

16. What does the Bible say about the man who will not provide for his own?
17. How would you answer someone who said, "By the time that I provide for my family, I cannot afford to bring a tithe and an offering"?
18. Point out several ways in which most families could bring even more to God than they do now.
19. Show by the Bible that Christians are to help the needy.
20. Show how concerned the early church was about caring for the needy.
21. How much should a Christian give to the needy?
22. How did the Macedonian Christians give?
23. Even if we can afford to bring but little, what should encourage us?
24. How much did each one in need receive?
25. Picture judgment with reference to helping the needy.
26. What is covetousness called in the New Testament?
27. Why will covetousness drive the love of God out of our hearts?
28. How will covetousness cause some to teach things that they should not?
29. Name some of the evils that are the fruit of covetousness.
30. What Old Testament character was used to illustrate that covetousness pierces some through with many sorrows? What sorrows did his covetousness bring upon him?
31. Why would God disqualify a covetous man from being an elder?
32. Should a covetous member be rebuked and disciplined?
33. Will covetousness actually condemn a man's soul? Give proof.
34. Where should our treasures be laid up? Why is this warning needed today?
35. Show how the rich fool misused money.
36. What were some of the special warnings to the rich in I Tim. 6?
37. Quote Eph. 4:28.
38. Quote Matt. 6:33.
39. Quote I Cor. 9:14.
40. Quote I Tim. 5:8.
41. Quote Heb. 7:8.
42. Quote I John 3:17.
43. Quote Jas. 1:27.
44. Quote I Tim. 6:18.
45. Quote Col. 3:5.
46. Quote I Tim. 6:10.
47. Quote Matt. 6:19-21.

Section Three

STEWARDSHIP IN OTHER MATTERS OF LIFE

The Bible reveals the fact that we have spiritual obligations both to God and to our fellowmen. Our stewardship of life has failed if we do not fulfill both obligations. We need to live in such a way that we can affirm with Paul that herein do we exercise ourselves always to have a conscience void of offence "toward God" and "toward men" (Acts 24:16). This we cannot do if we have not conscientiously fulfilled our responsibilities toward both.

I. Obligations toward God:

1. The obligation of being personally committed for life to the will of God.

(1) One may do many things that are right and refrain from many things that are wrong, and at the same time not be pleasing to God. For example, one might remake his life according to his own wisdom and morality, yet not be altogether in the spirit of Saul of Tarsus, when he submissively asked, "Lord, what wilt thou have me do?" (Acts 9:6). Saul's spirit showed a willingness to do ANYTHING that the Lord required, whereas many people who are looked upon as good and religious people are not willing to go ALL the way in their lives with the will of God.

(2) Submission and obedience to God in all things is required in the Bible:

A. We must deny ourselves, take up our crosses, and follow Christ (*LUKE 9:23*).

B. We are to receive God's message into our hearts, then obey as well as hear (*Jas. 1:21-25*).

C. If we hear, but do not obey, we are foolishly building our house upon sand, and it will not stand:

a. Proof from the sermon on the mount (*Matt. 7:26,27*).

b. If we transgress the teaching of Christ, we have not God (*II JOHN 9*).

c. Christ will come and take vengeance upon those who know not God and have not obeyed the gospel (*II Thess. 1:7-9*).

C. Only as we draw nigh to God will He draw nigh to us, and only as we submit ourselves to God and resist the devil can we have the victory (*Jas. 4:7,8*).

(3) This personal commitment to the will of God must precede every other act of devotion and service:

A. Observe the noble example of the Macedonians (*II Cor. 8:1-5*).

B. Without this commitment, one's pretended devotion and service are really pretense and hypocrisy.

(4) Whether our commitment to the will of God has been genuine or not will be tested on the day of judgment. The human will (that which can be submitted to God or which can resist God exerts itself in but three ways. All three of these will be tested in judgment:

A. Our deeds will be judged (II Cor. 5:10).

B. Our words will be judged (Matt. 12:36,37).

C. Our thoughts and motives will be judged (Rom. 2:16).

2. *The obligation of giving up all sin and iniquity.*

(1) Christians are to be pure and holy:

A. We are to think upon the things that are pure (Phil. 4:8).

B. We are to be holy like God (I Pet. 1:14-16).

C. We are to be pure like Christ (I John 3:2,3).

D. Only the pure in heart will see God (MATT. 5:8).

E. Without holiness of heart and life, NO MAN will see God (Heb. 12:14).

F. Those things that are not pure and holy, such as the present-day movies, the dance, filthy stories, worldly associations, fornication, wild courtships, necking and kissing parties, unspiritual Hollywood magazines that major on free-love and triangles, etc., should have no part in a Christian's life.

