

# The Art of Giving Self

Lessons in Christian Stewardship



By Bob Gress

(Bibliography at end)

Restoration Movement Literature

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## Opening Statements Outline

1. Opening Prayer for Enlightenment and Wisdom through the Holy Spirit by God's Holy Inspired Word!
2. I have enjoyed studying for this lesson series!
3. I hope to bring new light to the understanding or at least to renew some of your thinking of what it means to be a Christian Steward!

\*\*\*One thing we all must realize is that; Because God's word is repetitive and perfect; there will be things that we cover more than once! But I will try to keep this to a minimum, unless an example requires it.

4. \*\*\*There will be handouts for each study, just as you are used to!

\*\*\*I encourage you in your own research as well!

**“May God Richly Bless All That Attends!”**

**“Father, give us an enlightened mind and a burning heart to do your will” “In Christ's Name”, Amen!**

### Our Growth as Stewards!

2<sup>nd</sup>. Peter 1:2-8. Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; 3. seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and

godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. 4. For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust. 5. Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, 6. and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness, 7. and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love. 8. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ

### **Peter's Reminder to Us!**

2<sup>nd</sup>. Peter 1:12-15. Therefore, I will always be ready to remind you of these things, even though you already know them, and have been established in the truth which is present with you. 13. I consider it right, as long as I am in this earthly dwelling, to stir you up by way of reminder, 14. knowing that the laying aside of my earthly dwelling is imminent, as also our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. 15. And I will also be diligent that at any time after my departure you will be able to call these things to mind.

# The Art of Giving Self!

## Lessons in Christian Stewardship

### Lesson 1 –“The Biblical Foundation of Stewardship”

#### 1. AIMS FOR THIS SERIES OF STUDY

##### A. To Study Biblical principles of Stewardship:

Paul and Timothy wrote to the Church of God at Corinth in

2<sup>nd</sup>. Corinthians 8 and 9 about the Grace of God which had been given to the Churches of Macedonia! And, about their giving and the eagerness to do so even though they were poor!

2<sup>nd</sup>. Corinthians 8: 7-8, speaks of the Spiritual abundance principal in our lives as well as the material grace that should be given by us! And, in Chapter. 8: 15, Paul's quotation from Exodus 16:18, illustrates, this principle. Everyone gathered what they could, some more and some less; but they all shared what they gathered.

##### B. To Understand that Stewardship is also giving of self:

2<sup>nd</sup>. Cor. 8: 3-5 (A big Example)

Matt. 16: 24-27

C. To Acknowledge that Stewardship, is a commitment to Christ, and is an integral part of our lives. (Acts 20: 35)

D. To Apply Stewardship as an everyday, ongoing part of our lives, we must:

1. Be diligent in seeking knowledge
2. Give, not take, (2<sup>nd</sup>. Cor. 8: 2, -- 2<sup>nd</sup>. Cor. 9: 11-13)

(Generosity, open heartedness, selfless, Blessings of God's Grace in us)

3. Establish Priorities, (Matt. 5: 16\*\* Matt. 6: 7-13\*\*)

4. Apply Stewardship in practical ways:

A. Re: – To ourselves – in the care of our bodies: in developing our talents; in the use of that, which we earn, buy, sell, keep, and give

B. Re: – To others, especially brethren and Family

(1<sup>st</sup>. God, 2<sup>nd</sup>. Spouse, 3<sup>rd</sup>. Children,.)

2. A. “... An Enlightened Mind ...” To: --- What is Stewardship?

1. By Definition: “Stewardship” describes the obligatory activity of a servant for his or her master! So, as Stewards to Christ we become as “Bond Servants”, like the apostle Paul, though we are as Priests, not Apostles, we are Disciples of Christ!

A Disciple of Christ would be considered: a follower or student of the Gospel, A leader, all showing Good Stewardship!

2. “Stewardship” signifies our possessions are not our own but are given to us for safekeeping and proper utilization. “Meaning: we are to take the best of care of anything that God has left us in Charge of! For all of them are Gift's, given to us for safe keeping!

