



KINGDOM STEWARDSHIP

SESSION 3: THE SPHERES

“Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf; for in its welfare you will have welfare.” Jeremiah 29:7

CONNECT Open your group time by creating an environment in which you begin to develop a community of connection. Get to know one another through sharing prayer requests and experiences that provide members with an opportunity to engage.

CONNECTING IN PRAYER: Begin your time together with prayer and praise.

CONNECTING WITH ONE ANOTHER: Give an example of what it means to steward a family member or close relation under God’s rule and for His glory!

GROW Watch the DVD for Session 3 now. Use the space below to record your thoughts, key points and questions you would like to remember or discuss.

GROWTH THROUGH UNDERSTANDING: All of life is a stewardship because all of life comes from and is under the authority of the King. Psalm 128 best exemplifies this by touching on every aspect of life according to God’s kingdom agenda. The kingdom agenda can be defined as: *The visible manifestation of the comprehensive rule of God over every area of life.*

In this week’s lesson, Dr. Evans takes us through Psalm 128, the scriptural basis for his magnum opus and ministry philosophy that outlines life as it is lived out under God’s rule or kingdom stewardship. The psalmist begins with the first two verses that teaches us that personal stewardship is to fear the Lord. To fear the Lord means to take God seriously. In other words, we are not to take the Lord’s word and His ways casually. How do you know if you fear God? You “walk in His ways.” Thus, you take God seriously when the fear of the Lord is ordering your steps, and your decisions are reflecting God’s kingdom perspective. When this takes place, your emotions are elevated because God’s word tells you, it will “be well with you.”

Next, the psalmist takes us to the family. Many of the social problems we are wrestling with in our churches, communities and country comes out of a broken family. The breakdown of the family has created social chaos in society. Yet, according to Psalm 128, when a family operates under a kingdom stewardship, each member of that family becomes a fruitful, productive and a contributing member of the world around them.

Additionally, we are given insight into the role of the church in the kingdom stewardship of the family. “Zion” was the Old Testament form of church. And in the passage, we are told a family’s blessings increases in their connection to the church. God calls us into community with each other to live out the “one-anothers” of scripture—love one another, serve one another, comfort one another, and so forth. It is in our giving to others that we become the hands and feet of Jesus.

Lastly, the psalmist refers to the community and connects its prosperity to it operating under God’s kingdom covenant. When kingdom stewards are engaging and contributing members of society, our cities, states and nation enter a season of prosperity and growth. God’s people become kingdom stewards when their personal, family, church and community lives come under the complete and comprehensive rule of God.

NOTES

GROWTH THROUGH DISCUSSION: As you dive into the heart of Dr. Evans' teaching, use the following questions to generate discussion among your group.

1. What do you think most people associate with the term "stewardship?" Why?
 2. Dr. Evans states that "all of life is a stewardship because all of life comes under the King." What are some examples of kingdom stewardship that fall outside of money or tangible resources?
 3. What are some of the principal goals of the family according to Psalm 128? What are some of the results or rewards when a family is stewarded well?
 4. How do Satan's attacks on the family ultimately and negatively impact society at large?
 5. In Jeremiah 29:6-7, God's instructed the Israelites to be productive stewards in a pagan land. What does God say about the outcome of their contributions to the "well-being" of the country in which they were placed? How do you think this spiritual principle could apply to Christians living and working in secular America?
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SERVE Now is the time to apply the wisdom of what you have learned to your life, as you demonstrate the depth of your relationship with God through service to Him and others.

SERVING GOD: Psalm 128 begins with the foundational truth of one person fearing God. This lays the groundwork for all else. To "fear God" is to take Him seriously. This week, what is one way you can demonstrate to God that you fear Him? This can be in thoughts, words or actions.

SERVING OTHERS: We often look for ways in which we can serve our church and other believers, but Jeremiah 29:6-7 makes it clear that we are to serve all others outside the household of faith. Think of something you can do this week that is outside your normal boundaries of service. Invest in your local community somehow in order to increase its' "well-being."



