



## Week 1: Stewardship in Principle & Practice

### Introduction:

In our first teaching from the series, "Entrusted: Living for God's Glory," we explore the biblical principle of stewardship through Matthew 25:14-30. Here Jesus teaches the general principle of stewardship. The Biblical concept of stewardship means that everything we have—our time, talents, finances, and opportunities—ultimately belongs to God. As His stewards, we are called to faithfully manage what He entrusts to us, using it not for selfish gain but for His glory and the good of others. This teaching challenges us to move from passive ownership to active faithfulness, recognizing that true stewardship requires investment, obedience, and trust in God. In the end, being a steward of God's resources is a responsibility God has given us, but it is also a pathway to deeper joy and eternal reward in His kingdom.

### Purpose of This Homework:

This 5-day devotional study will help you assess your current mindset about stewardship, challenge unbiblical beliefs or attitudes, and develop intentional habits that align with God's design for faithful stewardship.

Each day will include:

- **A Scripture Reading** (to shape your understanding of stewardship)
- **Assessment Questions** (to evaluate your attitudes, thoughts, and beliefs)
- **A Practical Action Step** (to help you embody faithful stewardship)

# Day 1: Recognizing God's Ownership

**Psalm 24:1** *“The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein...”*

**Read:** Deuteronomy 8

## Assess Your Beliefs & Attitudes:

In Deuteronomy 8 Moses reminds the Israelites that everything they have has been gifted to them by the Lord. The place in which they will live, the clothing they possess, the food they eat, the wealth they accumulate are all directly given from God.

As you read these portions of scripture, do you find yourself agreeing with the truth or resisting it? Why?

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How do you typically think about your possessions, money, time, and abilities—do you see them as *yours* or as *God’s*?

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How does seeing God as the source of all you have shape your view of His goodness?

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## Assess Your Actions:

How often do you pray and seek God’s direction before making major financial, career, or time-related decisions?

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How have you recently used what God has entrusted to you, whether time, skills, relationships, or resources, to bring Him glory?

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## Action Step:

Write down three specific things (possessions, abilities, or opportunities) that you currently manage but that ultimately belong to God. Beside each one, write how you typically use it. Then, pray and surrender them to Him, asking how He wants you to use them for His glory this week.

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## Prayer:

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# Day 2: Using God's Resources for His Glory

**1 Corinthians 10:31** "So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."

**Colossians 3:23-24** "Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ."

## Assess Your Beliefs & Attitudes:

After reading these scriptures, do you see your daily work (whether paid or unpaid) as something that can glorify God? Why or why not?

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How do you determine what is a "worthy" use of your time, talents, or money? Do you measure it by personal benefit, societal standards, or God's glory?

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Do you view generosity of time, talent, and treasure as an obligation, a burden, or a joy?

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## Assess Your Actions:

In what areas of life (finances, relationships, work, etc.) do you most naturally prioritize God's glory?

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In what areas do you struggle to surrender your resources for God's purposes?

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## **Action Step:**

### **The 36-Hour Stewardship Awareness Challenge:**

An exercise to heighten awareness of how you are using your daily time, energy, and resources. Dedicate the next 36 hours to focused conversation with God about how best to use everyday opportunities for God's glory. The morning of Day 2 will provide the start of this exercise and it will end on Day 3 in the evening.

#### **Instructions:**

For the next 36 hours, pause before making any decision involving time, money, or talents. Try and give careful attention to every opportunity God has placed in your path to be used for His glory.

Before each action, ask yourself one question:

*"Is this an act of stewardship for God's glory, or am I primarily doing this for myself without any awareness of God?"*

## Day 3: Faithful Stewardship Requires Action

**James 2:14-17** *“What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? <sup>15</sup> If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and filled,” without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.”*

### Assess Your Beliefs & Attitudes:

As you begin day 3, continue your practice of asking, “Is this an act of stewardship for God’s glory, or am I primarily doing this for myself without any awareness of God?” throughout the day. Take notice of the internal dialogue or underlying motivations of your heart.

- Do you tend to be passive or active in using your talents, time, and financial resources for God’s purposes? Why?
- Are there any gifts, skills, or opportunities you have that you hesitate to use for God? If so, what holds you back—fear, doubt, busyness, or something else?
- How do you define *faithfulness* when it comes to stewardship? Do you equate it with *not wasting* resources, or with actively investing them for the Kingdom?

### Assess Your Actions:

It is one thing to believe that we are called by God to be stewards of the gifts that he has given us, but according to James, our attitude and actions must agree. What action is required for today in order for your actions to align with your stated Biblical values about stewardship?

- If someone were to evaluate your life, what evidence would they find that you are actively investing your resources for God?
- Do you see areas where you’ve buried or neglected a talent, financial resource, or time opportunity?