Examples: Our Church Buildings, Our Brethren, Our Immediate Family, Homes, Cars, our Jobs, etc.

**(Example: Joseph's attitude toward stewardship, Genesis 39: 2-6)**

**3.** The New Testament Idea of “Steward” comes across as “Partaker” (2<sup>nd</sup>. Peter 1: 4) and “Fellow Worker” (1 Cor. 3: 9) Rather than “drudge” or “slave”. The *definition* of a drudge is a person who is tasked with boring, dull, repetitive or meaningless work. **“As Christian Stewards,” everything about being a Partaker or Fellow Worker in Christ, becomes a large part of everything we are and do! Never boring, dull or just repetitive or meaningless work! Christ Gave All for Us! We should strive to always give of ourselves.**

2. **B.** Functions and responsibilities of the “Good Steward”

- The steward accepts tasks from God, fully aware of God’s ownership in his life.  
**(We must always be aware that Christ paid for our sin, and make ourselves ready)** (James 2:17, 18)
- The steward administers this trust in a responsive manner whether it is material, financial, or of talents, (i.e.—Special Gift to each) (1<sup>st</sup>. Peter 4:10 & 5: 5, 6)
- As Elders --- entrusted with the flock, called Overseers. (1<sup>st</sup>. Timothy 3 :) As parents to children. As husband to wife. As deacons serving the church,
- The Steward has a highly personal relationship with his or her Savior (John 15: 15) Jesus here refers to the disciples as, “No longer slaves but his friends! (Just as we are baptized into Christ and now Disciples to Christ, we live in accordance to the Gospel of Jesus, rendering accounts for all that we do. By always

examining ourselves and asking forgiveness for our Sins! Also showing others, “Good Stewardship” by our Fruits and Service to the Lord!

- The Steward realizes: he or she does not give back to God a portion of what he owns. The Steward realizes: he or she is entrusted with that which God already possesses.
- Stewardship: the “Supreme Beatitude” (Matt. 5: 3-12) Though we are all Faulty, Jesus teaches us here about “Supreme Blessedness” and “Exalted Happiness”! But as a Steward of Christ, these also become a Trait that we show to others because of our own understanding of (Romans 3: 23)—every person has worth as a creation of God, but that all have sinned and fallen short of the Glory of God! So, (Matt. 5: 16) becomes a part of His or Her “Function and Responsibility”!

**3A.** “... A Burning Heart ...” --- “What Motivates A Person To Be A Good Steward”?

Creation as basis for Stewardship

1. A Steward understands that: God is creator, possessor, sovereign, and absolute owner. (Gen. 1:1)
2. As a Christian Steward, we understand that, **Christian Stewardship** began when we became a Christian! (After Christ came and died) But also understanding that as God created the Earth and all things on it, including Man and Women! Man became the first Steward by **“Devine Decree”**! **Genesis 1: 26,ff**

**2a.** Basis of Stewardship is God's Love for us. In turn we desire to do what God desires with "His Wealth". God's love is Selfless and pure --- manifested at it greatest at Calvary!

**God loves us as if we were the only ones to Love! (John 3: 16)**

**2b.** --- Giving, then, is the very nature of God (James 1: 5)

--- We should reciprocate (act on or give back to him as his fruitful creation) (James 1: 6, 7,)

3. Understanding Gen. 1: 26, where God says, "Let Us make man In our image, according to Our Likeness! Speaks to Christ as our Exemplified first Steward!

