



The Faithful Steward

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Stewardship is About Relationships

“Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gifts each of you has received.”
1 Peter 4:10



God craves a relationship with us. God longs to restore the broken relationship we have with Him. Relationship ever and always is the Father’s objective.

IN GOD WE TRUST

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“Sixty-four years!” Jack exclaimed. “Sixty-four years I have been performing for God, and tonight I have come into a relationship with him through his Son!”

Bettie’s story was similar. As she sadly puts it, “How could I have been deceived through all these years, playing out on the stage of life what I thought was an acceptable performance, while God was standing by waiting for a relationship with me through his Son, Jesus Christ?”

It brings joy to hear such moving and powerful statements. But with the crescendo of gladness echos a few lingering notes of regret. Why did it take Jack so long to find the Savior? Why was Bettie deceived for so many years? Both were frequent church-goers. Both would have told you they were Christians up until the very moment of finding Christ. They gave donations to churches and charities. They served on committees, boards and councils, and sang in the choir. They were decent, law-abiding people. Yet the love of Jesus Christ had NEVER penetrated the layers of their busy lives to find its resting place in their heart. For decades, succumbing

to the lure of service for its own sake, they were dead in their trespasses and sins because they never got to know the Savior. It took each nearly a lifetime to discover what it means to have a meaningful and purposeful relationship with Jesus Christ.

God craves a relationship with us. He longs to restore the broken relationship we have with Him. The key to a growing spiritual experience is a personal relationship with God.

Stewardship is about relationships and first, a relationship with God. It is not a program, but a spiritual consciousness or way-of-life, based in Scripture, which holds that all we are and all we have flows from God’s unmerited grace. In turn, we serve as caretakers of our spiritual and worldly blessings, responding to His love.

In a relationship with God, we put Him at the center of our life. When God is at the center, every other relationship falls into its right place, including the use of our time, talents and treasures.

Secondly, stewardship is about our relationship to others. Jesus commanded us to love God first and then our neighbor as ourselves. In a world



where greed, anger, hatred and selfishness abound, stewardship principles call us to embrace God's love more fully, so we may embrace others as well.

Many times we are so busy it's hard to maintain and sustain our relationship with the Lord. Things obscure our concentration on God. We must continually maintain a position of beholding Him, keeping our life focused on our Lord.

Is your busy lifestyle keeping you from having a relationship with God? "Never let a hurried lifestyle disturb the relationship of abiding in Him. This is an easy thing to allow, but we must guard against it" (Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest*, January 23). Sometimes we might be so busy in our church activities that we do NOT make time to have a relationship with God. It is very important to spend quality time every day with God to develop and sustain a lasting relationship with Him.

Do not let anyone or anything come between you and God. Is your family keeping you from having a personal relationship with God? How about your work? Your church?

Jesus is waiting for us today to enter into a relationship with him. How will we respond?

If God were to write us a letter, it would probably read something like this:

Dear (our name), I just had to send a note today to tell you how much I love you and care for you. I saw you yesterday as you were walk-

ing with your friends. I waited all day, hoping you would want to talk with me also. As the evening drew near; I gave you a sunset to close your day and a cool breeze to give you rest, and I waited, but you never came. It hurt me, but I still love you because I am your friend. I saw you fall asleep last night, and I longed to touch your brow, so I spilled moonlight on your pillow and your face. Again I waited, wanting to rush down so we could talk. I have so many gifts for you, but you awakened late the next day and rushed off to work and my tears were in the rain.

Today you looked so sad, so all alone, it made my heart ache because I understand. My



friends let me down and hurt me so many times, too. Oh, if you would only listen to me; I really love you. I try to tell you in the blue sky and in the quiet green grass. You can see it in the leaves on the trees and hear it in the love songs that you sing. I clothe you with warm sunshine and perfume the air with nature's scent. My love

for you is deeper than the ocean and bigger than the biggest want or need in your heart. If you only knew how much I want to help you. I want you to meet my Father. He wants to help you, too. My Father is that way, you know. So just call, ask Me and talk with Me. I have so much to share with you, but I won't bother you. I'll wait because I love you. Your Friend, Jesus.

Let's not keep Jesus waiting any longer!



WANTED: Stories of how God has blessed you and others through you, as you have been His faithful steward. In an upcoming issue, we want to share your testimonies of what God is doing in your life as a result. Please send your story with photos to:
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