

The Ten Basic Steps: Step #8: The Christian and Giving

Lesson 8-Our Accountability to God

Objective: To recognize our ultimate accountability to God.

Read: Luke 19:12-27 and Matthew 24 & 25

Memorize: II Corinthians 5:10

1. The Christian at Christ's Coming
2. The Time of Christ's Coming
3. The Earth at Christ's Coming
4. Preparing for Christ's Coming
5. Life Application

Many Christians miss the special blessing of God because they do not obey our Lord's command recorded in the Gospel of Matthew:

Don't store up treasures here on earth where they can erode away or may be stolen. Store them in heaven where they will never lose their value, and are safe from thieves. If your profits are in heaven your heart will be there too (Matthew 6:19-21, TLB).

Jesus knew that by storing up treasures on earth, we would soon take on the appearance of the world. Through selfish desires, we would cease to reflect the character of God and seek our own glory. By laying up treasures in heaven, on the other hand, we would declare the glory of His kingdom.

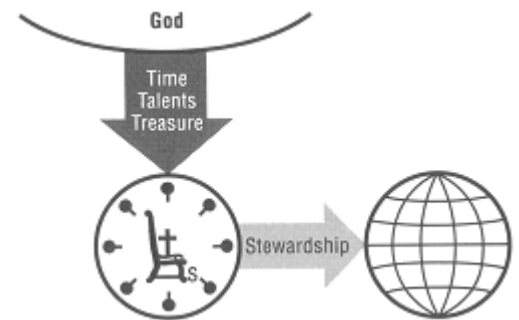
Everything we do to bring men and women into the kingdom of God, every act of kindness, every expression of love is laying up treasure in God's storehouse. We give out of love for God and gratitude for His love and sacrifice for us through the gift of His only begotten Son, our Savior Jesus Christ.

God will hold us accountable for our motivation in giving and for our faithful obedience to our Lord's command to help fulfill the Great Commission and so reach the world for Christ. The apostle Paul wrote:

We will all stand before God's judgment seat. So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God (Romans 14:10,12).

Relating the parable of the shrewd manager, Jesus said:

There was a rich man whose manager was accused of wasting his possessions. So he called him in and asked him, "What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your management..." (Luke 16:1,2).



God considers "An immortal soul beyond all price. There is no trouble too great, no humiliation too deep, no suffering too severe, no love too strong, no labor too hard, no expense too large, but that it is worth it, if it is spent in the effort to win a soul."

As faithful stewards, our primary financial responsibility is to help worthy ministries reach the largest possible number of people for Christ. We are accountable to our Lord's last command before He ascended into heaven to "Go and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19).

The Christian at Christ's Coming

According to II Corinthians 5:10, what will Christ do when He comes again? Notice that Paul says "we all." Who is this primarily for?

Note: Our sins have already been judged in Christ (Romans 8:1). The judgment here is of our works since the time we became a believer.

Read I Corinthians 3:11-15. God's judgment of our works is compared to the reaction of certain materials to fire. According to this passage, what is God most interested in regarding the works we do for Him?

How is it then possible for us to spend long hours working for God, but have no reward whatsoever? A Christian's works can be rejected, but what can he himself still be sure of? (Verse 15)

The Time of Christ's Coming

The judgment of the Christian will take place when Christ comes again. When will that be? (Acts 1:6-7)

On what should we concentrate until He comes? (Acts 1:8, Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:15)

Why has Christ waited so long already before coming? (II Peter 3:9)

The Earth at Christ's Coming

Read Mark 13. This chapter foretells the world conditions as Christ's coming approaches. As we see the world today becoming more like this, we know His coming is drawing near. What will we see happening in religion, from verses 5, 6, 21-22? What will the world situation be, in verses 7-8? What will occur in verse 8?

Describe in your own words what you think Christ's coming will be like from verses 26-27.

Preparing for Christ's Coming

As a believer, what are you to do as His coming draws near? (Mark 13:33)

How will obedience to that instruction affect the following: Your employment; your social life; your worship; your giving?

Life Application

As faithful stewards of God's resources, our primary responsibility is to help fulfill the Great Commission. If God were to call you into account for your stewardship, what would you say to Him? (Luke 16:1-2, Hebrews 4:13, I Peter 4:5)

How can you be more faithful in your giving to help reach your world for Christ?

In what ways are you storing up treasures in Heaven? Look over your spending in the past month. What percentage did you give to God's work?

To plan your giving for the next year, go through the chart on the following page to develop your personal Stewardship Plan.

Stewardship Plan

Begin by asking God how much and where He wants you to invest your time, talents, possessions, and money. Write your ideas here:

Prayerfully develop a systematic plan for giving each month in each of these areas: Time, Talents, Possessions, Money.

Plan to set aside some time and resources for needs you may become aware of at your church, in your neighborhood, or other places. Dedicate your plan to God. Ask Him to use your resources to bring the greatest glory to His name. Begin to implement your plan with a joyful heart, expecting God to bless you through your stewardship. Write any other notes and observations here:

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