His highest point in goodness and fulfillment speaks of the Consummation of God's plan for man by then sending Christ! (Ephesians 1: 3-10) and Christ's Stewardship to us showing how to be good stewards in him through Love! (v.4)

**3a. The Church's mission is to recognize and implement God's rule, fulfilling the great commission! (Matt. 28: 18-20) Our motivation as Stewards is to understand The Lords Authority and Instruction! (Proverbs 22: 17-21) As Stewards, Solomon's wisdom to us about Knowledge and wisdom all throughout Proverbs, gives the fulfilment of the Great Commission more meaning even today!**

**3b. To carry out this Stewardship, the Church must provide growth and development of the redeemed through Teaching (Matt. 28: 20, ---\*\*Colossians 1: 24-28,\*29) -- In order for the Church to fulfill this, we must have a strong "Home Base", or**



place of worship and teaching! Our mind-set to being a Strong Steward of the Gospel – our giving back in some small way, even so, is only a portion of what we could strive for through Love in our Stewardship as Christians!

3c. Such a Steward will become committed to the Lord in an attitude of Surrender or WANTSMANSHIP! Understanding that our nature is to be found wanting, when in fact we should\*vs. 29 Surrender to Gods will not ours, making a “Strong Commitment!

3B. Redemption as a basis for Stewardship

1. Creation and redemption are in Juxtaposition.

(an act or instance of placing close together or side by side, especially for comparison or contrast.)

a. Creation described (Gen. 1:1 – 2:25)

b. Redemption explained (Gen. 3:1 – Rev. 22:21) NASB—NIV (Rev.)

(Genesis shows the need for redemption, Revelations speaks of the “Lord’s Grace” for all. Johns last statement, is clearly the favor in which we stay redeemed! And Amen! Seals the Promise to his people!)

c. Of the 1189 Chapters in the Bible, two are devoted to creation and 1187 to redemption – 0.2% compared to 99.87%

d. God is Creator (The Heavens and Earth), Participator by his Omnipresence, and our redeemer by Christ’s Grace on the Cross.

We must be Stewards of all things received, just as Christ showed the greatest example of Stewardship to us, in his coming and doing God the Father's will in the giving of his Son's life on the cross for us! Also that we could have Redemption and the promise of Heaven by our own Baptism into Christ!

**2. God gives gifts that are good and perfect, (James 1: 17,)**

Even for the unjust, the gift of another day of life (Matt. 5: 44, 45)  
God's gift of love is the Greatest of any gift to Christians.

- **"Love that you may be sons" expresses the purpose of our loving those who do not love us! Jesus is saying, "Love that you may be like God, or godly, or godlike." Jesus' second reason for loving the unlovely and unlovable, is that refusing to do so is conduct no better than the worst of men.' So we become as "Hypocrites" If we love anyone any less than the other!**
- **These gifts of grace, come wholly because of his love – not by merit – and the greatest of these was His son (Rom. 6:23, John 3:16, Rom. 5:6-7)**
- **For which was the manifestation of Forgiveness and Restoration for this undeserved love ( Eph. 2: 4-10)**
- **Reconciled to God (2<sup>nd</sup>. Cor. 5: 17-20) through redemption. Thus, Redemption should strongly motivate us to Stewardship!**
- **Stewardship reciprocates (or to be similar to) our love to all just as if we were Christ him-self!**

- **(Matt. 5: 46-48) Superficial attitudes, gimmickry (something concealed or devout in nature), overwhelming zeal or**
- **False intent, Misguided Piety (reverence for God or devout fulfillment of religious obligations), disproportionate emotion or unevenly tempered -----  
-----**
- **These traits do not equate with Christian Stewardship and are not born by our Redemption in Christ Jesus! (\*\*John 3:17-21)**

**3. Redemption motivates us to serve in:**

- Joy -- (2<sup>nd</sup> Tim. 1: 4-5 Paul to his son, Then in Phil. 4: 1,
- Suffering – The apostles and disciples suffered in bringing us the Gospel of Christ, but we should always understand that they gave selflessly in doing so! Preaching anyway!  
(Acts 5: 40-42, 2<sup>nd</sup> Tim. 1: 7-9)
- Sharing – when we share with others about Jesus, about the Lords Grace and Love! We can understand how our own Redemption feels to motivate them towards there salvation!  
(2<sup>nd</sup>. Cor. 8: 9-11)

**4. We have the example of the Macedonian Christians who responded to the divine grace of giving by:**

- First giving of Self

- Giving out of deep poverty
- Giving beyond their means
- Begging to share what they had

