to remind the people of this fact.

The Lord said to Moses, "Speak to the Israelites and say to them: 'When you enter the land I am going to give you and reap it's harvest, bring to the priest a sheaf of the first grain you harvest. vs.9-10

The stage for the festival is set with words of reminder that the very land from which they will harvest is not finally theirs by ownership but comes from the one who gives it to them

("the land I am going to give"). Further prescriptions for harvest, labor and giving are reminders that God is rightful owner of all things. Attempting to guide His people back into compliance with His ownership, God provides "forced structure", the law, for the people. That law guides not only personal character but provides disciplines which the people must follow indicating they know everything they have comes from and is the provision of God. These disciplines require returning to the owner a portion, the firstfruits, of what each person received.

Scholars such as Walter Eichrodt observe that in seeking a common motif to tie together the breadth and diversity of literature found in the Old Testament, the theme of the rightful rule of God as King prevails. In I Chronicles 29 we see God's ownership from the perspective of His position as Lord.

Yours, O Lord is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours O Lord is the kingdom you are exalted as head over all. Wealth and honor come from you: you are the ruler of all things. [I Chronicles 29:11-12](#).

Here the writer asserts God's ownership from the perspective of his authority and position. Still other texts assert God's ownership from the perspective of his power.

Psalm 89 declares:

O Lord God Almighty, who is like you? You are mighty, O Lord, and your faithfulness surrounds you. You rule over the surging sea...you crushed Rahab like one of the slain....The heavens are yours and yours also the earth. vs.8-11

Finally however the Old Testament, having charged humanity with managing and caring for that which belongs to God, reveals a deep fracture. The creation is under a curse.

Hear the word of the Lord, O people Israel; for the Lord has a controversy with the inhabitants of the land. There is no faithfulness or kindness, and no knowledge of God in the land; there is swearing, lying, killing, stealing and committing adultery; they break all bounds and murder follows murder. Therefore the land mourns and all who dwell in it languish and also the beasts of the field and birds of the air. Even the fish of the sea are taken away. [Hosea 4:1-3](#)

The brokenness of the creation is reflected in the English word "steward". It is the combination of two old English words, "sty" where the pigs live and "ward" meaning to keep. Because of the fall we are relegated to exercise dominion over a world "dirty" with sin and evil.

God's challenge is obvious. He approved of His creation, yet those to whom He entrusts its care have fractured the system. In assuming ownership of everything created, including themselves, they abuse the design and the designer. The creator is rejected and His intent violated. The creation, which was beautiful and complete, becomes spoiled and wayward. Yet, at no time in this disappointing saga did God relinquish ownership.

It is essential to turn to the New Testament to see creation and life as God intended it liberated from the curse.

## REDEMPTION AND [STEWARDSHIP](#)

In turning to the New Testament we are introduced to specific terms that develop the theme of mankind as mere managers of what ultimately belongs to God. The term "oikos" meaning "house" coupled with "nomos" meaning "to distribute" or "administer" refers to the administration of a household and is the Greek word that is translated "steward" in the New

Testament. In the Old Testament the phrase “*aser al bayit*” (lit. “the one who is over a house”) is assigned to Joseph in Pharaoh’s house and becomes a counterpart to the New Testament’s “*oikonomos*”. The New Testament uses the term “*oikos*” to speak of God’s rightful ownership of all things. All creation is his “house.”

Therefore holy brothers who share in the heavenly calling, fix your eyes on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess. He was faithful to the one who appointed him, just as Moses was faithful in all God’s house. Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses just as the builder of a house has greater honor than the house itself. For every house (*oikos*) is built by someone but God is the builder of everything”. [Hebrews 3:1-4](#)

Here the writer clearly establishes God as the builder of all things. He is superior to even the greatest of workers in that household, namely Moses. Again, the New Testament goes on to speak of the “*oikonomos*” (occurring 10 times, Luke 12:42; 16:1,3,8; Romans 16:23; I Corinthians 4:1,2; Galatians 4:2; Titus 1:7; I Peter 4:10) as the one who administers the affairs of the house. The Greeks used this word to indicate those who were entrusted with different responsibilities in religious practice. The Bible however fills this term with greater significance yet.

