

LIFE STEWARDSHIP NEWSLETTER



STEWARDSHIP MINISTRIES

The One Question that Changes Everything!

I like it when someone “cuts to the chase” giving me the bottom line of what they want to say without including all the details. I am often guilty of helping people finish their sentences so they can more quickly get to the point. I assume some of you might be like that too. So, allow me to boil the quite massive subject of stewardship down to one simple, yet incredibly profound and life-changing question. The question may be simple to ask, yet it is anything but simple to answer.

Before I give you the question, let me first highlight one irrefutable truth that we need to acknowledge. This one truth is that *God owns everything that exists, including you and me.*

Just one of the many passages that confirm God’s ownership of everything is found in [Job 41:11](#) where God is forcefully questioning Job, “*Who has given to Me that I should repay him? Whatever is under the whole heaven is Mine.*” God actually owns us believers in a second way as Paul points out in [Titus 2:13-14](#), “*Christ Jesus; who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession....*” Paul is emphasizing that God is the owner and we are the owned. So, when we sit down to prepare a balance sheet of all we own, the list should be very short. In fact, the page should be blank. We own nothing, period. It is all His.

Accepting this foundational truth properly prepares us to ask the *one question that changes everything.* Unfortunately, it is not a question we can ask once, answer once and then move on. It is a question we must ask routinely, daily, sometimes even hourly. Have I adequately piqued your

interest as to what this profound and life-changing stewardship question is?

Here it is - simple to ask, but difficult to answer. “God, what do You want me to do with all that You have entrusted to me?” We all seem to be more than willing to acknowledge that God owns everything, but we still seem to continue making all the decisions regarding what we do with what we have. The ultimate objective of our stewardship (management) of God’s property is to do with it what He (the Owner) wants us (the managers) to do with it. What we want to do with our stuff is frankly irrelevant.

Does this idea seem restrictive to you – that you don’t get to make any decisions about what will be done with all that you possess? At first blush, it can feel that way. But allow me to put this “you mean I’m not in charge” issue into a broader context.

The Perfect Role Model

Jesus, the one we are all attempting to imitate had no qualms about completely yielding His will to the will of His Father while He was temporarily

dwelling on this planet He created. He repeatedly informed his listeners *Who* was in charge of His life. In John 12:49 He notes the source of all that He says, “*For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak.*” In John 8:28 He adds all His actions to this, “*...I do nothing on My own initiative.*” In other words, everything that Jesus said and everything that He did was directed by the Father. He was not saying or doing anything apart from His Father’s directions.

What about when this God-man and His Father disagreed on a plan of action – for example when Jesus had second thoughts about His pending trip to the cross? Jesus willingly yielded His own will to His Father’s. He prayed, “*My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from Me. Yet not as I will, but as You will*” (Matthew 26:39). God was in charge of every aspect of Jesus’ life.

There is an unavoidable question that inevitably emerges from all this. If Jesus willingly yielded all of His words, His actions and even His very life to the will of the Father, dare we be so arrogant or rebellious to make unilateral decisions about our lives and possessions without first consulting with the Father? In other words, are we personally emulating Jesus’ submission statement in John 5:30, “*I can do nothing on My own initiative...because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me*”?

As the game show hosts would always say, “But wait, there’s more!” Jesus not only models this for us, He also gives us very direct instruction on how we ought to be handling our Father’s property.

As Jesus taught His disciples to pray in His model prayer in the Sermon on the Mount, He told them to pray, “*Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven*” (Matthew 6:10). We have no problem with God’s will being done in heaven; the problem is down here on earth, isn’t it? The solution to this heaven on earth challenge is for us to willingly allow God’s will to rule in how we manage our personal lives and what we do with the temporary possessions we watch over down here. In so doing, each believer will allow God’s Kingdom

to come and His will to be done in his or her little part of earth as it is in heaven.

Can You Imagine?

Can you imagine what would happen to this world if God’s people were to make all their time fully available for His use? What about if they devoted all their talents and whatever was needed of their material resources to carry out God’s purposes? What would happen if they cared for their bodies like the sacred temple that it really is? What if they saw their employment and careers as an extension of God’s calling on their lives and a fulfillment of their God-given purpose? What would happen if all their energies were clearly focused on knowing and following their Owner’s agenda and being the most obedient and effective managers possible of what He has entrusted to them?

Can you imagine how your personal life would change if each morning as you rose from your bed, you were to genuinely and humbly pray, “Okay, Lord, *all* that I am and *all* that I have are at your disposal today. What are your plans for me and my stuff today? Not my will, but Thy will be done this day.”

We know those blessed words that we all long to hear from the Lord when we stand before Him, “*Well done...*” (Matthew 25:21, 23). I must confess that I have so focused on these two words that until recently I have never really pondered the two adjectives that describe the “*slave*” who will hear these words. The “*well done*” commendation goes to the “*slave*” who is “*good and faithful.*”

He doesn’t say, “Well done, efficient and productive slave.” He doesn’t say, “Well done, doer of great deeds slave.” He doesn’t say, “Well done, generous and sacrificial slave.” He uses two simple adjectives – *good and faithful*. As I first considered these words, I rather felt like the bar that Jesus had set in this statement was actually far lower than I had previously understood.

However, as I meditated on these two words further, I began to realize that He may have actually set the bar much higher than I thought. He will someday say *well done* to his *slaves* because of what they are (*good and faithful*) and not because of

what they may have done – our being is just as important as our doing. And for *slaves* who tend to be more focused on the doing than on the being, this revelation can be quite a sobering realization.

I can think of no better way for us to someday hear, “*Well done, good and faithful slave*” from our Father than for us to be continually asking Him this one question, “God, what do You want me to do with what You have entrusted to me?” And as He reveals His plans for us and for the stuff He has put under our care and management, we need to obediently carry out those plans as faithfully and as well as we can. We need to be *good and faithful slaves* regardless of how much or how little we have been entrusted with or how much or how little we ultimately accomplish for Him.

I hope you can now see why this one “simple” question, “God, what do You want me to do with what You have entrusted to me,” really does change everything. When we faithfully discern and follow

His directives, we will, in a very real and a very tangible way, allow *God’s Kingdom to come and God’s will to be done on earth as it is in heaven!*



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