**They Were Blessed! (2<sup>nd</sup> . Cor. 9: 11-15) because of Timothy and Titus’s planting of the Lords Gift of Righteousness**

5. Thus, God’s Love is the source of salvation and the motivation to be Good Stewards. He gave us the “Creation”...and then God sent us His Son for our redemption. (John 3: 16)

In Summary: (Fill In the Blanks) **See Key on Pages 13+14**

- Creation shows us our \_\_\_\_\_ toward material things.
- \_\_\_\_\_ reveals our Spiritual Responsibilities as partners with God in \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
- The Christian cannot but \_\_\_\_\_ **his very being, his or her possessions, time, energies, abilities, experiences, and knowledge to further God’s purposes and Will for us.**
- Vows in giving should be non-compulsory or up to the \_\_\_\_\_, but once made were required to be fulfilled! (Example: Ananias and Sapphira) – Acts 5: 1ff \*\*\*\*\*  
(Example: of Righteous Giving or Stewardship –Acts 4: 32 -37)
- The \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus reinforce the \_\_\_\_\_ for stewardship. Jesus tells us to \_\_\_\_\_ seek the Kingdom (Matt. 6:33,34 so as to \_\_\_\_\_ worry, and

Luke 12:31-34) after which God will \_\_\_\_\_ as we \_\_\_\_\_, Luke 9:23, that as we follow him, we must be \_\_\_\_\_ to be \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ Committed. (Meaning clear; or having only one possible meaning or interpretation in our Belief in Christ!)

\*\*\*The apostles, especially Paul, \_\_\_\_\_ and “\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_” what Jesus taught and it is in their writings that we find much to help us to successfully implement \_\_\_\_\_.

### In Summary: (Fill In the Blanks) **Key for Page 12**

- Creation shows us our **Responsibilities** toward material things.
- **Redemption** reveals our **Spiritual Responsibilities** as partners with God in **Fellowship** and **Friendship**.
- The Christian cannot but **yield his very being, his or her possessions, time, energies, abilities, experiences, and knowledge to further God’s purposes and Will for us.**
- Vows in giving should be non-compulsory or up to the **Individual**, but once made were required to be fulfilled! (Example: Ananias and Sapphira) – Acts 5: 1ff \*\*\*\*\*  
(Example: of Righteous Giving or Stewardship –Acts 4: 32 -37)
- The **teachings** of Jesus reinforce the **need** for stewardship. Jesus tells us to **first** seek the Kingdom (Matt. 6:33,34 so as to **not** worry, and Luke 12:31-34) after which God will **provide** as we **serve**, Luke 9:23, that as we follow him, we must be **prepared** to be **totally** and **un-equivocally** committed. (Meaning clear; or having only one possible meaning or interpretation in our Belief in Christ!)

\*\*\*The apostles, especially Paul, **Reinforced** and “**Expanded** and **Expounded**” what Jesus taught and it is in their writings that we find much to help us to successfully implement **Christian Stewardship**.

## **The Art of Giving Self!**

### **Lessons in Christian Stewardship!**

#### **Lesson 2 – “Examples of Stewardship**

**1. Old Testament Examples—Though Christian Stewardship was not a practice in the Old Testament. (For Christ had not come to Earth as of yet!) “Examples of Stewardship in the “Old Law” help us in being better Stewards as a part of the Family of God in Christ!**

**A. God’s “Great Act of Giving” in creating and preserving the world; (Gen. 1: 1, & Ps. 19: 1 and Supported by Deut. 10: 12—14 and Ps. 24: 1-5\*\*\*)**

**B. Abraham’s tithe: (Gen. 14: 17-20 and understanding why?  
Vs. 21-24**

**C. Jacob’s vow (Gen. 28: 20-22) “Vow’s must be kept”  
(Ecc. 5: 4-5)**

**Because of The Old Covenant with man! The Law of Sacrifice, how land was exchanged, or redeemed. It was an act or action set by the Law and not by their act of Faith as we do in Christ Jesus! And we**

today certainly don't make "Hollow Vows" as a Christian Steward today, in the way that Jacob did! The "Will of God" for our life, "is Not to Give and expect to receive", but to give and know that our obligation to God through obedience is more than the practicing of a few religious ceremonies on Sunday. It is an everyday, every matter affair embracing us throughout all of our Christian lives as Faithful Stewards in Christ!