### Action Step: Prayer of Reflection:

At the end of the day, take 10-15 minutes to pray. Walk through these 5 steps in conversation with God. This prayer practice is meant to walk you through the steps of talking reflectively with God and creating space to listen to the presence of the Holy Spirit in your life.

#### 1. Remind Yourself to Be Aware of God’s Presence

Example: *“Father, You are the giver of all good things. Everything I have comes from You. As I reflect on this day, open my eyes to see Your presence and my role as a steward of Your gifts. Holy Spirit, guide me in honesty and clarity. Amen.”*

Pause for a moment of silence. Rest in God's presence and invite Him to lead your thoughtful reflection.

## **2. Review the Day with Gratitude**

Reflect on your day with thanksgiving. Stewardship starts with recognizing that all we have is from God as a gift.

- *What blessings have I received today (time, opportunities, provision, relationships, or insights)?*
- *How has God provided for my needs—spiritually, physically, or emotionally?*
- *In what ways did I experience joy, fulfillment, or gratitude in how I used my resources today?*

### **Prayer of Thanksgiving:**

*"Lord, thank You for entrusting me with so much. Every breath, every moment, every opportunity comes from You. I praise You for Your faithfulness and generosity."*

## **3. Examine Your Stewardship**

Now, reflect on how you managed what God entrusted to you today. Be honest before the Lord.

- *Where have I misused or neglected what God has given me?*
- *Have I prioritized my own desires over God's purposes today?*
- *Did fear, laziness, or distraction keep me from being a faithful steward?*

### **Pause and listen.**

Allow the Holy Spirit to highlight areas where you have been faithful and where you may need to grow. Recognize that the Holy Spirit also reminds us of scripture so that we have a "plumb line" for truth and assessment. If scripture is brought to mind, make a conscious decision to embrace it as the true measurement. Conviction is a loving and gracious gift from God, receive it as such.

## **4. Seek Forgiveness and Renewal**

If the Holy Spirit convicts you of wasted time, missed opportunities, selfishness, or negligence, bring these before God.

### **Prayer of Repentance:**

*Example: "Lord, I confess where I have not stewarded well what You've entrusted to me. Forgive me for any selfishness, waste, or neglect. Help me grow in faithfulness. I surrender every resource, my time, finances, talents, and relationships to You again. Transform my heart to reflect Yours."*

Receive God's grace and forgiveness through Christ. Remember, He is not condemning you; He is shaping you into a faithful steward.

## 5. Look Ahead with God's Guidance

Ask God for wisdom to steward tomorrow well.

- How can I be more intentional in managing my time, talents, and resources?
- What small step can I take to be more generous, diligent, or purposeful in my stewardship?
- Where is God calling me to trust Him more fully with what I have?

### **Prayer for the Future:**

*Example: "Father, tomorrow is another opportunity to serve You. Give me wisdom to use my time well, generosity to share what I have, and faithfulness to honor You with my resources. Help me to live with open hands, ready to serve and invest in what truly matters. Let my life bring You glory. Amen."*



## Day 4: Accountability Before God

**Romans 14:12** “Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; for it is written, “As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.” So then each of us will give an account of himself to God”

**2 Corinthians 5:10** “ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.”

### Assess Your Beliefs & Attitudes:

Do you live with a daily awareness that one day you will give an account to God for how you used your resources? Why or why not?

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When you think about God evaluating your stewardship, does it bring peace or anxiety? What does that reveal about your perspective on God and stewardship?

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How do you define *success* in life? Is your definition aligned with God’s standards for stewardship?

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### Assess Your Actions:

If Jesus sat with you today and reviewed how you’ve used your time, money, and abilities in the past year, what areas would He affirm? What areas would He challenge you to change?

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## Action Step:

Small, consistent changes, often called micro-disciplines, have the power to transform our lives over time. Just as a single drop of water, repeated over years, can carve through stone, small, daily acts of faithfulness shape our character and habits in profound ways. Whether it's setting aside five minutes for prayer, choosing generosity in small moments, or intentionally managing our time for God's glory, these seemingly minor choices create momentum for lasting spiritual growth. We often experience discouragement when we try to make huge swings in life but cannot sustain them. Faithful stewardship is not about grand gestures but about daily obedience, and over time, these micro-disciplines lead to a life fully surrendered to Christ, bearing fruit for His kingdom. "Whoever is faithful in very little is also faithful in much" (Luke 16:10).

What is one practical micro-change you can make to nurture growth in some aspect of stewardship in your life?

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What action can you take today to begin that change?

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## Day 5: The Reward of Faithful Stewardship

**1 Cor 4:2** “Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful...”

**1 Cor 4:5** “Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation from God.”

### Assess Your Beliefs & Attitudes:

When you think about the rewards for faithfulness, do you focus more on earthly blessings or eternal joy?

