

“Resource Management” & “Christian Stewardship”

As defined by the book, resource management is the method of using any and all resources such as money, time, and even values to achieve a goal (Goldsmith, 2000). For the Christian, there is another name for this method, in which the resources are seen as God-given, it's called Christian stewardship. “Christian stewardship is the free and joyous activity of the child of God and God’s family, the church, in managing all of life and life’s resources for God’s purpose” (“Biblical Stewardship...”, 2010). Resource management and Christian stewardship are both very similar, but one difference is that resource management is a tool God has given us to use and Christian stewardship is what God wants us to strive for. “Stewardship demands a way of life that encourages virtue and bears the fruit of solidarity among peoples” (Gray, 2001). In the beginning God created Adam and Eve and put them in charge of all the earth and everything in it. God wanted them to manage the earth while honoring him. “It was expected that Adam and Eve would subdue the earth by using its resources for the advancement of humanity. As they filled the earth, they would need its resources to provide for their posterity” (Gray, 2001). Christians today should want to utilize resource management to become better Christian stewards.

Resource management and Christian stewardship are very similar, especially as people use one to strive for the other. In Christian stewardship, God calls us to manage “His” resources that He has given to us. As Christians, we need to understand that all of our possessions and every resource available to us is not ours, but rather Gods. First Timothy

6:7 it says, "For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it" (as cited in "God's Minimum...", 2010). Everything belongs to God, and He has chosen his people to be the stewards or managers of his property. By using resource management, Christian stewards are able to take care of and use the resources God has given them in the best ways. God enjoys it when his people use his resources wisely and in the ways he intended. For instance, in Matthew 25:23 Jesus says, "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 your master's happiness!" (Hoerber, Hummel, Roehrs, & Wenthe, 1984). Resource management enables Christians to be better equipped to use God's resources and when we do, God is pleased.

When comparing resource management and Christian stewardship, they both require a person to think ahead in order to avoid problems. Resource management is all about planning ahead and allocating resources in order to reach goals. In the same way, Christian Stewardship requires a person to think ahead. Luke 14:28 provides a good question: "Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it?" (Hoerber, Hummel, Roehrs, & Wenthe, 1984). Just as a person plans ahead with resource management to save up for a large purchase, Christian stewards plan ahead to make sure they are always able to give an intended percentage of their income back to the Lord.

God also wants Christian stewards to keep a good record of the resources, which he has entrusted to them. Proverbs 24: 3-4 says, "By wisdom a house is built, and through understanding it is established; through knowledge its rooms are filled with rare and beautiful treasures" (Hoerber, Hummel, Roehrs, & Wenthe, 1984). God wants us to have the

wisdom, understanding, and knowledge to take care of his earth. In order to do this, Christians need to record how they are using the resources. For instance, a church should take note and record where offerings are being disbursed. In the same way people should take a look at how they are spending their money and see where they can cut back in order to meet their given budget. Christian stewardship and resource management require people to keep a tally of resources in order to better facilitate and reallocate them.

Genesis 1:26-28 says, “be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground” (Hoerber, Hummel, Roehrs, & Wenthe, 1984). God tells us to, “be fruitful and increase in number”. God wants us to bring children into this world and, in doing so, he expects us to teach them how to be Christian stewards. Children make up the next generation, and it is important also understand not only how to be Christian stewards but how to be good resource managers. As mentioned previously, Christians can utilize resource management to become better, more efficient Christian stewards. Children are part of the family and in different ways help manage the home and the family’s resources. “Each person born contributes to the well-being of society. Through prayer, work, and discovery, each person allows others to grow in knowledge and holiness. Thus, no one person rules the earth. Collectively, we are stewards of the earth (Gray, 2001). “Each person contributes”, “each person allows others to grow”, and “no one person rules the earth”, expresses the importance that everyone, including children, has in managing resources and stewardship. Parents especially need to understand this, as they are in the position and role of passing their knowledge on to their children. “Time, talents, skills, and health are tools on loan to us with the expectation that we’ll share them, do good with

them, and use them to glorify the Master” (MacInnes, 2008). As parents “share” what they have learned, they can better prepare their children to use resource management in order to have more balanced, enjoyable lives, and to become better Christian stewards.

Resource management helps us become better Christian stewards, and Christian stewardship guides our actions in how we utilize our resource management skills. They work hand in hand with one another and also work better together than apart. In using them together, we can accomplish much both pleasing and honoring God. “How we use the resources in our control expresses our gift of self to God. In short, God doesn’t want our resources, He wants us” (Gray, 2001).

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