DAY ONE

MEDITATE: Psalm 128:1-2

MOVE: God declares everyone blessed when they live a life of honoring God by fearing Him. To fear God means to take Him seriously. God declares that when we take Him seriously, we will have the opportunity to enjoy the fruit of our labors. He also tells us that we will experience emotional well-being. What is an area of your life where you need to take God more seriously? Try to look for ways to do that this week.

DAILY STEWARDSHIP PRINCIPLE:

Live out God's Kingdom principles here on earth by putting feet to your faith. Over the next 5 days, use the Daily Stewardship Principle to help you meditate on God's word.

DAY TWO

MEDITATE: Psalm 128:3-4

MOVE: When a family takes God seriously, prioritizing God's perspective first in their thoughts and then decision-making, the results are a blessed family. Productivity increases for the wife, and the children grow in their understanding and application of God's truth. This enables the family to better reflect God's image to those around them. Write "Put God First" on a sticky note or something else you will easily see and place it in locations throughout your day. Let this serve as a reminder of His rightful place. If you are single, know that the spiritual principles of productivity likewise apply when you put God first in all things.

DAY FOUR

MEDITATE: 1 Corinthians 4:20

MOVE: The kingdom of God in this verse does not refer to Christ's future millennial reign but to God's rule over all. Paul emphasizes that real power is made manifest through the Holy Spirit's work through a person's life. Just as faith isn't demonstrated by what we say but rather by what we do, kingdom power makes itself felt through alignment under God in such a way that allows His Spirit to flow through us to others. Seek to be a vessel of God's power this week yet do so without words. In what ways can your actions or temperament alone reflect the Spirit's presence in you?

DAY THREE

MEDITATE: Psalm 128:5-6

MOVE: In Old Testament days, Zion symbolized the place of God's presence. God's blessings flowed from Zion to those who feared Him. In addition, living all of life under God's overarching rule creates a ripple effect into the surrounding communities. This grows exponentially as the entire body of Christ makes its' collective impact. Identify an area to pray for the prosperity of your community, state or country and make that an emphasis during your prayer time this week.

DAY FIVE

MEDITATE: Matthew 18:4

MOVE: Jesus used a child to teach these grown men a lesson about greatness. What quality in children is Jesus looking for? Humility. And humility resonates when there is a healthy fear of God. The principle is this: greatness comes through humility and a childlike faith that fears God completely. In the Roman world, children had no rights and were completely dependent on others to care for them. Believers in Jesus Christ are to be humbly dependent on their heavenly Father. Write this verse in your own words and include a personal application and reflection.

DIVE DEEPER: WALK IN HIS WAYS

ACTION: Our attitude toward how we use our resources that God has blessed us with is much like the lights on a car's dashboard. When an indicator light comes on, it's pointing to something happening under the hood that needs attention before something breaks. When God turns on the indicator light in our lives, it is because he wants to call our attention to something deep in the heart that we cannot afford to ignore. The spheres of stewardship that all of us have in varying proportions is our time, talent and treasures. As you reflect on your life stewardship, how are you giving, serving and growing your talents (gifts, skills abilities)? What is preventing you from giving, serving and growing in this area?

TIP: HOW CAN YOU DETERMINE YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS?

If you are not sure of your spiritual gifts, you can complete a free Spiritual Gifts Survey at <http://gifts.churchgrowth.org>. The survey is a discovery tool that will provide you with a personalized profile of your God given spiritual gifts. When you complete the survey, please share your results by e-mailing your top four gifts to: membership@ocbfchurch.org. If you already know your spiritual gifts, please share them by emailing your top 3-4 gifts as noted above.

Use the space below to record your top 3-4 spiritual gifts.

My Spiritual Gifts:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Write down one action you will take in the next 60 days to reflect on how you can be more productive with talents (1 Peter 4:10).

Action(s) I plan to take in the next 60 days to use my God given gifts for the Kingdom:	By when (date)
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	