The background for all the Bible says about the steward is found in this, that God in his goodness thinks so highly of the ultimate in his creation, the human being, that he will trust him to administer all other dimensions of creation. The steward’s calling rests on this lofty position assigned to him by His creator. He is a fully authorized representative, free to deal independently on behalf of the master, at the same time he is entirely dependent on and responsible to the master. When his role as steward is over he shall give account of his work on behalf of his master. This general stewardship profile can be traced throughout the Bible. Note the following examples:

...Abraham and his steward Eliezer ([Genesis 24](#))

... Joseph the steward of Pharaoh ([Genesis 39:4](#))

... the [stewardship](#) parables of Jesus in Luke 12 & 16

Perhaps the ultimate stewardship assignment is in the apostolic mission to be “stewards of the mysteries of God” [I Corinthians 4:1ff](#). The apostle Peter goes further yet to say:

As each has received a gift, employ it for one another as stewards of God’s varied grace. [I Peter 4:10](#)

The biblical idea of a steward, aptly illustrated in the Old Testament and given meaning through the work of Christ has something consistent to say to persons of faith throughout redemptive history. The system of laws fails. A new covenant is established.

In the new covenant, the dynamics of God’s ownership of do not change. All creation is His. He maintains ownership and continues to entrust the management of that which was created to those created in His image. They, however, continue to assume ownership for themselves and for their own purposes, purposes, which reflect a spoiled creation. The owner, nevertheless, loves the steward and pays a very dear price in order to rescue him from his own destruction. A redemptive plan, through Jesus Christ, is the costly remedy for a distorted creation and those abusing it. The original law directing people to effective stewardship proved successful only to expose the steward to the need for redemption. And, interestingly enough, the earthly management of this remarkable redemptive program is even entrusted to the steward.

Now God's people are not only entrusted with the assets of creation, they are given the responsibility of managing the plan which saves them from their own mismanagement. Stewards now manage both creation and redemption as fully authorized representatives of God. God's appreciation for the original potential in man, the crowning glory of His creation, surpasses the pragmatic experience of man's own choices.

The New Testament teaching on [stewardship](#) appears first in two of the parables of Jesus. In [Luke 12:42-48](#) and [16:1-9](#) the basic characteristics of a steward are illustrated to be faithfulness, wisdom and an expectation of a day of accounting. These qualities are seen in other descriptions of a steward throughout the New Testament.

### 1. The Faithful Steward

Faithfulness is the chief characteristic of a good steward as the steward is a representative of the Master. It describes one who is loyal to the owner and the owner's desires for that which has been entrusted to the steward.

Now it is required that those who have been given a trust (oikonomos) must prove faithful. [I Corinthians 4:2](#)

And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. [II Timothy 2:2](#)

Whoever can be trusted with little can be trusted with much. [Luke 16:10](#)

Well done good and faithful servant, enter into your master's joy. [Matthew 25:21](#)

The competent steward develops mental and emotional discipline to follow a priority system that comes as close as possible to that of the owner.

Nothing exists for stewards to use for their own personal ends. The great temptation, as Jesus illustrated in [Luke 12:42-48](#), is for the steward to forget that the Master's dominance will always prevail.. Stewards seek to keep themselves in the background so that first and foremost the interests of the master are served.

### 2. The Wise Steward

In the illustrative teachings of Jesus, the steward does not receive detailed instructions as to their responsibilities. It appears assumed that the steward will act appropriately in managing the resources, that is, the steward will make good decisions in determining what to do. It is the wise choices that were made in a new and unexpected situation that earned the praise of the master. [Luke 16](#) describes the moment of decision ("What shall I do?" vs.3), the cognitions and decision of the steward, ("I have decided what to do" vs.4) and the praise from the master because the steward "acted wisely" vs.8. The wise steward leaves no room for the subtle temptations of ownership to affect decision making.

In the parable of the ten talents ([Luke 19:11-28](#); [Matthew 25:19-30](#)), through the eschatological framework of the story, the importance of wisdom is reiterated. The wise managers to whom property has been entrusted are those who "went at once and put the money to work", doubling the investment.

### 3. The Accountable Steward

The third motif that recurs in the texts that relate to a steward is the obligation to give an account. Nothing is owned by the steward (Luke 16:2). Since ownership carries the privilege of purpose, those who manage must provide the owner an account of the balance

between the owner's intended use and the steward's actual use. The calling to account comes at a time not expected ([Matthew 24:36](#); [Mark 13:32](#); [Luke 12:39-40](#)). Consistently the negative response of the master is associated with what was not done on his behalf. The “settling of account”(Mt.25:19) does not ask what the steward wished, hoped or wanted to do. Only that which was done for the master is included in the accounting. The steward is, after all, handling that which does not belong to himself but is under a charge from the owner.

## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF [STEWARDSHIP](#)

[Stewardship](#) that demonstrates faithfulness, wisdom and accountability is mindful of all God's gifts, whether they are those received through creation or those received through redemption.

A casual review of the person in the pew would show that the word “stewardship” is most often associated in their mind with financial matters. While it is true that the most obvious sign of stewardship maturity in Scripture seems to be how one handles money and material things, comprehensive stewardship relates to all dimensions of life. Since God “owns” everything and because a person can receive nothing except God give it, the requirements of stewardship pervade every dimension of life. It is an affront to the owner to reduce stewardship to a moment in church when the offering plate is passed . Effective stewardship calls on the steward to make every act, within and outside of the church, an act of managing that which graciously entrusted to him but is owned by another.

### 1. Stewardship of Talents...Personal Abilities

Normally the designation “talent” is associated with a natural endowment. The Bible makes the point that talents are not given equally to all, (“to one he gives five talents and to another two”vs.15) though all are accountable for what they have been given regardless of amount.

Stewardship of talents begins with a proper understanding of the body. This understanding begins by accepting our bodies as the creator's handiwork, without criticism (Romans 9:20f) and as a vessel that is uniquely gifted. It is the temple of the Holy Spirit (I Cor.6:19) and therefore residence to the gifts of the Spirit. Stewarding this “oikos” calls for self discipline (I Cor.9:27) and restraint (James 3:2). God no longer seeks dead sacrifices but the proper stewardship of a living sacrifice in our bodies (Roman 12:1-2). This includes every ability whether it be physical, mental emotional. Suffering is also part of the stewardship of the body. In fact, the good steward bears the marks of Christ's death on his body (Galatians 6:17). Paul speaks of this stewardship of suffering to the Colossians saying:

Now I rejoice in what was suffered for you and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, which is the church. I have become a servant by the commission (oikonomos) God gave me to present the word of God to you in fullness. Colossians 1:24-25

The Old Testament passages regarding the dominion that has been given humankind over the earth perhaps give us the greatest emphasis on the stewardship of talents. In our very creation as people with minds and bodies there is the capacity to steward the earth. The New Testament takes this up as it blesses the variety of human vocations. Hugh Latimer the Puritan reminds us:

Let no one despise to be in a simple calling for our Lord himself was a carpenter. In his calling he blessed all callings.

Paul elevates this value when he counsels:

Nevertheless each one should retain the place in life that the Lord assigned to him and to which he called him....each one should remain in the situation which he was in when God called him. Were you a slave when you were called? Do not let that trouble you....brothers each man as responsible to God should remain in the situation God called him to. (I Corinthians 7:17ff).

Richard Bowles observes that all talents and callings can be grouped into three categories under the charge to have dominion over the earth.

1. For some their talents bring more beauty into the world. Here we think of the arts or sport, those who design or create in any number of areas.
2. Others are gifted to bring order into the world through management, leadership or simple organization.
3. Still others are gifted to bring truth into the world as handlers of information or education in a myriad of forms.

Whether Bowles simple categories are comprehensive or not, the Bible argues that regardless of the station one occupies in life, the gifts, talents and calling we are given make it possible for us to rightly manage what ultimately does not belong to us but to God.

## 2. Stewardship of Time

To understand the call to steward our time properly we first must consider the various ways the Bible speaks of time. Three words are significant. “[Chronos](#)” speaks of a period of time as for example Hebrews 10:37 “In just a little while (chronos) he who is coming will come”. The writer speaks here of a span of time, albeit relatively short, before Christ shall return. It is this sense of time that we are most conscious of as we live day in and day out. Our lives are “chronos”, a span of years that we fill up with activities.

The New Testament also has a word that speaks of a very special point of time when an event could be carried out. This word, “kairos” appears in reference to God’s unique work in the world. Jesus Christ illustrated this word when he said, “My hour ([kairos](#)) is not yet come...”(John 7:3). He spoke here of a particular event, his death. Our lives are punctuated by “kairos moments” when it appears God is uniquely at work.

