



Stewardship Primer 3

Fundamentals of Christian Stewardship

1 Corinthians 4:2

"Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy."

Scripture has much to say about Christian Stewardship. T. A. Kantonen writes in *A Theology for Christian Stewardship*, "Stewardship is the English word used to translate the New Testament word *oikonomia*. The Greek word is a compound of *oikos*, meaning house, and *nomos*, meaning law. It refers thus to the management of a house or of household affairs...when the word stewardship takes on the new depth and richness which it has acquired in American church life, it is still the best single equivalent of the Pauline *oikonomia*" (page 2).

Roy Bleick writes in *Much More Than Giving*, "In the New Testament, 'stewardship' [*oikonomia*] is never used to designate the action of giving, much less the giving of money. *Oikonomia* relates primarily to the office of administration or management or to the implementation of a plan" (page 15).

Stewardship is what the steward does and what the steward does is governed by God's Word. God's word suggests the following fundamentals of Christian stewardship:

1. God owns all things, we own nothing. God owns us twice. He owns us because He created us. He owns us because He redeemed us.

The following Bible passages support this first fundamental:

- Psalm 24:1
- Haggai 2:8
- 1 Corinthians 6:19
- 1 Chronicles 29:14
- 1 Corinthians 4:7
- Titus 2:14

Roy Bleick writes, "Though we may hold (possess) certain things, God really owns all. This ownership by God extends from inanimate things to animals and birds, to human life. God's ownership reinforces the concept of stewardship as management. Strictly speaking, we cannot give anything to God, He already owns all. We can only manage its use" (page 12-13, "A Theological Statement Concerning Christian Stewardship").

2. We are stewards, under God, of all we are and have and do. Everything we have is given to us by God as a trust to use for His purposes.

The following Bible passages support this second fundamental:

- 1 Corinthians 6:19

The biblical truth—that it all belongs to God—is the cornerstone of everything we have to say about stewardship.
-Charles Lane

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- 1 Corinthians 4:2
- Matthew 24:45-46
- Romans 14:7-8
- 2 Corinthians 6:4, 10
- Titus 2:14

Roy Bleick continues, “It is indeed a high honor and a great privilege to represent the gracious God to the world. It is part of God’s plan of salvation to reveal His love, care and concern for the world through the lives of His sons and daughters. The individual Christian is consciously to live every moment, speak every word, perform every act, for the purpose of glorifying God and serving others in such a way that God thereby builds His kingdom in the hearts and minds of people. The object of our life, of all stewardship activity, therefore, is to use the resources God has entrusted in such a way that people come to know and trust in the only true God” (page 9, “A Theological Statement Concerning Christian Stewardship”).

3. We are accountable and responsible to God for all He entrusts to our care.

The following Bible passages support this third fundamental:

- Hebrews 4:13
- 1 Peter 1:17
- Luke 16:1-2
- Galatians 6:7
- Luke 19:15

Roy Bleick writes, “In the stewardship parables the master always returns and holds an accounting.” (See Matthew 25:14-30 and Luke 16:1-9)

Reflection:

Why is it vital to keep in mind the foundation of Christian stewardship (God’s grace in Christ) when considering the fundamentals of Christian stewardship?

What resources does God supply so that stewards accomplish the tasks He gives? Acts 1:8, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Romans 6:4

Digging Deeper:

Read *A Theology for Christian Stewardship* by T. A. Kantonen.

Read *The Stewardship Life* by Karl Kretzschmar.

Both resources are available at faithaflame.lcms.org

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leaders, you need
to find and
utilize ways to
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-Charles Lane*