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How do you respond to the idea that faithful stewardship is about *relationship* with God, not just responsibility?

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Does the promise of sharing in God’s joy motivate you to be more faithful in stewardship? Why or why not?

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### Assess Your Actions:

How are you currently storing up *eternal treasure* through generosity, service, and faithful management of resources?

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What do you anticipate Jesus affirming as “faithful” when you stand before Him?

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What would you like to be affirmed and rewarded but don’t expect it?

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## **Week 2: Stewardship of Time for the Glory of God**

### **Introduction:**

Time is one of the most precious gifts God has entrusted to us, yet it is also one of the most easily squandered. In a world marked by busyness, distraction, and constant demands, it is all too easy to drift through our days without intentionality or purpose. As followers of Jesus, however, we are called to a higher standard, one that recognizes time as a sacred resource to be managed for God's glory and His kingdom purposes.

Time is the great equalizer. Each person has been given the same amount of time in a day. We all only have 24 hours. This resource aims to equip Christians to think biblically about the stewardship of time. It is designed to help us move beyond mere time management techniques to embrace a mindset rooted in Scripture. A mindset that sees every moment as an opportunity to honor God. We will explore practical ways to align our daily lives with God's purposes, examine biblical principles that shape our understanding of time, and consider how to cultivate habits that reflect wise stewardship.

Often the concept of time stewardship is framed as a matter of productivity or efficiency. However, for Christians, it is fundamentally a matter of discipleship. Scripture teaches that our lives are but a vapor (James 4:14), and we are called to "make the best use of the time" (Ephesians 5:16). As we seek first the kingdom of God (Matthew 6:33) and walk wisely in the world (Colossians 4:5), we demonstrate our submission to Christ's lordship in response to the Gospel and our commitment to living purposefully for His glory.

# Day 1: Acknowledge That Time Belongs to God

## Scripture for Meditation:

**Psalm 90:12** *"So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom."*

**James 4:14-15** *"Yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. Instead you ought to say, 'If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that.'"*

**Colossians 1:16-17** *"For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible... all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together."*

## Scripture Reflection:

If we're honest, many of us tend to view time as something that belongs to *us*. We schedule our days, set our goals, and make plans, often without even pausing to acknowledge God's sovereignty over it all. Yet the Bible teaches us that time is not our own, it is a gift from God, created by Him and given to us to steward well.

Psalm 90:12 reminds us that numbering our days doesn't just mean counting them and keeping track. Rather, it requires us to recognize the value of our days and live with purpose. To live out this scripture, we must cultivate a heart of wisdom that understands life's brevity and God's eternal significance. Likewise, James warns us that our lives are fragile and fleeting, like a mist that appears briefly and then vanishes. If we truly believe that our days are in God's hands, we will approach each moment with humble dependence on His will.

Reading Colossians 1:16-17 pushes us even deeper. Not only are our lives short, but they also exist *for Him*. Every moment, every breath, and every decision should ultimately be about glorifying Christ and fulfilling His purposes. The idea that time belongs to God challenges our self-centered thinking and invites us to see time as sacred. Time, given as a gift by God, is meant to be used for God's glory rather than our own ambitions.

## Heart Check: How Do You View Time?

Take a moment to reflect honestly and prayerfully:

1. When you plan your day, how much do you consciously invite God into your schedule?
2. Are your priorities shaped more by your desires or by God's will?

3. How often do you thank God for the gift of time?
4. Do you feel entitled to your time, or do you see it as a stewardship responsibility?

It's easy to fall into patterns of busyness God is calling us through his Word to surrender our concept of time to Him. Our desire to bring glory to God should permeate our time and drive the way that we decide how to steward it.

## Exercise: Submitting Time to God

1. **Prayer of Surrender:** Spend a few moments in prayer, confessing any areas where you've treated time as your own possession. Acknowledge God's rightful ownership and ask Him to guide how you use your time.
2. **Time Audit:**

Below, are hashmarks that represent the number of hours in a day that you have been given by God. Divide the appropriate number of hours between the necessary tasks that you must accomplish each day. Assign the number of hashmark/hours to each responsibility and cross them off the overall day. You may only use 24 hashmarks total to fill assigned tasks.

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- \_\_\_\_\_ Sleep
- \_\_\_\_\_ Food (prep, eating & cleanup)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hygiene (shower, brushing teeth, using bathroom, etc)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Work
- \_\_\_\_\_ Responsibilities (bills, household maintenance,
- \_\_\_\_\_ Relational Connection (family & faith)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Spiritual Connection (personal time with God)

- How many extra hours do you have left over in the day after these necessary tasks are completed? \_\_\_\_\_

- What do you most often use those extra hours for?

