



STEWARD MOMENT

Mr. Freddie McKnight, President
Connectional Steward Ministry



I am grateful by the Grace and Mercy of God to serve as President of the Connectional Steward Ministry. May the blessings of God be with you. I would like to commend the former President of the Connectional Steward Ministry, Mr. Charles S. Taylor, for an excellent job, well done. May the joy of the Lord be with you and your family. Communications will be coming out every quarter from the Connectional Steward Ministry. This, my first communication, is about Stewardship.

Jesus modeled biblical stewardship at every turn during His time on earth. Well, the challenge for us is not in recognizing His example, - we have to follow His example. We have to find ways to use God's blessings, God's way, for God's glory, just like Jesus did.

Jesus talked a lot about *stewardship*. He used parables about handling money to teach the principle of discipleship, and He reminded His followers, in Luke 12:34, that our hearts follow our treasure. But how did Jesus' walk match His talk? It's a fair question for believers who want to follow Jesus' example in every area of their lives, including their stewardship. A great way to examine the question is to filter Jesus' life through the definition of biblical stewardship. We as leaders, or stewards in our local churches, district, region or connection, need to use that same formula to examine ourselves to know whether we're qualified for the position in which we lead. In managing God's blessings, God's way, for God's glory by breaking each component down we can see how Jesus integrated genuine stewardship into His own life.

God's Blessings – God owns it all, and we manage His stuff, which is the foundation of biblical stewardship. In the Gospels, Jesus often acknowledged God's role as provider. Jesus trusted God to provide things like temple tax from the mouth of a fish [Matthew 17:24-26] but Jesus also showed how stewardship isn't just about material possessions. It involves things like our work and our time, too. Jesus knew His time on earth was limited, so He intentionally set priorities. Jesus told His followers to keep His identity a secret; it was to avoid the kind of distractions that would disrupt His ministry. So many times in our local church we as leaders do something nice or great, and we want God's praise and His glory. Is that the way we should think as stewards who are charged with managing God's blessings?

God's Way – It's one thing to admit that God owns it all, it's another thing to commit yourself to using stuff He owns His way, because His ways don't always make sense to our human brain. From Eden until today, humans have struggled with the tension between trusting God's plan and jumping in with our own plans. Jesus really never struggled with that tension. *He embraced the Father's purpose* and never wavered from making it happen. Jesus came to "seek and save the lost" [Luke 19:10]. Anything outside of that mission is a step outside of God's plan and His way of doing things.

When Satan tempted Jesus with an alternative plan in Matthew 4:11, Jesus rebuked him with Scripture and refused any shortcuts. Even when God's purpose brought Jesus to the Cross, complete with suffering and agony, Jesus submitted to God's will, not His own.

Matthew 26:39 teaches us that Jesus' job wasn't finished until the Father's purpose was finished. In John 19:30, Jesus stayed connected to God's way by connecting to God through *prayer*. Scripture tells us that Jesus went into solitary prayer. When we read Luke 5:15-16, we learn that He had a designated quiet time in His life for prayer. We can copy Jesus as we try to figure out how God wants us to steward His blessings. Whether it was the death of a friend [John 11:4] or teaching His disciples about prayer [John 14:13], Jesus looked for ways to glorify His Father, so like Jesus, everything we do and say should be wrapped up in the glory of God [1st Corinthians 10:31]. By definition, genuine stewardship glorifies the Father.

God's glory is a natural consequence of God's blessings God's way. Jesus modeled biblical stewardship at every level in His life while on earth. The challenge for us isn't just recognizing His example, but following His example, in order to be effective stewards. We must find ways to use God's way for God's glory, just like Jesus did.