Tithes and offerings unquestionably formed God's plan for the support of his work in Old Testament times. It is a fact that in no place did the New Testament Lower an Old Testament standard. On the contrary, in many places, the New Testament standard is much higher than the Old! In fact we must practice giving by "Grace" just as Christ gave to us! **Willingly!!!**

- Jacob's Vow in (Gen. 28: 20-22) "Hollow" as it was at the time. Is an understanding for Christians in that; "We don't make these kind of Vow's with the Lord, Ever!
- Tithing as is mentioned in (Lev. 27: 30ff. and Deut. 14: 22-24) we understand to be, Moses's Old law or Covenant, thinking!

**Our vows in giving, we understand to be not only that we give of ourselves, but to further God's Kingdom by our gift of giving and ask for the Lord's blessing's for the right reason! By giving to God even a portion of our material resources, monetarily, or even of ourselves Is the way of a New Covenant Christian, but according to his or her best ability of giving!** Hence---Jacob expected something in return for his belief in the Lord! Which the Lord made him work for!

D. God requests free-will offering (Ex. 25: 1-9)

Generous, heart-felt voluntary offering on the Sabbath (Ex. 35: 5-9)

**Offerings were given of a genuine nature but still done according to the Laws of Moses. Either by: 1#. Judicial Section of Civil Laws, Known as Sundry Laws, (Gen: 22: ff & Gen: 23: ff) 2#. Ceremonial Laws. 3#. Moral Laws. ( all three having their own uniquely specific purpose and separate of one another)**

We can look at all these as a part of Stewardship according to the Law! By their obedience, just as we are to be obedient in Christ, God sends his Blessing!

E. Sacrificial gift of Thanksgiving (Psalm 50: 7-15)

- The Psalm of Asaph explains to us God’s might and ownership of Creation and just what he expected of the people of Israel! Asaph was one in a long line of Kinsmen appointed over the service of song, as leaders in David’s Choir! Known as a **SEER—or a synonym for “Prophet”.** ( **1<sup>st</sup>. Chronicles 6: 31-48**) Asaph’s vision also explains to us how God acknowledged all their offerings of sacrifice, but charged them to: Offer a “Sacrifice of Thanksgiving” and to pay their vows to the Most High (God)! Psalm 50: 14-15, re: vs. 15 **Stewardship by Obedience!**
- Prayer in times of trouble or in times of Joy is a prayer of Thanksgiving that even we today rely and honor God by our request or praise! By giving back to our Lord in Obedience by prayer! For his will for us is perfect! (1<sup>st</sup>. Thessalonians 5: 12-18)
- “Acceptable sacrifice is a broken spirit” (Ps. 51: 17)  
**“Contrite”-- Feeling regret and sorrow for one's sins or offenses; penitent.**



(Matt. 5:3) Christ also spoke of being “poor in spirit” in the Beatitudes.

- F. Man’s “Avarice” (excessive or insatiable desire for wealth or gain: greediness) can’t be satisfied (Ecc. 1: 9ff, 5: 8-11ff,)

“King Solomon”, Known as the Preacher, Son of David. Speaks many times throughout Ecclesiastes, that he has seen it all and that it is all just folly or foolishness, and vanity!

“Then he Sums up what God has given man that is “Good”

(Ecc. 5: 18-20)

“Solomon” speaks even of creation, just as his father (David) recorded in the ‘Psalms’.

And that it will last forever, but a generation is here but a short time!

