



KINGDOM STEWARDSHIP

SESSION 8: THE LEGACY

And his master praised the unrighteous manager because he had acted shrewdly; for the sons of this age are more shrewd in relation to their own kind than the sons of light. Luke 16:8

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: Describe some ethical ways people in secular environments act shrewdly to get ahead. How “shrewd” do you feel most Christians are in their approach to life and resources?

GROW Watch the DVD for Session 8 now. Use the space below to record your thoughts, key points and questions you would like to remember or discuss.

GROWTH THROUGH UNDERSTANDING: In the final week of our Kingdom Stewardship study, the parable in Luke 16:8 introduces a comparison that may surprise us. In the parable, Christ makes a contrast between how unbelievers manage and maximize their resources in this world with that of believers in the world to come. Unbelievers seize opportunities to progress in their lives through the relationships they build and to maneuver through those relationships toward a greater goal. Jesus makes the point that unbelievers are wiser in the things of this world than believers are about the things of the world to come. Now, this does not mean we are to manipulate people or situations; but we are to invest in the wellbeing of others now so that we are creating kingdom connections/relationships for the future that awaits us in eternity.

The parable teaches us the importance of developing kingdom relationships by impacting as many people as we can for our benefit in eternity. This includes sharing the gospel and leading others to Christ. As kingdom stewards, we are to benefit others in any

way we can. Jesus said that even a cup of cold water, given in His name, will be credited to our account (Mark 9:41).

Dr. Evans has challenged the members of OCBF to perform “random acts of kindness” in our community with people we do not know. As a way of encouraging our participation, “Acts of Kindness” cards were created for our members to carry with them throughout their day as they look for opportunities to be a blessing to strangers. Kindness comes in many forms, so any “act of kindness” such as bringing food to a homeless person, buying someone a cup of coffee, helping an elderly person cross the street, carrying groceries for a young mom with kids, etc., gives us an opportunity to hand out the “acts of kindness” cards to these individuals and possibly pray, share the gospel and/or invite them to church.

Why are we encouraging our members to do “random acts of kindness?” We certainly do it to be a blessing to people in our community, but there is another reason that is closely connected to the parable in this week’s lesson. By encouraging our members to do acts of kindness, we are teaching them to be generous in their service to others, using their God-given resources to make friends for eternity. When we use kingdom stewardship principles, we help override the mismanagement of the past, build kingdom relationships for the world to come, and we leave a legacy of God’s glory everywhere we go.

It is never too late. You can change your legacy. Regardless of where things are now, you can change where they will wind up. When you recognize you are a citizen of heaven, money becomes foreign currency to you. That’s because you belong to another kingdom. However, for where you live now, money is a necessity. So use the currency you have, as well as your other resources of time, talents and treasures for the benefit of others, and you will discover the key to eternal rewards that are stored up for you in the heavenly kingdom to which you belong.

At heart, a kingdom steward is a believer who protects and expands the assets of the Owner, and that Owner is God. As Creator and Owner of everything, God has established the guidelines that we are to use in managing and maximizing what He’s given us for the benefit of others so that we produce the most good and experience the greatest gains in this life and the life to come.

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. Give the definition of a kingdom steward as taught in our lesson today.
2. In the parable of the unrighteous manager, we are presented with a contrast between a secular and biblical approach to profit growth through resource management. What point is the parable making about the "sons of this age" and the "sons of light" in the management of resources? How should Christians respond to the meaning of the parable? What are the benefits to the Christian in the practice of kingdom stewardship?
3. What does Dr. Evans mean when he says money is a "foreign currency" for Christians? In what ways does this impact your view of money and its use? Talk briefly about the potential "exchange rate" when we get to heaven.
4. Share some overall principles and life application points you learned from this 8-week Bible study. Have you been living your life in keeping with the principles of kingdom stewardship? Why or Why not? What changes can you make to become a kingdom steward or a better kingdom steward?
3. Linking emotional well-being to "stewardship" isn't always a common thought. Describe how the two connect and share some ways others in your sphere of influence can be made more aware of this connection as you seek to disciple them.
4. What are some additional benefits for living as a kingdom steward that weren't mentioned in this week's lesson?

SERVE Now is the time to apply the wisdom of what you have learned to your life, as you express the depth of your relationship with God through service to Him and others.

SERVING GOD: Create a grid of your resources. Pray over your resource grid every day for ways to maximize and use your resources more shrewdly to the glory of God and for the impact of His kingdom.

SERVING OTHERS: This week, identify a person you can help in a specific area of stewardship as a way of building kingdom relationships and rewards in the life to come.

DAY ONE

MEDITATE: MATTHEW 10:16

MOVE: Jesus made clear to the Twelve that persecution will occur from people who oppose the message of the Kingdom of God. So as they went forth to proclaim His message, they were to be shrewd as serpents, but innocent as doves. That is, they were to minister with wisdom and grace by combining the wisdom of the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove. Jesus predicted that they would stand before governors and kings because they were His followers. But they were to use it as an opportunity to testify about the King and His Kingdom by the power of the Holy Spirit. How will you allow the Holy Spirit to use you to testify about the Kingdom of God to someone 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: Proverbs 1:7

MOVE: Proverbs teaches that the knowledge of God opens the door to wisdom. In contrast, fools despise wisdom and discipline. A fool is a self-centered person who lives life without regard to wisdom and moral values. A fool rejects God's perspective. The Bible (particularly Proverbs) commands us to gain wisdom and avoid foolishness. Proverbs teaches that all true wisdom and knowledge is rooted in God and His Word, and it urges us to cultivate a fear of God through a relationship with Him. This week, make it your intention to get to know God more deeply. And as you grow deeper in knowledge, you will acquire greater wisdom.

DAY THREE

MEDITATE: PROVERBS 21:20

MOVE: The wise person manages their resources in such a way as to not deplete them. This is in contrast with the foolish person who lives a life of squander and lack, regardless of what has been given to them. Wisdom comes in understanding and fearing God, as well as using His principles to maximize our God-given resources. Are your resources quickly depleting or growing? Explain. What are you doing to set aside resources for the future, especially if you're experiencing growth? Even if you start small, make an attempt to store up resources for future use.

DAY FOUR

MEDITATE: JAMES 1:17

MOVE: The origin of every good thing and every perfect gift comes to us from our Father in heaven. He is our ultimate source, even when our gifts come through others to get to us. He sits and rules over all as the Creator of all that exists. Let God know you recognize Him as the Source of everything you are and have in life through your prayers and actions this week.

DAY FIVE

MEDITATE: 1 CHRONICLES 29:12

MOVE: God gives both riches and honor. Riches are tangible resources, but honor is more intrinsic to the quality of life itself. Both are benefits and blessings of living in alignment with the King and the order of His universe. As a kingdom steward, you can count on God's internal and external benefits in your life. Commit to living as a kingdom steward. Set reminders in familiar places to help you in your commitment, not only this week—but in the days, months and years to come.