

Stewardship

When we hear the word “stewardship” most of us probably think of being responsible with money. And rightly so. We should not foolishly spend what God has entrusted to us. But biblically, the idea of stewardship extends to much more than just finances. Consider the following verse:

1 Peter 4:10, “Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.”

Faithful stewards are those who *use whatever gift we have received* as a means to honor God and serve others. Think about that for a second. What are the gifts in your life? Finances, a roof over your head, material possessions, natural talents, spiritual gifts, personality, intelligence, creativity, relationships...the list could go on and on. Without God we would have nothing – be nothing. Your physical body included. The psalmist makes that very clear.

Psalm 139:13, “For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb.”

Let me be very clear about this: Your body is a gift to you from God. You may tend to focus on the flaws and imperfections of your body, but you need to change your thinking to one of gratitude and stewardship. Ask yourself this, “Am I truly using my body to honor God and serve people? Or am I constantly giving in to the demands of the flesh?”

Imagine you have given a gift to one of your children, or a loved one. You may give out of love with no strings attached, just to see the joy that it gives them. But isn’t there an expectation that they will appreciate and care for the gift? And how do we feel when the gift is neglected, abused, or misused? Now think about how God feels in relation to how you are treating your body.

The purpose of this program is to pursue “Total Stewardship – Body, Mind, and Spirit.” But what is stewardship exactly? According to [dictionary.com](https://www.dictionary.com), there are two meanings for stewardship:

1. The position and duties of a steward, a person who acts as the surrogate of another or others, especially by managing property, financial affairs, an estate, etc.
2. The responsible overseeing and protection of something considered worth caring for and preserving:

We can apply both of these definitions to the stewardship of our body, mind, or spirit.

1. To be a good steward of my body (or mind or spirit) I must acknowledge that it is a gift from God, ultimately belonging to Him, and my loving, grateful response is to be a responsible manager of my body (or mind or spirit).
2. My body (or mind or spirit) is valuable to God, worthy of being cared for and preserving.

Spend a few minutes reading through those two points, meditating on how they apply to your life. Then read Matthew 25:14-30, which is where Jesus tells the parable of the talents. We are all entrusted with gifts to care for. It may seem like other people have five talents, while you got just one. But God expects you to do the best with what you have. If we are not responsible caretakers of what we have, we will lose even that. This is clearly seen in people who neglect to take care of their bodies, and so ultimately lose their health. But keep in mind that those who choose responsibility over neglect reap great benefits!

Remember Jesus' words in Matthew 25:23. "Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share in your master's happiness!"