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- How can you use even the necessary tasks in your day (sleep, food, work, etc...) as an opportunity to intentionally bring God glory?

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- 3. Declaration of Dependence:** Write a short, simple prayer committing your time to the Lord. Keep it somewhere visible (like on your desk, mirror, or phone wallpaper) to remind you that every moment in time is a gift from Him.

### **Respond in Prayer::**

**Example:** *“Father, I confess that I often treat my time as if it belongs to me. Teach me to see each moment as a gift from You, given for Your glory and purposes. Help me to number my days wisely and align my schedule with Your way of living. Transform my attitude toward time so that I might steward it faithfully. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”*

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### **\*Challenge for Today**

For the next 24 hrs, intentionally pause before each major task or decision and simply pray, *“Lord, how can I honor You with this time?”* Let that simple prayer become a habit that shapes your day and reorients your heart to God’s perspective.

Time belongs to God, and our calling is to steward it wisely for His glory. Tomorrow, we’ll explore how to prioritize our time by seeking first His kingdom. Let’s walk in humility and wisdom, knowing that our time is not our own.



# Day 2: Assessing Our Priorities

## Scripture for Meditation

**Matthew 6:33** - *"But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."*

**Ephesians 5:15-17** - *"Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is."*

**Psalm 37:4-5** - *"Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will act."*

## Scripture Reflection:

Yesterday, we acknowledged that all time belongs to God and is entrusted to us for His glory. Today, we confront a challenging reality: **time is limited**. We cannot do everything, and that means we must prioritize wisely. If we don't, urgent and trivial matters will consume us, while eternal and essential things are left undone.

Jesus sets the tone for prioritization in Matthew 6:33, commanding us to *"seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness."* Notice that He doesn't say to seek the kingdom *eventually* or *when it's convenient*. The kingdom of God comes first. Our lives are often filled with demands, but pursuing God's kingdom should never be an afterthought. Jesus taught that our identity in his kingdom is the grid through which we all live as a first order issue.

Paul's words in Ephesians 5 remind us to *"make the best use of the time."* Why? Because the days are evil. Time left unmanaged will naturally bend toward the trivial, wasteful, or even sinful. Prioritizing God's will over our preferences is not just wise—it's essential for faithful living. Furthermore, Psalm 37 reminds us that prioritizing God at the center of life is not just a duty but a *delight*. When we commit our ways to Him, we find that our desires become aligned with His purposes. In doing so, our hearts experience peace and fulfillment, even as we choose what matters most.

## Heart Check: How Do You Prioritize Your Time?

Reflect honestly and prayerfully on these questions:

1. What do you tend to put first in your day—God's presence or your to-do list?
2. Are there good things in your schedule that have displaced *essential* things?
3. When making decisions, do you consider biblical priorities, or are you driven by convenience and preference?

4. How often do you pause to evaluate whether your activities align with God's will?

Biblical prioritization means saying “no” to some things—even good things—so that we can say “yes” to the best things. Let's learn to put God's kingdom first, trusting that He will provide for every other need.

## **Exercise: Reordering Your Priorities**

1. **Prayer of Realignment:** Start by asking God to reveal where your priorities have been misaligned. Surrender your plans and ask for wisdom to seek His kingdom first.
2. **Priority Mapping:**

On the next two pages act as a worksheet for you to map how you prioritize the tasks that can be a part of your daily life in an average week. Not all of the tasks listed may apply to you. Pick activities that reflect your typical week or fill in others that may not be on the list. Group them into three categories:

**Essential:** God-centered priorities that shape your walk with Christ.

**Important:** Necessary but secondary, like work or family routines.

**Optional:** Activities that could be minimized or eliminated.

\*Note: When your list is completed, the grouped categories should reflect the reality of the way in which you **actually** live, not the way you **aspire** to live. Try to make this list as accurate to how you actually live as possible.

# Possible Daily Activities

- Family meals together
- Studying for certifications
- Personal journaling or reflection
- Volunteering at church (teaching, hospitality, etc.)
- Gaming (console, PC, mobile)
- Grocery shopping
- Full-time job (on-site or remote)
- Taking online courses or classes
- Reading (books, articles, news)
- Small group or Bible study group
- Talking and connecting with extended family
- Cleaning and house chores
- Rest and relaxation
- Mentoring or discipling someone
- Social media browsing
- Reading spiritual books or devotionals
- Personal prayer and devotion time
- Budgeting and financial management
- Exercise (gym, running, walking)
- Commuting to and from work
- Visiting or calling relatives
- Watching TV or streaming shows
- Helping children with homework
- Date nights with spouse
- Professional development (training or courses)
- Networking or socializing with colleagues
- Home maintenance or repairs
- Hosting friends or family for meals
- Mission involvement (planning, support, or participation)
- Answering work emails after hours
- Managing a side business or freelance work
- Running errands (bank, post office, etc.)
- Scripture memorization
- Prayer ministry or intercessory prayer
- Church worship service (Sunday or midweek)
- Quality time with spouse or children
- Family devotions or family prayer
- Listening to worship music or sermons
- Taking online courses or classes
- Reading (books, articles, news)
- Video chatting with friends
- Sports or recreation
- Part-time work
- Preparing lessons or materials for ministry
- Community service (food bank, outreach events)
- Self-care routines (hobbies, reading, etc.)
- Engaging in hobbies (crafting, DIY, etc.)
- Learning a new hobby or skill
- Yard work or gardening
- Doctor or therapy appointments
- Listening to podcasts or audiobooks
- Bible reading and study



