

Victoria Fellowship Church
International & Interdenominational
Bible Study Worksheet – January 22, 2023
Theme: Servant Leadership Topic: Stewardship
Main Texts: 1 Peter 4:1-11; Matthew 25:14-30

Key verse: 1 Peter 4:10 – “As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. (NKJV)

INTRODUCTION: The Oxford dictionary defines stewardship as, “*taking care of or managing something, for example property, an organization, money or valuable objects.*” And one of the definitions of a “steward” is one employed, as in a household, to manage another person’s property. Such a person is typically compelled to do the will of his master or employer. Our passages for this study underscore the importance of doing our Master’s will, which ultimately, is that God may be glorified through Christ Jesus (1 Peter 4:2, 11) and to please the Master (Matthew 25:21, 23).

1. **Consider the words and tone of the master in Matthew 25:19-30 and of Apostle Peter in 1 Peter 4:2,10-11. (a) How important is stewardship in the Kingdom of God? (b) More pay, performance bonuses and promotions are the major rewards and motivations for good stewardship in a typical corporate setting. What should be the motivation for stewardship for believers? (c) According to Matthew 25:24-26 and 1 Peter 4: 1-2, what are obstacles to stewardship for a believer?**

We are stewards of God’s grace. If we are not using our gifts to serve one another, then we are not living lives of stewardship. Whether in the Church or the workplace, the goal of a believer’s stewardship should always be that God may be glorified through Christ Jesus (1 Peter 4:11). In the parable of the talents, the first two servants were referred to as “good and faithful” (Matthew 25:21, 26). This is because they used their talents and multiplied what their master gave them. The master described the third servant as “wicked and slothful” because he chose to bury his talent (Matthew 25:26). Interestingly, the decisions and actions of the third servant were informed by his bad attitude towards his master – his unwillingness to deliver any profit to his master! Similarly, when believers lose sight of the imminent return of our Master, Jesus Christ, we end up spending our lives chasing other things (1 Peter 4:7).

2. **(a) In 1 Peter 4:7 – 11, Peter cautions that “the end of all things is at hand”, and in view of this, we need to focus on five key things. What are those things we should focus on and how can they help us to be good stewards of God’s grace? (b) In Matthew 25:24-25, the servant’s attitude and view of his master set him on a negative path. Where are we seeing examples of this and how can we curtail these in our lives? (c) All believers have received at least one spiritual or material gift from God. Let some participants share what gift(s) they have received from God and how they can be better stewards of the gift(s), not just in Church.**

In today’s text, Apostle Peter presents the greatest example of stewardship, our Lord Jesus Christ. He begins by recognizing that “*Christ suffered in the flesh and ceased from sin*” and encouraged the believers to do the same (1 Peter 4:1). What does it mean that Christ “*suffered in the flesh*”? We know that Jesus Christ forsook the comforts of heaven and came down to earth as man, lived among us, was tempted as we are yet without sin, and suffered a painful, humiliating, and shameful death on the cross so that we might be saved. He did all of this, not to fulfill His will, but to fulfill the will of the Father who sent Him (Matthew 26:39, 42; John 5:30; John 6:38).

3. **Read 1 Peter 4:1; John 6:38-39; John 14:31. (a) How is Jesus’ “suffering in the flesh” a demonstration of stewardship? (b) Why is it important in stewardship for us as believers to “arm [ourselves] with the same way of thinking” as Jesus? (c) Let participants share examples of personal agendas which hinder stewardship among believers. What can be done about these?**

Prayer: *Dear Father, help me to be fully submitted to Your will. My desire is to be a good and faithful steward. Help me to serve others with the gifts that You have blessed me with. May my life be a living sacrifice to You so that in all things, You may be glorified through Christ Jesus. Amen.*