



EVANGELICAL CHURCH MAHWALALA

BIBLE STUDY

STEWARDSHIP

FAITHFULLY MANAGING AND USING
ALL THAT GOD HAS ENTRUSTED TO US



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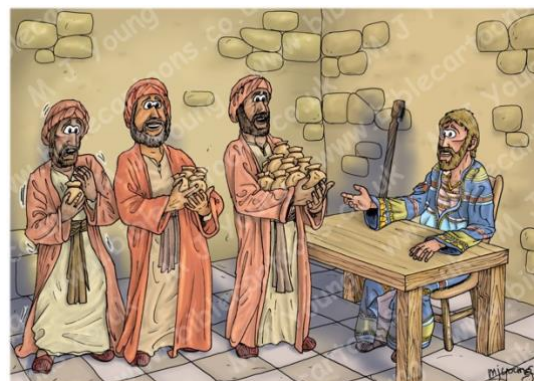


FOR THE PROCLAMATION, CONFIRMATION AND DEFENCE OF THE GOSPEL

1. THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS

Matthew 25:14-30 “For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. 15 To one he gave five talents to another two, to another one to each according to his ability. Then he went away. 16 He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. 17 So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. 18 But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master’s money. 19 Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. 20 And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me five talents; here I have made five talents more.’ 21 His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ 22 And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me two talents; here I have made two talents more.’ 23 His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ 24 He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, 25 so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.’ 26 But his master answered him, ‘You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed? 27 Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. 28 So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. 29 For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. 30 And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

- The parable of the talents in Matthew 25:14-30 illustrates the concept of stewardship.
- The parable is told by Jesus Christ to His disciples; about the return of The Lord and the end of the Age (Matthew 24:3).
- In this parable, a master entrusts his servants with varying amounts of money before leaving on a journey.
- The talent = money = a currency.



- Upon his return, he evaluates how the servants invested the talents given to them.
- The servants who wisely invested and multiplied their master's wealth are commended, while the one who buried his talent out of fear is rebuked.

Matthew 25:26 'You wicked and slothful servant!

- The word “wicked” is a translation of the Greek word, “πονηρός”, which encapsulates every thought, act, person, spirit, or era set against God.
- As Christians, we are servants of our Lord & Saviour Jesus Christ.
- He sent us to be His witnesses,

Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

- As Christians > witnesses for Christ, we are disciples > who are servants.
 - The man = Christ
 - The servants = us
 - His property = resources at our disposal.
- Jesus Christ is coming back soon

Acts 1:10-11 And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”

- We will account for all the work that was expected of us,
- Hence the parable of the talents underscores the expectation that Christians are expected to actively and wisely manage what has been entrusted to them.
- This is the essence of stewardship.

2. STEWARDSHIP

Stewardship in the biblical context refers to the responsible management and care of resources, talents, and possessions that God has entrusted to individuals.

- It encompasses the idea that everything belongs to God, and humans are merely caretakers of His creation.
- **A person who practices stewardship is a steward.**
- Being a steward is an essential part of our identity as Christians.
- We have the responsibility of faithfully managing and using all that God has entrusted to us—for His glory, the advancement of His Kingdom, and the benefit of

others. This includes: spiritual gifts, time, relationships, finances and possessions, and the environment.

- Through recognizing that God is the ultimate owner of all things, we are accountable to Him for the management of the resources entrusted to us.
- The principle of stewardship is woven throughout Scripture.

2.1. What The Scripture Says

- The triune God created everything.

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

- Nothing existed before God created it.
- Everything belongs to God.

Psalms 24:1 The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein,

- It is important to understand this as a Christian.
- Everything was created through Christ.

John 1:1-3 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.

- Christ holds everything together.

Colossians 1:15-17 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

- Everything will come under the complete rule of Christ.

Revelation 4:11 "Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created."

- As Christians we don't really own anything – we have been entrusted with resources, skills, money and time to be used for God's purposes.

***1 Corinthians 4:1** This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.*

- We are stewards of the Gospel.
- Between creating the heavens and the earth, and His coming again, God has given man responsibility of all that He created.

***Genesis 1:28** And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”*

- This mandate establishes humanity's role as stewards of God's creation.

3. LEVELS OF STEWARDSHIP

There are different levels or types of stewardship.



3.1. Stewardship of Your Body

- As disciples, the first call to stewardship is that of our bodies.
- We need to surrender our bodies to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

***Romans 12:1-2** I appeal to you therefore, brothers by the mercies of God to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. 2 Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.*

- This shall be made possible by the transformation of the mind.
- The mind must seek the things of God's Kingdom.
- We need to surrender our bodies as holy and acceptable to God.

***1 Peter 1:16** “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”*

- Because our body is a member of the Body of Christ > who is Holy.

1 Corinthians 6:15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never!

- We need to steward our body.
- The body is the host of the Holy Spirit.
- This is because our body is the temple of God.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, 20 for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

- We were redeemed by Christ (for Himself) from the world of sin.
- We need to steward our body in order to glorify God.
- Always asking, "How can I grow in the Lord?"
- Always remembering to,

James 4:7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

- This is an intentional gesture.
- Surrender our bodies to the Lord, in order to be faithful stewards for our bodies.