## Questions for Reflection:

- What do my daily choices reveal about what I truly value and prioritize, and how does that align with God's command to seek first His kingdom and righteousness?

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- Are there areas in my life where comfort, success, entertainment, or personal ambition consistently take precedence over pursuing Christlikeness and serving others?

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- If someone observed my life without knowing me, what would they conclude about my ultimate purpose and priorities, and would those conclusions reflect a life surrendered to Christ?

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## Respond in Prayer:

**Example:** *"Lord, I confess that I often let distractions and urgent tasks take over my time. Teach me to prioritize Your kingdom and seek Your will above all else. Help me to make wise choices that reflect a heart aligned with You. Transform my schedule to honor You first. In Jesus' name, Amen."*

## Challenge for the Day

Before committing to any new task or invitation today, ask yourself, *"Is this aligned with God's priorities for me?"* Then, as an act of worship, practice saying *"no"* to what hinders your devotion to God or distracts you from His purposes. This is a chance for you to lay something sacrificially on the altar of your heart to God. You can do this with a simple prayer of offering like this:

*"Father, I choose to lay aside \_\_\_\_\_ so that I can give the best of myself to something better. Receive this act as an offering."*

# Day 3: Making the Best Use of Your Time

## Scripture for Meditation:

**Ephesians 5:15-16** - *"Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil."*

**Colossians 4:5** - *"Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time."*

**1 Corinthians 10:31** - *"So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."*

## Scripture Reflection:

When we understand that our lives have been purchased at the highest cost (1 Corinthians 6:20), it stirs a desire to honor God with every moment He has given us. The good news is that making the best use of our time is not about legalistic rule-keeping or squeezing productivity out of every second. It's about walking wisely in a way that reflects God's grace and His purposes. It doesn't mean adding more to our schedules. In fact, it likely means doing less with more focused intention.

Ephesians 5:15-16 challenges us to be intentional, not careless, with how we use our time. The days we live in are full of distractions and temptations that can easily consume our time with trivial pursuits or selfish ambitions. But because Jesus has freed us from living for ourselves (2 Corinthians 5:15), we are now free to live each moment for His glory. Colossians 4:5 echoes this by calling us to walk wisely among others, using our time to build relationships, share Christ, and be a light in dark places. God has placed us in our communities, families, and workplaces on purpose. Our time there is not random or meaningless; it's a God-given opportunity. Finally, 1 Corinthians 10:31 reminds us that every activity, even the most mundane, is an opportunity to glorify God. Whether we are at work, at home, serving at church, or simply resting, we can choose to use our time in ways that reflect our love for Christ. There can be a "God-wardness" in our hearts that makes the time we spend an act of worship.

The motivation here is not obligation or law but transformation of our hearts by grace. Because we have been saved and transformed by Christ, we *want* to make the best use of our time. We *get* to live simply, wisely, and purposefully, not because we have to but because we want to honor the One who gave His all for us. This means adjusting our priorities to match God's priorities, out of affection, and in response to His love for us.

## **Adjusting our priorities:**

Look at the scriptures and logic below. Consider how it might impact the way in which we engage with the responsibilities we must carry in life. (Note the order)

### **1. Relationship with God (First Priority)**

Our relationship with God is the foundation of everything else. Jesus clearly stated in Matthew 22:37-38 *"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment."*

If we neglect our personal relationship with God, any love we give to others or ministry we perform becomes hollow and powerless. These must flow out of our love for and intimacy with God, not the other way around.

### **2. Marriage and Family (Second Priority)**

Scripture clearly teaches that our responsibilities to our families come before outward ministry to others.<sup>1</sup> Timothy 3:4-5 describes the qualifications for church leaders, stating: *"He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church?"* The instructions for women are similar. Titus 2:3-5 tells us *"Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good, and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled."* For singles, honoring a father and mother is one of the 10 commandments and indicates that God holds it in high priority as well.

Family is seen as the first proving ground for all other ministry. If a leader fails at home, it undermines their credibility in public ministry.