- G. Man is “Covetous” – an attitude condemned by God: The last of God’s 10 Commandments. Yet in (Joshua 6: 18,) where God commands a ban and gives “warning” that the sons of Israel do not obey! (Josh. 7: 1) “A Covetous Attitude” was also recorded in Neh. 13, Ezek. 33, Amos 2, Isa. 57, Hab. 2, Micah 2, Prov. 21, and more! **Jesus, in Luke 12: 15, tells us to be on guard of every form of Greed! Then gives a parable regarding it!**

Paul in 1<sup>st</sup>. Cor. 5 & 6 speaks strongly against Coveting and all immoral action! **Correcting our own actions as a New Christian Steward is hard! But when we stay faithful daily to read and understand God’s plan by study, then the old habits fade-away!**

## 2. **CHRIST’S TEACHINGS**

- A. Not having – holding but sharing – giving (Luke 12:15)
- B. “The Rich Ruler” (Matt. 19: 16ff---Luke 18: 18 – 30). This Man’s wealth, stood in his way to salvation. He placed his trust in “things” and was unable to accept Jesus’ “Test of fellowship.” He had gone beyond meeting the essentials of life but suffered (anxiety) over the thought of giving up his wealth. (Matt. 6: 31, --- Luke 12: 22 – 29 or Mark 8: 34-38) Jesus words on worry, coveting and salvation are hard but are needed, so as **Christian Stewards** “we show example of Christ teachings and are able to exude Discipleship by the Gift he has given us”!
- C. “Possessions are not virtually evil”, (for all practical purposes) nor is “poverty virtue”.  
Jesus taught that our salvation hinges on what we have (Luke 12: 32-34) (Ecc.5: 13, 19---Remember Solomon Spoke of the evil of riches, here)
- D. Jesus’ parable of “The Rich Man” (Luke 12: 16ff) the story was instigated by a man being disturbed over his brother’s “Inheritance”.  
1. Jesus didn’t criticize how the rich man got his wealth.  
2. The rich man had no concept of Stewardship – he was Self-centered.  
3. The rich man trusted his destiny in wealth.  
4. In the parable, he defined as a “Fool”

5. Lastly, The man lost everything, including his life!

(Luke 12: 21)

- E. “The Unrighteous Steward” (Luke 16: 1-9) --- Jesus stresses using material possessions for eternal good. He who is faithful over small things will eventually become steward over bigger things. (\*\*also vs. 10-13)

**In Summary:** (Fill in the Blanks) – See Key on pages 20+21

A. Though the examples of \_\_\_\_\_ in the Old Testament study are not to be confused with \_\_\_\_\_. They are examples to help us understand man’s \_\_\_\_\_ along with each of his \_\_\_\_\_, so that we may grow in each!

- The \_\_\_\_\_ Examples (God’s Law through Moses) gives us strong background to the understanding of why a \_\_\_\_\_ with man had to be fulfilled. Along with \_\_\_\_\_ being fulfilled, the foretelling of the Coming of the Messiah, as well as the \_\_\_\_\_ of what would happen if the people failed to correct their sinful behavior!
- Man was \_\_\_\_\_ then and is still **Covetous** today! Our \_\_\_\_\_ desire \_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ have changed with becoming a **“Christian Steward”** and its duties. --- **But, “Do we still fight Sin”? Yes!**

B. \_\_\_\_\_ are not virtually evil, but as a Christian Steward we show \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ’s teachings in our \_\_\_\_\_ to exude Discipleship by the \_\_\_\_\_ he has given us! \_\_\_\_\_ from arrogance and Pride! Our \_\_\_\_\_

to give back a portion of what we know was \_\_\_\_\_ given to us by the Lord.

- **(1<sup>st</sup>. Cor. 4: 1-2)** we are the “\_\_\_\_\_” of the mysteries of God, (God’s Holy Inspired Word) for we are all servants of Christ and “\_\_\_\_\_” **Christian Stewards** of all that God has put us in charge of— **Creation**, “**His Holy Word**”, Our **Assembling** together, Our **Spouses**, our **Children**, (If still at home), our “**Possessions**”, and “**Our Brethren**”! “**Loving our enemies**”, and not “**Hating**”!