(2) God requires that His people turn away from sin:

A. We are to be not conformed to this world (Rom. 12:2).

B. Every Christian is to depart from iniquity (II Tim. 2:19).

C. Christians are to cleanse themselves from ALL sin, both of the flesh and of the spirit (II Cor. 7:1). Many people need to give up their tobacco and many other habits, and many, many need to cleanse their hearts of heart-sins that are so numerous and besetting.

D. As new creatures in Christ, old things are to have passed away that all things might become new (II Cor. 5:17).

E. Christians are to have no part in sin, but are to reprove it (*EPH. 5:11*).

F. The grace of God teaches us that we should deny ungodliness and worldly lusts and should live godly (*TIT. 2:11-14*).

(3) Christians are not even to love sin (*Rom. 12:9; I John 2:15,16; Jude 23*).

3. *The obligation of worshiping God.*

(1) We are to love God with our entire being (*Mark 12:29,30*).

(2) We are to revere God and have a holy fear toward Him (*Eccl. 12:13; HEB. 12:28*).

(3) The fact of worship in the heart is the basis of:

A. Obedience, which is love perfected (*I John 2:5*).

B. Bible study (seeking to know more of God and His will that we might grow spiritually) (*I Pet. 2:2*).

C. Prayer (depending upon God and communing with Him).

D. All the many other acts and expressions of worship.

(4) Acceptable worship must be done in spirit and in truth (*JOHN 4:24*):

A. Worshipping according to the commandments of men is vain worship (*Matt. 15:9*).

B. Worship that is not real and heartfelt is not worship at all, but hypocrisy (*Matt. 15:7,8*).

4. *The obligation of Christian service.*

(1) Every Christian is to be a full-time servant of Christ:

A. Daily cross-bearing (*Luke 9:23*).

B. To abound in the work of the Lord always (*I COR. 15:58*).

C. So many people have the idea that Sunday belongs to the Lord and that they can use the other six days just in any way that they want to. But, as we have seen, all of life is a stewardship.

(2) Financial service has already been considered in former studies.

(3) Since much of our service to God is directed toward our fellowmen, the rest of Christian service will be considered in the following section.

II. Obligations toward others:

1. To the unsaved:

(1) Christ's desire for the unsaved is that they might be saved (I Tim. 1:15; Luke 19:10; Tit. 2:14; Matt. 11:28). If Christ is living within us, and if we have His spirit, we too shall desire to see men saved from sin. Our labor for their salvation will be just in proportion to our desire for their salvation.

(2) Christ's commission to His followers concerning the unsaved (Matt. 29:19,20; Mark 16:15,16):

A. He told them to do four things:

a. Go.

b. Teach, or make disciples.

c. Baptize into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

d. Teach those who are baptized to observe all things that He commands.

B. He told them where to go—everywhere in all nations.

C. He told them to whom to preach—every creature.

D. He told them what to preach and teach—the gospel and all things that He had commanded them.

(3) Christ ordained that some men devote their entire time to teaching and preaching (Eph. 4:11; Acts 6:1-4—these men gave themselves to prayer and to the ministry of the Word).

A. There is a great need for true evangelists today:

a. In the United States:

(a) In established congregations that need to

be strengthened and purified, and in great unchurched areas where the true gospel has not gone.

(b) In cities, in small towns, and in rural areas.

b. In the great untouched areas in the rest of the world. Let us remember that most of the countries of the world do not have true churches of Christ, that preach the gospel plan of salvation and spread the Lord's table weekly.

c. Only as we realize our stewardship of service and submit ourselves completely unto God, willing to go where He wants us to go, willing to say what He wants us to say, and willing to be what He wants us to be, will we go forth in the name of the Lord, proclaiming His Word as we should.

B. Every Christian man blest with ability to teach should devote his life to preaching the gospel:

a. Nothing needs to be done as pressingly as this. What needs to be done more urgently than preaching the gospel? Absolutely nothing! The greatest need of this hour is for a great front of true evangelists who will labor day and night for the advancement of the cause of Christ.

b. This being the primary mission of the church, Christian men should desire to be used in this work to the greatest extent of their abilities . . . and those who are now filling the shoes of evangelists should put their very best into that work, it being the most responsible and influential work that there is.

C. The early church taught both publicly and privately (Acts 5:42):

a. Evangelists and elders were responsible for public teaching.

b. But, every Christian, as well as evangelists and elders, is to do private teaching (personal work):

(a) Evidence from Acts 8:1-4. The members of the Jerusalem church went everywhere proclaiming the Word. Notice that the apostles remained at Jerusalem, so those who went were the members of the dispersed church.

(b) Evidence from Rev. 22:17. The bride that is to say "come", of course, is the church.

