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*Taking Care of Everything God Gives Us*

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## Introduction



## God Asks Us to Be Wise Managers of Everything He Gives Us

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We are Christians. But we must understand we are sinners first. Then we will see the need to change our lives. That change can come only when Jesus works fully in us. One way Jesus can change our lives is to make us good managers of all He gives us. *Stewardship* means taking care of all God gives us. We bring God honor by taking care of His gifts to us. This work covers many different parts of the Christian's life.

The Bible teaches us that being good managers of God's property helps protect us against our love for owning things. This love is one of the biggest traps that Satan sets before us. Many people fall into it. Why? They fail to understand that riches and belongings are cheap. Many souls will not be saved because they loved owning things more than they loved God. What are these things? John tells us: "Here is what people who belong to this world [earth] do. They try to satisfy [give into; please] what their sinful [full of sin] desires want to do. They long for [want] what their sinful eyes look at. They take pride in what they have and what they do. All of this comes from the world [loving the things on this earth]. None of it comes from the Father" (1 John 2:16, NIV). These are the ways of sin. But they can be avoided by following the rules of being a good manager for God. So, we must live out these rules in our lives.

This quarter we will study what it means to take good care of everything God gives us. We will learn what working as good managers for God teaches us about how we should live as God wants us to live. Part of God's plan for our lives is to free us from loving the things on this earth more than we love Him. Our love for Him can be shown in different ways. One way to show our love for God and our faith in Him is to work as good managers of the gifts He gives us. So, we must work as good managers. Then we will learn how and why we follow Jesus. This work shows our love for God. As good managers, we live the truth that God gives us in Jesus.

So, what does it mean to be good managers of God's property? Our work as God's managers includes many things. It includes a full change in our thoughts and feelings. It also includes a complete change of heart, giving ourselves fully to God, self-control, and

much more. We are to be God's loyal and dependable servants. We are to live unselfish lives in all we do and say. So, we must first connect to Jesus. He teaches us that being good managers for Him leads us to happiness. Our work as good managers leads us to live holy lives. We must learn to manage what God gives us so that we may bring praise and honor to His name. One way we bring Him glory is by giving our money to support His work on earth and to finish it.

Yes, we are God's managers. But we now "see as if we are looking into a dark mirror" (1 Corinthians 13:12, ICB). What this verse means is that we may not always understand everything that happens in this life. But Jesus sees very clearly what we do not. Our lives may not always make sense to us. But Jesus trusts us anyway to do His work. So, we must trust Him fully to lead us in our work as His managers. The desire to own more and more things on earth will try to stop us from being loyal to Jesus. But we must stay loyal to Him. And we must take good care of the bodies God gives us and use wisely the skills He gives us too. Also, as wise managers, we are responsible for taking care of our homes, churches, work-places, and neighborhoods. The lessons this quarter will teach us what it means to be wise managers. They also will teach us how God's love will give us the power to do all He asks us to do. But we must remember that we do not earn everlasting life by doing what God asks. No. Instead, we do all God asks because we love Him.

***We honor God  
by giving our  
money to finish  
His work on  
earth.***

Our lives as managers for God show who God is to people. We show them that God is good and holy. There is beauty, happiness, and a holy peace in the lives of people who dare to take a stand for Bible truth. It is very hard to take a stand when we must stand against what everyone else around us is doing. We all feel the desire to live without God and to put ourselves first. The desire for things we should not have and the desire to own more than we need is everywhere around us. Some of these unhealthy desires are very easy to see. But some of them are easy to miss. So, as Christian managers, we must remember that God shows us how to escape these traps. God also promises to give us the power to escape.

One day soon, Jesus will come back to earth. When He comes back, He will say one of two things to us: "Then I will say to them in plain words, "I never knew you. Go away from Me, you who do wrong!" ' ' (Matthew 7:23, NLV). Or, He will say: " "You did well. You are a good servant who can be trusted. You did well with small things. So I will let you care for much greater things. Come and share my happiness with me" ' ' (Matthew 25:23, ICB).

It is our hope and prayer that the lessons this quarter about being good managers will help us stay on the right path. Then one day, we, too, will hear Jesus say to us: " "Come and share my happiness with me" ' '!