



DEVOTION: January 22

Stewardship (Life Realities)
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God owns you and all you call yours, and expects you to manage His things for his glory.

Many people reared in a culture that emphasizes ecology have no trouble conceiving of themselves as being responsible for stewardship of the earth — the water, the air, the forests, animals, and other natural resources. They regard these things as somehow entrusted to human care. The same is true, however, with our own lives and every resource in our lives — things we often call ours. In fact, everything we own or possess, and even our lives themselves, have been placed in our care by someone else: God. He expects us to manage all He has given us in such a way that His causes will be staffed and funded, His purposes will be accomplished, His people will be blessed, and His own name will be exalted.

Often the Christian's automatic thought when the word stewardship is brought up is of offerings made in church. To be certain, money contributed toward the ongoing ministry and mission of the church is a vital part of Christian stewardship. However, stewardship is much, much more.

God owns your time: what you spend in church, what you spend in work, and what you spend in leisure activities. Are you managing your time for God's purposes, or are you appropriating time for things that do not honor Him in any conceivable way? God likewise owns your abilities, since He gave them to you. Are you using them to glorify Him and carry out His will, or are you enriching yourself but not serving Him with your talents and gifts?

The Bible declares that not only the earth and everything in it, but all of us human beings as well, belong to the Lord. It teaches us that each of us has been placed on the earth to manage the unique blessings and opportunities that constitute our lives, and that God will call us to account for our management in due time.

And the Bible reminds us that faithful stewards will hear "Well done!" from their Lord, and will be welcomed into His eternal kingdom.

SCRIPTURES

Psalms 24:1, Luke 12:42, 1 Corinthians 4:2