(c) Evidence from Eph. 6:17. Every Christian is to be an armoured soldier, using the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

2. To our fellow-Christians:

(1) We are to maintain the right attitude toward them:

A. We are to have true brotherly love for them:

a. We are to love them as Christ has loved us (JOHN 13:34).

b. Brotherly love is enjoined upon many Christians many times (Rom. 13:8; Heb. 13:1; I Pet. 1:22).

c. So great is Christians' love to one another to be that the world will recognize us as His disciples because of our love (JOHN 13:35).

d. Anyone who does not love his brother is condemned of God (I John 2:9; I John 3:14,15; I John 4:20, 21).

e. There are so many who claim to be Christians who do not have the spirit of love toward others in the congregation. No spirit that we could have could be farther from the Spirit of God than when we fail to love our brethren in Christ (or our enemies also). May God hasten the day when those who violate this divine requirement will be shorn of their influence in the congregations, for they are not of God.

B. We are to have a forbearing and a forgiving spirit toward them:

a. There may be things which arise that may be against us and our wishes, but forbearance and forgiveness are only possible when we have been harmed.

b. We are required to have this spirit (Col. 3:13; Eph. 4:32).

c. If we do not have this spirit, we are told by the Bible that God will not forgive us of our sins (MARK 11:25,26; Matt. 18:21-35).

d. Surely, there are many people who are going to miss heaven because they hold malice, bitterness, and

grudges in their hearts toward others. But, the Bible will bar them out of heaven as surely as it is true.

(2) We should help them in their spiritual lives:

As Peter, we are to strengthen our brethren (Luke 22:32; John 21:15). We can do this in the following ways:

A. By provoking them to love and good works (Heb. 10:24).

B. By admonishing them in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs (Col. 3:16).

C. By exhorting them lest they be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin (HEB. 10:25).

D. By removing those things from our lives that might cause them to stumble (ROM. 14:21; I Cor. 8:10-13).

E. By restoring them when they have fallen into sin (GAL. 6:1,2).

F. By praying for them, especially in times of need (Jas. 5:16; Acts 12:5).

G. We have not fulfilled our stewardship before God if we do not accept the role of being our brothers' keeper. With a true love for them, we must—yea, we will—stimulate them to greater love and service; we will admonish them; we will exhort them lest they fall; we will remove hindrances from our lives; we will restore them when they have fallen; and we will pray for them constantly. May God help us to be the brothers and sisters that we ought to be!

CONCLUDING DECISIONS CONCERNING CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP

Having studied this course, surely many thought-provoking things have come to your mind. What are you going to do about these facts? We urge you to make the decisions that you should make, such as the following:

1. *I accept the fact that I am steward and not owner, and that I will live conscious of this fact.*

2. *I commit myself, my life, my all, to the will of God knowing that someday I must render a personal account unto Him.*

3. *I will let Christ live within me, utilizing every talent every possession, every moment, every opportunity, and every blessing to glorify God, to bless the lives of others*

and to bring peace, happiness, and salvation to my own life and soul.

4. To bring my tithes and offerings faithfully for the work of the gospel, to support honorably my dependents, and to give to the needy according to my ability.

5. To live the life of purity, worship, and service to my heavenly Father.

6. To labor earnestly to win sinners to Christ and to be the kind of a Christian brother and helper that Christ would have me be to other Christians.

—QUESTIONS—

1. What does it mean to be personally committed to the will of God?
2. Prove by the Bible that submission to God is required.
3. Why must this commitment to the will of God precede everything else?
4. What all will be judged in the last day?
5. Prove by the Bible that Christians are to be pure and holy.
6. What are some of the things that a Christian cannot indulge in?
7. Prove by the Bible that Christians are not only to refrain from sinning, but that they are actually to have no affection for sin.
8. Prove by the Bible that we are to worship God.
9. List some of the expressions of worship.
10. How do you know that Christians are full-time servants of Christ?
11. What is our chief obligation to the unsaved?
12. Who should devote his life to the preaching of the gospel? Prove.
13. What four things did Christ commission us to do in the great commission?
14. Prove from the Bible that every Christian is to teach others.
15. Write a paragraph setting forth the Bible teaching on brotherly love.
16. How do you know that one who does not forgive others will not go to heaven?
17. What are some of the ways in which we are commanded to help other Christians in a spiritual way?
18. Write a paragraph, summarizing the decision that all people should make concerning the Christian stewardship of life.
19. Quote Luke 9:23.
20. Quote II John 9.
21. Quote Matt. 5:8.
22. Quote Eph. 5:11.
23. Quote Tit. 2:11-14.
24. Quote Heb. 12:28.
25. Quote John 4:24.
26. Quote I Cor. 15:58.
27. Quote John 13:34,35.
28. Quote Mark 11:25,26.
29. Quote Heb. 5:13.
30. Quote Rom. 14:21.
31. Quote Gal. 6:1,2.