### **3. Work and Vocation (Third Priority)**

Work is also an essential part of life as ordained by God. It is a subset of our responsibilities toward the priority of bringing glory to God and caring for family. *Colossians 3:23* tells us: *"Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men."* *2 Thessalonians 3:10* also reminds believers: *"If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat."*

God's design includes diligent work as a means of providing for our families and serving society. Our work is a form of worship when done for God's glory.

### **4. Ministry and Serving Others (Fourth Priority)**

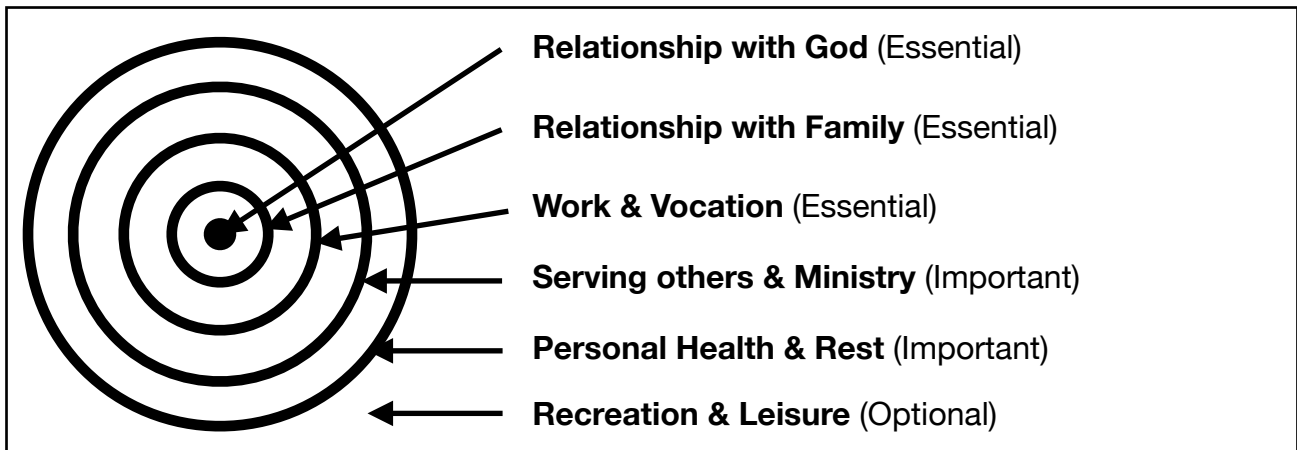
Ministry comes after our relationship with God, family, and work because it must be an overflow of the first three. Ministry should not be an isolated or compartmentalized part of our lives; it should arise naturally from living out our faith in our personal, family life, and in our vocation. *1 Peter 4:10* states: *"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace."* *Matthew 28:19-20* commands us: *"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations..."*

While ministry is absolutely vital, it should not come at the expense of neglecting our relationship with God or our family obligations. A ministry or service to God that damages family relationships or neglects vocational responsibilities is out of balance.

### 5. Personal Health and Rest (Fifth Priority)

Personal health and rest come after our relationship with God, family, work, and ministry because they serve as support rather than primary goals. Health and rest enable us to sustain a vibrant relationship with God, fulfill our family responsibilities, be productive in our work, and remain effective in ministry. However, they are not the primary focus of a disciple's life, but rather a means to sustain our ability to serve and glorify God. From the beginning, God modeled that rest comes at the end of our work. Jesus also modeled this in His earthly ministry. Mark 6:31 records Jesus' invitation to His disciples as they grew weary from the labor of serving: *"And he said to them, 'Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while.'"*

While personal health and rest are necessary and valuable, they should not come at the expense of our higher priorities. Rest is essential for sustaining long-term effectiveness in ministry, work, and relationships, but it should never take precedence over our commitment to God or our responsibility to love and care for others. Proper rest and care allow us to recharge and be better equipped to fulfill God's purposes.



### Exercise: Time Inventory for God's Glory

Today's goal is to take an honest look at how your time is being spent and assess whether it reflects God's priorities. Using the logic from the graphic above, reorganize your work from yesterday to be in agreement with the Biblical priorities above. Re-order that list to ensure that the tasks in your life are aligned with the priorities given in scripture.





## **Respond in Prayer:**

**Example:** *“Father, thank You for the gift of time and the grace to use it wisely. Forgive me when I waste it on lesser things or live without intention. Transform my heart so that I desire to use every moment for Your glory. Holy Spirit, guide my decisions and help me to walk wisely, reflecting the nature and character of Christ in all I do. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”*

## **Challenge for the Day**

At the end of today, take 5 minutes to reflect on how you spent your time. Did you make even one small change to use time for God’s glory? Celebrate that! If not, don’t be discouraged, ask God to shape your heart to desire His will more and more. Stewarding time well is not about perfection but progress. The more we surrender our schedules to God, the more our lives reflect His priorities. Tomorrow, we’ll talk about being present in the time we are in as part of faithful stewardship. Keep pressing on with grace and purpose!