3.2. Stewardship of Relationships

- In addition to our relationship with God, we need to steward our relationships.
- At home, family, community, work, school, church.



Romans 12:18-19 Do your best to live as everybody's friend. Beloved, don't be obsessed with taking revenge, but leave that to God's righteous justice. For the Scriptures say: "Vengeance is mine, and I will repay," says the Lord.

- We were born into the families we were born in for a reason and a divine purpose.
- For couples

Ephesians 5:22-23,25 For wives, this means being devoted to your husbands like you are tenderly devoted to our Lord, for the husband provides leadership for the wife, just as Christ provides leadership for his church, as the Savior and Reviver of the body... And to the husbands, you are to demonstrate love for

your wives with the same tender devotion that Christ demonstrated to us, his bride. For he died for us, sacrificing himself

- For parents

***Ephesians 6:1-4 Children, if you want to be wise , listen to your parents and do what they tell you,** and the Lord will help you. For the commandment, “Honor your father and your mother,” was the first of the Ten Commandments with a promise attached: “You will prosper and live a long, full life if you honor your parents .” **Fathers, don’t exasperate your children,** but raise them up with loving discipline and counsel that brings the revelation of our Lord.*

- For employees

***Ephesians 6:5 Those who are employed should listen to their employers and obey their instructions with great respect and honor.** Serve them with humility in your hearts as though you were working for the Master.*

- For employers

***James 5:4 Listen! Can’t you hear the cries of the laborers over the wages you fraudulently held back from those who worked for you?** The cries for justice of those you’ve cheated have reached the ears of the Lord of armies!*

- For friends or alliances such as business.

***2 Corinthians 6:14 [TPT] Don’t continue to team up with unbelievers in mismatched alliances,** for what partnership is there between righteousness and rebellion? Who could mingle light with darkness?*

- The Lord is watching, how we are stewarding the relationships we are in.

Matthew 5:13-14 “You are the salt of the earth,** but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people’s feet. **“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.

- We are to bring life into the relationships we have.
- The stewardship of our relationship with God and everyone around us is founded on The Shema,

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

- Our stewardship of our relationships is impacted by our level of loving God.

Matthew 22:36-40 “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”

- The Greatest commandment is loving God
- The next great second commandment is to love your neighbour.
- Christ highlight that all the prophecies and the Law are founded on these two commandments.
- This is why it is important to remember that we are stewards of the relationships we have.

3.3. Stewardship of Resources

- Stewardship of resources is a significant aspect of biblical teaching.

Proverbs 3:9-10 Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce; *then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine.*



- Honor God with the first portion of income or select the best of your produce and offer to God > demonstrating faith in His provision.
- There is a promise for blessings for those who follow through.
- This verse highlights the importance of prioritizing God in the management of one's resources.
- The resources are the possessions which are in our care.
- The assets, finances, harvest and any possessions in our care.

- This level of stewardship is demonstrated in how we give tithe and offering.

Deuteronomy 14:22 “You shall tithe all the yield of your seed that comes from the field year by year.”

Malachi 3:10 Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need.

- Even though this is in the Old Testament, where the offering mandated by the Law, the practice of offering is also highlighted in the New Testament.

2 Corinthians 9:6-8 The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.

- This was a message for the “Collection for Christians in Jerusalem”.
- It speaks to offering now being personal and intentional > from the heart.
- This is why Jesus said the following words to the Rich Young Man about the requirements for attaining eternal life,

Matthew 19:21-22 Jesus said to him, “If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.” When the young man heard this he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

- In the New Testament, about half of Jesus’ parables focus on the use of material resources to further God’s purposes
- This highlights the need for us to channel the use of resources entrusted to us to further God’s Kingdom > This is the hallmark of being a disciple of Jesus.
- We take what belongs to God and giving it back to Him > to use for His purpose.
- ***How do you decide what to offer?***
- The Evangelical Church Distinctives highlights the denominations belief regarding TITHING AND FREEWILL OFFERING.

SECTION 17. TITHING AND FREEWILL OFFERING

17.1. We believe that tithing is not a Mosaic Law, for Abraham, the father of our faith tithed to Melchizedek some 2000 years B.C. before Moses' time came (Gen. 14: 20, 28: 22).

17.2. We also emphasize love or cheerful giver (John 3: 16; Rom. 8: 32; Cor. 8: 7).

17.3. We teach that people cannot be so poor that they cannot give. People can give beyond their means, (II Cor. 8: 2, 3). But we don't encourage believers to borrow money with the purpose of giving it to the Lord. God does not expect us to give what we don't have.

*17.4. We teach that tithes and offerings are given to God, not the pastor. **The Church Board with the help of the Treasurer, receives the money and should exercise good stewardship over it, for it is God's money.***

17.4.1. A financial statement will always be given to the local Church Conference quarterly or regularly.

17.4.2. The tithes, if they are plentiful enough would not only be used in paying the Pastor's allowance (salary), but also taking care of the registered widows and nobodies of the Church.

