

## Lesson Two

### What Is Biblical Stewardship?

**Objective:** To define Biblical Stewardship and to contrast it with the "Ownership" mind-set of modern society.

**Read:** 1 Corinthians 4

---

#### Introduction:

Biblical stewardship is a way of living grounded in what the Bible tells us about our lives as God's people in God's created world. The Bible is God's guidebook for us as we seek to live as God's stewards. It is a book of hope and help that God has given us to let us know how we should care for all the things God has entrusted to us. It provides many references to God's hopes, plans, and promises to stewards, who are counted "joint-heirs" with Christ in God's family (Rom. 8:17).

The Oxford English Dictionary defines a steward as *"a person employed to manage another's property, especially a large house or estate."* In Biblical times, a steward was usually a trusted slave. Every person who walks God's planet today is a steward. Some are good stewards—caring, careful, attentive, compassionate, thoughtful, committed, and generous. Unfortunately, some are poor stewards—careless, wasteful, thoughtless, inconsiderate, self-centered, and hurtful.

---

#### Bible Study

When you hear the word "stewardship," what comes to mind?

What does the Bible mean when it speaks of the Christian as a steward?

- Use the following verses to help you in your understanding: Psalm 24:1; Genesis 1:26; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2, Matthew 28:19-20.

Biblical stewardship recognizes **three** important facts.

- First, that God is the owner of everything, and that includes every part of our lives (Ps. 24:1)
- Second, our role as stewards is to God's resources (Gen. 1:26; 1 Cor. 4:1-2).
- Third, the goal of our stewardship is to accomplish God's mission in the world (Matt. 28:19-20).

As best you can, write out your own definition of biblical stewardship incorporating these three facts.

- Does your definition reflect the fact that God owns everything?
- Does it explain that a steward manages what God owns?
- Does it point out that mission happens because of stewardship?

A definition of biblical stewardship might read as follows: *"Biblical stewardship recognizes that God's resources are to be deployed through God's people to accomplish God's mission."* Spend some time reflecting on how this definition either concurs or conflicts with your understanding of stewardship. )

We should always try to understand what the Bible has to say about stewardship by looking at its implications within the context of our own lives.

There are two basic models to consider when analyzing life today. One is the **"Ownership model"** to which most are introduced at birth. The other is the **"Biblical stewardship model"** which involves the faithful, wise, and responsible management of all that God has entrusted to us-for God's purpose, not our own.

Compare the emphases of the two models described below:

- How prevalent is the "Ownership Model" in our culture today?
- Can God and money be served at the same time (Matt. 6:24)?

<b>Ownership Model</b>	<b>Biblical Stewardship Model</b>
Human Rules	God's Rules
Human Ownership	God's Ownership
The rich rule by power	Covenant rules through community
"It is mine."	"It is God's."
Rarely entrusted	Entrusted to stewards
Receive	Return
Keep	Share
"Me"	"You"

---

## Personal Reflection

Which stewardship model are you following in your life and how does it affect your life?