# Day 4: Stewarding the Present

## Scripture for Meditation:

**Psalm 46:10** - *"Be still, and know that I am God."*

**Luke 10:41-42** - *"But the Lord answered her, 'Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her.'"*

**Matthew 6:34** - *"Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."*

## Scripture Reflection:

We live in a culture that glorifies busyness. We rush from one task to the next, often proud of how packed our schedules are. But in all our striving and doing, we often forget one essential truth: **God calls us to be present.** Psalm 46:10 speaks directly to our restless hearts: *"Be still, and know that I am God."* God is not in a hurry, and He doesn't need us to be either. Being still is not just pausing physically, it is quieting our souls and focusing on the presence of God with us and the people around us.

Jesus modeled this for us through His example. Though His mission was eternally significant, He never hurried through life. We see this in Mark 5:21-43 with the woman who touched the hem of His garment. Despite the demands for Jesus to make it to Jairus' house in time to heal his daughter, this woman's demonstration of faith was not lost to Jesus. He stops in the moment and acknowledges the woman regardless of the pressure around and her desire to stay hidden. Then when Jesus finds out that Jairus' daughter has died, he does not rush, he trusts.

This is also something Jesus encouraged in His followers. One of the most beautiful examples of this is His interaction with Mary and Martha in Luke 10. Martha was *"anxious and troubled about many things,"* busy, distracted, and overwhelmed. But Mary chose to sit at Jesus' feet, simply being present with Him. Jesus commended Mary's choice. Why? Because being present with **Him** is the *"good portion"* that will not be taken away. Martha wasn't doing something wrong by serving; the problem was that her spirit was restless and divided. Mary, on the other hand, understood that being present with Jesus was more important than completing tasks.

Matthew 6:34 gives us the freedom to leave tomorrow in God's hands. We don't have to be consumed with the next thing, the next appointment, or the next worry. Jesus tells us to focus on today—not because tomorrow doesn't matter, but because living unhurriedly today is an act of faith that God will handle tomorrow. It is a way of stewarding the present moment.

## Heart Check: Am I Present or Preoccupied?

Take a moment to reflect honestly and prayerfully:

1. Do I find myself constantly thinking about the next task, even while spending time with loved ones or in prayer?
2. When was the last time I sat still without feeling guilty or restless?
3. Do I feel a sense of accomplishment only when I'm busy, rather than when I'm simply being present with God or others?
4. Are there moments I'm missing because I'm too hurried or preoccupied to notice them?
5. Do others have to repeat themselves to me because my mind was somewhere else?

The reality is that being present and unhurried doesn't come naturally to most of us. We may feel lazy if we aren't being productive, or anxious if we aren't planning ahead. But Jesus' example and teaching calls us to slow down, be still, and truly be with Him, with others, and even with ourselves.

## Training: Practicing Presence

Today, let's put intentionality into being present and unhurried. Try these 3 exercises.

1. **Intentional Stillness Before God:** Spend 5-10 minutes sitting quietly, focusing on God's presence. Resist the urge to plan or rehearse your day. Simply rest in Him. Pray: *"Lord, teach me to be still and know You are God. Help me to quiet my soul and enjoy Your presence."*
2. **Mindful Moments:** Choose one interaction today, whether it's with a family member, friend, or co-worker, and be fully present. Put away your phone, make eye contact, and listen without thinking about your response.
3. **Unhurried Gratitude:** Take a slow walk, perhaps outside or even around your home. As you walk, thank God for simple things you notice: the sound of birds, the warmth of sunlight, or the comfort of your home. Let your heart overflow with gratitude.

## Respond in Prayer:

**Example:** *"Father, forgive me for rushing through life, even when You call me to be still and present. Teach me to value being with You above doing for You. Help me to slow down, notice Your goodness, and be fully present in each moment. Free me from the pressure to always be productive, and teach me to delight in Your presence. In Jesus' name, Amen."*

# Day 5: Stewardship of Rest

## Scripture for Meditation

**Mark 6:31** - *"And he said to them, 'Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while.' For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat."*

**Psalms 127:2** - *"It is in vain that you rise up early and go late to rest, eating the bread of anxious toil; for he gives to his beloved sleep."*

**Matthew 11:28-30** - *"Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."*

## Scripture Reflection:

After focusing on all the things we must do in life, it may feel strange to shift gears and talk about rest as part of stewardship. But rest is not a sign of laziness or weakness, it is an act of worship, an acknowledgment that God is in control, not us.