Finally we come to “aeon” which speaks of endless time without limit in either direction. The Bible speaks of God as “king of eternity ([aeon](#))” (I Tim.1:17).

The significance is the profound assertion that God is the Lord of time. He holds the past and future in his hands. He acts decisively to carry out his plans and designs. To be a steward of the time entrusted to me, therefore, requires that I seek to discover and be aware of his “kairos” in the midst of my “chronos”.... his activity in my calendar.

The preconditions for this good stewardship of time would include that we “draw near to the throne of God to find grace to help in time (kairon) of need” (Hebrews 4:16) and that we be alert and watchful “not knowing the day or the hour” (Matt.25:13). Paul carries this call to be alert when he coaches his readers to “make the most of the times as the days are evil” (Colossians 4:5; Ephesians 5:16). Jesus echoes this urgency with the reminder that even the call to bury your father should not be a hindrance to the cause (Luke 9:57ff). Stewarding time according to God’s “kairos” and his design calls for a sense of priority and focus lest we become slaves of our own “chronos”.

Stewardship of time also takes place within “aeon” or eternity. The remnants of the temporal age are all around us though we are citizens of heaven being swept up in the new

age of the gospel. This eschatological reality gives the Christian remarkable hope. As the life of the nonbeliever is described as one without hope (Ephesians 2:2) the life of the believer is decidedly with hope (Romans 8:24; I Peter 1:3). The steward, in whatever circumstances, waits on God with hope. Fear and anxiety that grips our hearts so often is quieted by this reminder to “wait on the Lord, wait patiently for him”. In the end he works all things for our good.

### 3. Stewardship of Treasure...the Temporal

We come finally to what many falsely consider to be the sum and substance of biblical teaching on stewardship. While we have certainly seen that money is not the only consideration in this study, we must reserve a particularly significant place to stewardship of money and things. Effective management of our treasure receives more attention in scripture than do all other stewardship areas. Paul roots the basic problem of mankind to be one of worshipping the creation more than the Creator (Romans 1). Such a love of property over God is idolatry and is therefore the root of all evil (I Timothy 6:9; Colossians 3:5).

The Old Testament issues a strong challenge to the worship of money. Everything belongs to God (Lev.25:23; Deut.26:5-11; Psalm 24:1; 50:12; Job 41:1). It is from this basic viewpoint that the practice of sacrifice took place. Every offering was a reminder of God’s ownership. The building of altars was a common activity though we forget that the altar was a signpost of God’s ownership. When Abram built an altar upon which to sacrifice his son, that altar symbolized God’s rightful ownership of Isaac. When Jacob built an altar after his dream at Bethel he poured oil over the stone saying; “Of all that you have given me, I give you a tenth” (Genesis 28:10ff). The altar gave expression to the tithe, a reminder that everything is the Lord’s. When Israel entered the promised land they forgot the truth of God’s ownership of all things. Moses feared this as recorded in Deuteronomy 8 where he notes the richness of the land they will occupy.

To seek to keep this value before them God proclaimed that the first born and first fruit belong to Him. In each case these firstlings were to symbolize God’s ownership of all that followed from the womb or the field. The discipline of firstfruits giving was designed as the human symbol of recognizing all belongs to God. His response, in turn, was to bless the remainder of the harvest as it was consistently used by the steward. A significant portion of the legal framework for God’s people reflected His desire to consistently remind the people of His ownership. Laws of sabbatical rest and jubilee were also to assert God’s ownership.

The land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land is mine and you are strangers and sojourners with me. Lev.25:23

Three significant reminders took place annually to further cement the fact of God’s ownership; The Passover, the Feast of Weeks and the Feast of Tabernacles. In gratitude for God’s provision they were to sacrifice unto the Lord and care for the poor. Portions of fields were left unharvested and giving was generous as a tribute to God’s ownership. When David led the way in giving to the building of a temple for worship he said:

“Who am I and what is my people that we should be able to offer willingly? No, everything comes from you and from your hand have we given this to you” (I Chronicles 29:14).