17.4.3. The priority in the use of the tithes is to salary the pastor. For the worker deserves his wages (I Tim. 5: 18).

3.4. Stewardship of Time and Gifts

- In addition to material resources, stewardship extends to the use of time and spiritual gifts.
- We must be good stewards of the time and the spiritual gifts given to us.



Ephesians 5:15-16 Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.

- Time is a gift from God.
- We all have 24 hours in a day.

- The days of our lives are a gift from God, we ought to steward them well.
- We do not know how much time we have on this earth.
- We must put all the time and spiritual gifts to use in advancing the Kingdom of God.

1 Peter 4:10-11 As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

- This directive calls us to employ their God-given abilities in service to others, reflecting God's grace and furthering His kingdom.



3.5. Stewardship of Creation

- The biblical mandate for stewardship also includes the care of the environment.
- When God was creating, everything was good in His eyes.

Genesis 2:15 The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.

- This verse highlights humanity's responsibility to tend to and preserve the natural world, reflecting God's creative order and sustaining His creation.
- We are stewards of His creation.
- The sin of man also created suffering for creation.

Genesis 4:11 And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand.

- Ever since Cain killed Abel, the ground was also implicated in the sin, and punished
- This is why Paul writes,

Romans 8:18-22 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.

- This gives us the picture that even nature is saying,

Revelation 22:20** He who testifies to these things says, “Surely I am coming soon.” Amen. **Come, Lord Jesus!

4. BENEFITS OF STEWARDSHIP

- Stewardship is essential in the success of discipleship in a local church.
- This was clearly demonstrated in the early church.

***Acts 2:44-47** And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.*

- Stewardship resulted in church growth.
- This highlights several benefits of stewardship in the local church.

4.1. Sustains the Church’s Mission

- The church has grown supported by the sacrificial giving of time, skills and finances of God’s people past and present.
- It is the offerings from faithful stewards that will enable EC Mahwalala to attain its objectives of Growing in the Lord: spiritually, physically, emotionally, materially and infrastructurally.

4.2. Enables Church Growth

- It has been observed that once church members understand what biblical stewardship is and commit themselves to give generously, churches often see an increase in giving.
- When faithful stewards are given opportunities to give, the church may see a significant increase in giving in response to specific projects.

4.3. Increases Engagement in Church Activities

- Faithful stewards tend to volunteer their time, skills and resources in different areas of church's ministry.
- This may also result in the formation of new activities as faithful stewards begin to invest more of their time, skills and resources into fulfilling the local church objectives.

4.4. Promotes Spiritual Growth and Prayer Life

- Above all, a good steward surrenders more of their life to God.
- Those who truly hear and understand the call to being faithful stewards of everything God has entrusted to them are likely to spend more time in reading the Bible, in prayer and other faith enrichment activities.
- This is because they realise that they cannot be good stewards of God's provisions if they do not take the time to establish a closer relationship with God and seek His guidance.
- Their giving becomes a joyful expression of their unconditional love for God – which is the ultimate purpose of giving.

5. WE SHALL ACCOUNT

- When everything is brought under the feet of our Lord, Jesus Christ, we shall all account and be rewarded for the level of stewardship we demonstrated on earth.

***Revelation 22:12-13** “Behold, I am coming soon, **bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done.** I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.”*

- In the passage where Paul warns the Romans not to judge one another, he writes,

Romans 14:12** So then **each of us will give an account of himself to God.

- This accountability underscores the seriousness of the stewardship role and the expectation of faithfulness.
- This highlights how serious we should be in being faithful stewards of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Faithfully pursuing attaining the stewardship highlighted above has a divine reward.

***Luke 16:10-13** “**One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much.** 11 If then*

you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? 12 And if you have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own? 13 No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.”

- This principle suggests that those who are trustworthy in small matters will be entrusted with greater responsibilities and blessings.
- God rewards faithful stewards.
- You may not think you have much, but how you use it may determine level of responsibility and blessings that come your way.

6. CONCLUSION

- The triune God created everything.
- We are stewards of God's creation.
- Stewardship in the biblical context refers to the responsible management and care of resources, talents, and possessions that God has entrusted to individuals.
- The parable of the talents in Matthew 25:14-30 further illustrates the concept of stewardship.
- As witnesses for Christ, we are disciples > who are stewards of: our bodies, relationships, resources, time and gifts and creation
- When everything is brought under the feet of our Lord, Jesus Christ, we shall all account and be rewarded for the level of stewardship we demonstrated on earth.
- You may not think you have much, but how you use it may determine level of responsibility and blessings that come your way.
- The biblical concept of stewardship calls believers to recognize God's ownership of all things and to manage His resources with wisdom, faithfulness, and a heart of service.
- Through stewardship, Christians are invited to participate in God's work, reflecting His character and advancing His purposes in the world.
- Be a great Steward.

7. REFERENCES

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