The invitation Jesus gives in Mark 6:31 is profound. After a season of intense ministry, and the loss of John the Baptist, He calls His disciples away to rest. Jesus, the Savior of the world, modeled resting as an intentional rhythm of dependence on the Father. He wanted the disciples to be in touch with their own limitations and the Father's sufficiency. He didn't just *allow* rest; He *commanded* it.

In Psalm 127:2, we are reminded that burning ourselves out with anxious toil is not God's design. Working endlessly is not a sign of faithfulness but of pride. It is as though we are acting like everything depends on us. God gives sleep to His beloved, offering rest as a *gift*, not a burden.

And in Matthew 11:28-30, Jesus offers rest to weary souls. Notice that this is not just a break from labor but a deep, soul-refreshing rest found only in Him. It is a demonstration of His care for our inner person. Resting in Jesus means releasing the burden of performing and achieving and embracing the simplicity of being loved by God.

But here's the thing: many of us resist rest. We feel guilty, lazy, or worried that things will fall apart if we slow down. Sometimes we even equate busyness with faithfulness. Yet God created us to work from a place of rest, not the other way around. In the creation story, the sabbath day rest is the culmination of work and the reset for what comes next. Embracing rest is a worshipful way of not only receiving physical renewal but declaring our trust in God.

## Heart Check: Do I Embrace Rest as Worship?

Take a moment to reflect honestly and prayerfully:

1. Do I feel guilty when I rest, as if I'm being unfaithful or lazy? Do I wake up from a nap or vacation with urgency to perform and make up for taking time to refresh?
2. Are there areas of my life where I refuse to rest because I think everything depends on me?
3. Do I see rest as a way to worship or honor God and trust in His provision?
4. When was the last time I truly *enjoyed* resting, without stress or distraction?

The truth is, resisting rest is often rooted in pride or fear. We worry that slowing down means we're not doing enough, or we feel that our worth is tied to our productivity. But God is honored when we trust Him enough to rest.

## Training: Practicing Holy Rest

Today, let's *practice* resting as an act of worship and stewardship.

### 1. Schedule Rest Intentionally:

- Set aside 30 minutes to an hour today to rest on purpose. Choose an activity that is restful and joyful; reading a book, taking a nap, playing a game, enjoying nature, or simply being still.
- Pray before you start: "*Lord, I'm giving You this time as an act of trust. Teach me to rest as You have called me to.*"

### 2. Embrace Boredom and Playfulness:

- Let yourself be a little bored without reaching for your phone or do something playful or creative: draw, cook, garden, or playfully engage with those around you. Rediscover the joy of recreation as a way of re-creating or renewing your soul.

### 3. Reflect on Your Rest:

- After resting, journal a few thoughts about how it felt to be intentionally unproductive. Did you feel peace, guilt, or a mix of both?

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## **Respond in Prayer:**

**Example:** *“Father, thank You for creating rest as a gift and not a burden. Forgive me for resisting it out of pride or fear. Help me to trust You enough to slow down, knowing that You are the one who sustains me. Teach me to delight in resting, to see it as an act of worship and not weakness. Thank You that in Christ, I don’t have to strive for worth—I am already loved and secure. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”*

## **Conclusion: God-Glorifying Stewardship of Time**

As we reflect on the truths from this week, let’s remember that the call to steward our time is not just a list of tasks to accomplish or a rigid schedule to maintain. Instead, it’s an invitation to respond to the goodness of God displayed through the gospel. The stewardship of time is one of the most tangible ways our lives demonstrate that the gospel story, the hope of redemption through Jesus Christ, is not merely peripheral but central to a life in Christ.

Because Christ has redeemed us and made us His own, our time is no longer ours to waste or control. It belongs to Him. Stewarding our time wisely is not striving for perfection or proving our worth, it’s living in grateful response to the One who gave His life to rescue us. The truth of the gospel frees us from the pressure to be productive for our own sake and instead calls us to live purposefully for His glory. When we put God first (Matthew 6:33), embrace rest as an act of trust, and prioritize our lives according to His Word, we are declaring that our hope is not in our efforts or achievements, but in Christ alone. Whether we are working diligently, resting peacefully, or serving faithfully, our lives are meant to reflect the transforming power of the gospel.

Most of all, we are now more aware how necessary it is to live in dependence upon the Holy Spirit. We will need conviction, instruction, motivation, and empowerment throughout our day in order to redeem the time God has given us.

We have worked toward developing a holistic approach to time stewardship that honors God while maintaining balance and intentionality. As you continue to apply these truths, let your motivation be rooted in the finished work of Christ. Stewarding time well is a worshipful response to the grace that has already been lavished upon you. Let each moment be an offering, reflecting a life surrendered to the One who loved us first. In all you do, let the story of redemption shape how you spend your days, so that Christ may be glorified through every moment given to you.