We should feel a strong \_\_\_\_\_ for “\_\_\_\_\_” the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ in Christ Jesus, along with the watering of that seed after! Doing all of this with a \_\_\_\_\_! Just as Christ with the “Rich Man, (Luke 12: 16ff) his \_\_\_\_\_ shines and is a great \_\_\_\_\_ for all!

Though the man lost everything, including his own life! (Luke 12: 20, 21)

As Christian Stewards, we are **Servants**, and “**Disciples of Christ**”! The **Truth**, \_\_\_\_\_, will always speak for itself! But only if we are “Good Stewards”-- **Keepers** of it, “Each day till Christ returns or we go to him in our own passing from this life!

C. “**The Christian Steward**” \_\_\_\_\_ that, if we give of our- selves through Christ Jesus ---“\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_”, knowing “**Love is the Greatest of all Gifts**”, “**For Love never fails**”!

**We become** “\_\_\_\_\_” and **Give of Ourselves**” in \_\_\_\_\_ areas of \_\_\_\_\_. Thus knowing that the “**The Art of Giving Self**” becomes our “**Understanding**” of “**Christian Stewardship**”, --- with this kind of attitude in Christ! (\*\*2<sup>nd</sup>. Corinthians 5: 5-21\*\*)

## **In Summary:** (Fill in the Blanks) **Key for Pages 19 & 20:**

A. Though the examples of **Stewardship** in the Old Testament study are not to be confused with **Christian Stewardship**. They are examples to help us understand man's **failure's** along with each of his **successes**, so that we may grow in each!

- The **Old Covenant** Examples (God's Law through Moses) gives us strong background to the understanding of why a **New Covenant** with man had to be fulfilled. Along with **Prophecy** being fulfilled, the foretelling of the Coming of the Messiah, as well as the **warnings** of what would happen if the people **failed** to correct their sinful behavior!
- Man was **Covetous** then and is still **Covetous** today! Our **fleshly** desire was or **should** have changed with becoming a "**Christian Steward**" and its duties. --- **But, "Do we still fight Sin"? Yes!**

B. **Possessions** are not virtually evil, but as a Christian Steward we show **example** of Christ's teachings in our **ability** to exude Discipleship by the **Gifts** he has given us! **Freedom** from arrogance and Pride! Our **ability** to give back a portion of what we know was **essentially** given to us by the Lord.

- **(1<sup>st</sup>. Cor. 4: 1-2)** we are the "**Keepers**" of the mysteries of God, (God's Holy Inspired Word) for we are all servants of Christ and "**Trustworthy**" **Christian Stewards** of all that God has put us in charge of— **Creation**, "**His Holy Word**, Our **Assembling** together, Our **Spouses**, our **Children**, (if still at home), our "**Possessions**", and "**Our Brethren**"! "**Loving our enemies**", and not "**Hating**"!

We should feel a strong responsibility for “Planting the Seed of Salvation in Christ Jesus, along with the watering of that seed after! Doing all of this with a lovingly attitude! Just as Christ with the “Rich Man, (Luke 12: 16ff) his humility shines and is a great example for all! Though the man lost everything, including his own life! (Luke 12: 20, 21)

As Christian Stewards, we are Servants, and “Disciples of Christ”! The Truth, God’s word, will always speak for itself! But only if we are “Good Stewards”-- Keepers of it, “Each day till Christ returns or we go to him in our own passing from this life!

C. “The Christian Steward” understands that, if we give of our- selves through Christ Jesus ---“Faith, Hope and Love”, knowing “Love is the Greatest of all Gifts”, “For Love never fails”!

We become “Willing participants” and Give of Ourselves” in all areas of our life”. Thus knowing that the “The Art of Giving Self” becomes our “Understanding” of “Christian Stewardship”, --- with this kind of attitude in Christ! (\*\*2<sup>nd</sup>. Corinthians 5: 5-21\*\*)

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