Also in emphasis to God’s rightful ownership in the Old Testament is the law of the tithe. We encounter it first with Abraham in his meeting of Melchizedek. It continues through the prescriptions of the law (Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 12:5-6) through the prophets (Malachi 3:8ff). However, legalism invaded the practice and was critiqued by the prophets Micah and Amos. As a law, the tithe served to consistently remind the people of their role as



stewards. The people, in their conceptual and emotional abuse of God's ownership, distorted a guideline in worship until the tithe became more of a tax than an act of worship. The law of the tithe did not disciple the people to true stewardship. Jesus only twice spoke of the tithe and on each occasion did so as an occasion to problems of legalism (Matt.3:23; Luke 11:42). Paul, although he has a great deal to say about money and materials things, says nothing at all about the tithe. Instead, the acid test for maturity in stewardships seems to be growth in the grace of giving.

The New Testament recognizes no binding law as to Christian giving. Zacchaeus gives half his goods to the poor and a rich young ruler is challenged to sell all he has. The disciples were equally instructed (Matt:19:21; Luke 12:33). Giving in the New Testament is the province of the individual conscience though it rests on God's ownership of all things.

Paul replaces the law of the tithe with giving that reflects the commitment of the redeemed. Just as other dimensions of life are re-born in Christ, so giving is reborn to become an act of worship, replacing the dictates of law. The argument for generous giving is based on several concepts.

In II Corinthians 9:6-9 Paul writes:

Remember this, whoever sows sparingly will reap sparingly and whoever sows generously will reap generously. Each one should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion for God loves a cheerful giver.

Far from the external immediate motivation of a tithe the appeal here is to the future benefits of being faithful as stewards. Paul assumes a converted heart that delights in being faithful to the designs of the master.

Elsewhere Paul coaches the Corinthians:

On the first day of every week each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with their income saving it up so that when I come no collections will have to be made. I Cor.16:2ff

Here Paul recommends a pattern of regularity, a discipline of "setting aside", a proportionality of giving to income and a synchronization with the first day of the week as a symbol of the authority of the resurrected Christ.

Finally, Paul instructs young Timothy substantially on stewardship development in his congregation. He begins by relating stewardship of money to the apostolic tradition.

If anyone teaches false doctrines and does not agree with the instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ his mind is conceited and he understands nothing...thinking that godliness is a means to financial gain. I Timothy 6:3ff

A failure to agree with the teachings of Jesus is the first step toward flawed stewardship. He goes on to identify the false security of money and furthermore the great danger that is to be experienced by those who singularly pursue financial gain in life.

Godliness and contentment are great gain for we brought nothing into this world and can take nothing out...people who want to get rich fall into a temptation and a trap...some eager for money have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. But you man of God flee from all this...fight the fight of faith. Vs.6ff

Fighting the fight of faith here is clearly a reference to having the attitude of a true steward in a context where many do not and where there are great temptations to look on money as

something to be possessed as opposed to something to be temporarily managed. Paul goes further in his instructions with a repeated command based on eschatological reality.

Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth which is so uncertain but to put their hope in God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so they may take hold of the life that is truly life. Vs.17-19

Stewardship, including generous giving, is in the end an entry into the life we were designed to live. The benefits of including generous giving in the disciplines of Christian living are two-fold. The giving individual:

1. develops for themselves a treasure for the future age
2. is capable of taking hold of life as God's redemptive plan designed it.

### **Concluding Thoughts:**

It can be a sobering yet ultimately liberating, moment when we come to terms with the fact that God owns it all. On one hand is the truth that we are all equally broke! Whether in the shopping mall or the pew or in the workplace I am making stewardship decisions that are of equal value and significance. His ownership changes everything. On the other hand it is also true that with His absolute ownership, there is never a shortage of resources....only a shortage of stewards!

Regardless of the cars we drive or homes by which we park them, regardless of the impressions we do or do not make through a display of our abilities, regardless of the hours remaining in this day, they are ours to steward according to the designs of the owner. All the time and talent and treasure belong to Him! Regrettably, some choose to squander the owner's possessions on themselves and lose sight of the biblical value of simplicity and the wonderful opportunity to "lay up treasure in heaven".

Still others of us may complain about the way the master has distributed his resources. Some are entrusted with two chickens, others with millions of dollars. The question from humanity is "why have some been entrusted with much more than others?" The question from the owner however is "how are you managing that which I entrusted to you?" A steward is charged with the management of all that has been entrusted to him as a seamless garment of praise and gratitude toward the giver of all things. There will be no better compliment to be received from the owner of all on the day of accountability than,

Well done thou good and faithful servant. Matthew 25:23

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