

Call to Obedience #388
 PO Box 299 Kokomo, IN 46903 USA
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The God/Man Relationship

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Every relationship has its own governing principles. You behave differently with a teacher, grandparent, grandchild, boss, or pastor. But none of these relationships is as important as your relationship with God, the Creator, the Sustainer, the King of Kings, the Savior and Judge. You must know how to relate to Him. You must know the boundaries. You must know what He expects from you, what will give you favor or disfavor.

Because of the importance of this relationship, God's first words to man made clear what is what: *And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth* (Gen. 1:28).

The summary of these words is that: **God is telling man what to do.** If you don't get that, it is like a fisherman not understanding that fish live in water. If you don't understand this, my friend, you have no foundation for Christianity, you have no beginning for a relationship with God - you are lost.

Here are the A B C's that undergird what Christianity is all about. A is understanding that God tells man what to do. B is man being blessed by doing what God has said. C is that man will be held accountable on Judgment Day for whether he has done God's will or not. It all comes down to this: In Eden, God established an owner/steward relationship with man, and that theme runs all the way through the Bible right to the last day: *And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works* (Rev. 20:13).

If you do not do what God tells you to do, there will be no place for you in heaven. *And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever* (1Jn 2:17). Jesus said that only by doing His will are we connected to Him: *For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother* (Mark 3:35).

So that's why we are here: we are here for Him and not for us. You can go to Bible studies and prayer meetings, and give to the church, but if you don't know this you know nothing. At this moment you stand on God's lovely property, you eat what God has created for you, you live in a body God has fashioned with His own bare hands - you have nothing to crow about, unless you crow for God's glory. *Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the LORD'S thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is* (Deut. 10:14). *Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture* (Psalm 100:3). God is the owner. We are His stewards.

Again, you find this teaching everywhere in the Bible. It is in the writings of Moses, the histories, the prophets, and the teachings of Jesus above all. Let us ponder just one of these teachings, the parable of Ten Virgins (Matt. 25:1-12). The virgins represent people who have been born again, pure, washed in the blood of the Lamb. They have received the light of the Holy Spirit. This was the beginning of their stewardship. Their life's purpose was to meet the Bridegroom. Five of them neglected their lights. The bridegroom came and those whose lights were burning made it to the feast; those whose lights were out did not. They violated the law of stewardship, and found the door to the wedding shut to them.

The Lord's remarkable answer to them was: *I know you not*. How could this be? When they were born again, was there not great joy in heaven? Were not their names written in the Lamb's book of life? My friend, notice that **just as your name can be written in the book of life, it can be erased from it**. *He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels* (Rev 3:5). If you do not overcome, if you lose your first love for Jesus, your name will be blotted out of the book of life. Your life is not your own. You must be about the Father's business.

Four major areas of man's stewardship responsibilities

1. Your body: *What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?* (1Cor. 6:19).

Where do you live, my friend? In your house? No, **you live in your body!** Do not treat your house as if it is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Don't fuss so much about it. Rather realize that it is your body that is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Keep it pure and healthy. Be careful of what you eat and how much. Keep yourself fit so that you will not become a burden to others and unable to finish the course Jesus has set before you. On the other hand, never let your body become your god.

2. Your time: *Redeeming the time, because the days are evil* (Eph. 5:16).

To redeem the time means not to abuse it for selfish purposes, but to rescue it from evil. You are living on God's time and therefore you need to fill it with God's purposes every day. **You are to have no agenda other than God's agenda** and, of course, that includes rest. God Himself also rested and gave us the Sabbath Day for that same purpose.

3. Your actions: *Marvel not ... all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation* (John 5:28, 29).

Although we are saved by grace to begin our journey with God (Eph. 2:8), we will be judged by our works when we get to the end of it on earth. Again, in the owner/steward relationship, either we are profitable servants and will be rewarded, or unprofitable servants and lose heaven. *And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth* (Matt. 25:30). **You have received grace to be born of God and grace to do His will!** Do it.

4. Your money: *Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again* (Luke 6:38).

Tithes (10%) and offerings (giving over 10%) was what God expected from the Jews (Malachi 3:8). Jesus' requirement for Christians exceeds that. The tithes and offerings should be given without thinking. The rest of your money you should pray about. It also belongs to God. Look at your checkbook to see if it tells you whether you have been **giving well above the tithe as a good steward** or if you have robbed God. If you have been a thief, make up what you have missed in giving. When Zacchaeus found Jesus, he restored everything fourfold (Luke 19:8). Remember you were bought with a price.

Misconceptions of the stewardship role

Many of us have a negative attitude about stewardship. We tend to connect it with a miserable state of existence, with bondage or slavery in some way or another. Please remember that the owner/steward relationship was established before there was slavery. The picture we see here from the beginning is like a King who has great trust in His steward coupled with much love. The owner provides a home for the steward, right next to Himself. The owner wants the steward with Him all the time because He needs the steward to help maintain His Kingdom. The owner feeds and clothes His steward beautifully because the steward is His representative to the world.

Joseph, Moses and Daniel were stewards of kings. They were ever at the king's side to fulfill all his needs. In return all their needs were met exceedingly and abundantly. That is God's picture of what He wants us to see in this owner/steward relationship.

O, my friend, don't you see that this stewardship is not a burden but a privilege, a place of high honor. And finally here is the icing on the cake: When it's all said and done, the owner will marry the steward and they shall happily live together forever, because after all, it is all about the love story of God and man.

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