



KINGDOM STEWARDSHIP

SESSION 1: THE RESPONSIBILITY

“His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.’” Matthew 25:23

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 what it means to steward (or “manage”) something on behalf of someone else?

GROW Watch the DVD for Session 1 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 first session, Dr. Evans introduced the concept of stewardship. He shared scriptures that reveal God’s ownership and rule over all of His creation. We also learned how humanity was made in the image of God and given the dominion mandate, which means to rule over God’s creation for Him. Dr. Evans defines kingdom stewardship as: The divinely ordained responsibility of managing God’s assigned resources (time, talent and treasures) in such a way that brings Him glory and expands His rule in the world.

The passage used as the backdrop for this week’s session is Matthew 25:14-30. In this parable, Jesus spoke of a master who went on a long journey, entrusting three of his servants with a certain number of talents while he was away. The Greek word for “talent” is talenton, which refers to the largest unit of currency in Biblical culture. For example, one talent equaled around 6,000 denarii. One talent had the earning power of approximately 16 1/2 years of wages. As you can see, one talent alone was an enormous sum, which

gives us insight into the magnitude of our stewardship over the resources we have all been given as Christ's followers.

The parable concludes by giving the master's response to each person who either stewarded well or stewarded poorly the master's assets in his absence. To the ones who stewarded well, they were given more responsibilities. But to the one who hid his talent out of fear or for self-preservation, the master took his talent from him, gave it to the one who earned ten, and cast the wicked servant into outer darkness, where there was weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Dr. Evans is encouraging each of us to take seriously the return of our Master, the Lord Jesus Christ. When we do not take His return seriously, we fail to manage well the resources He's given us. These resources include our time, talents and treasures. The Master is going to return, and He is going to settle accounts with how we used the resources He gave us to advance His Kingdom ownership of the creation that He placed under our rule.

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. Describe the differences between an owner and a manager. Are there any ways you think or act more like an owner over what God has given you to manage?
2. Dr. Evans mentioned in the DVD that we often associate "treasures" with money yet while money is a resource, he said there are others as well. What other resources can "treasures" refer to?

3. The “wicked” servant hid his talent in the ground. Why did he hide it rather than put it in the bank? What would hiding a talent look like in today’s contemporary Christian culture?
 4. What were the rewards the two faithful servants received? What kinds of rewards would you like to receive in eternity for being a faithful steward?
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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: What one thing could you personally invest a greater amount of your time in this week to further God’s kingdom?

SERVING OTHERS: Since God is the owner and rules over all, He is the One who best knows how you can maximize your time, talents and treasures to help others. In prayer this week, ask God to bring you a new opportunity every day to use the resources He’s given you in order to help someone else. Be sure to keep your heart and mind open to what He brings your way.



DAY ONE

MEDITATE: Psalm 24:1

MOVE: David affirms the worldwide scope of God's dominion in this verse. The reason He can claim sovereignty over all things is because He is the Creator of all. He laid the earth's foundations. Everything exists because God spoke it into existence (also see Hebrews 11:3). Is there an area of your life where you need to apply God's overarching rule as His steward?

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: Genesis 1:28

MOVE: As human beings created in the image of God, we are to rule the world on God's behalf, and to reproduce for His glory. Just like God handed over responsibility to the sun, so that it would shine for God, God handed over responsibility to us, so that we would govern and rule and steward His world for him. This is God's world, but He's put it in our hands to manage by saying, "Let them rule." In what way can you demonstrate more personal responsibility to manage something in your sphere of influence which will bring God glory?

DAY THREE

MEDITATE: Ephesians 5:16

MOVE: We must live not as unwise people but as wise. Don't miss opportunities by making the same choices you've always made. The only way to make right choices is to understand what the Lord's will is—that is, to determine God's view on a matter. Most of us will watch the weather report to get an expert opinion on the weather. But then we follow mere human opinions about life choices rather than seeking God's perspective. Spend a moment conducting a personal-time assessment. Is there something you could cut back on or remove altogether that would free up time to be spent more wisely for God's kingdom purposes?

DAY FOUR

MEDITATE: Matthew 25:29

MOVE: To those who are faithful, more will be given. To those who do nothing with their time, abilities, or treasure for the sake of the kingdom of God, what he has will be taken away from him. Those who were saved but whose earthly lives were useless to the King will lose out on full participation in and the benefits of Christ's millennial kingdom. Don't let this be you—making time for your personal priorities but no time for the kingdom. Make a list of your gifts, skills and/or talents. Circle the ones you are not currently using and pray for wisdom on how to use it/them for God's glory.

DAY FIVE

MEDITATE: 1 Peter 4:10

MOVE: We are stewards of God's gifts to us. We manage something precious that we received but don't own. If you are a receptor of grace, you ought to be a conduit for grace. Whatever your spiritual gift, it's all about God—not you. In whatever way you serve, it should be done with God's words and the strength God provides, so that God may be glorified through Jesus Christ in everything. Do you serve your boss with more excellence than you serve God? Eternal glory and power only belong to one of them. Is there something you can do to in order to benefit someone in your neighborhood or community this week? earth's foundations. Everything exists because God spoke it into existence (also see Hebrews 11:3). Is there an area of your life where you need to apply God's overarching rule as His steward?