

Managing
LIFE

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MANAGING LIFE

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Preface

This book is about fulfilling your responsibility as a steward, or manager, of the resources God (the Owner) has entrusted to you. Each lesson presents a positive step, or action, you can take so that you are a doer of the Word, and not merely a hearer (James 1:22).

I'll Manage describes the occupation of steward as overriding even one's vocation in life.

I'll Submit involves first giving oneself to the Lord before giving one's substance.

I'll Watch deals with the responsibility to manage time with the right priorities.

I'll Give teaches that grace giving is an acknowledgement of God's ownership and our trust in Him.

I'll Prioritize includes Biblical principles for budgeting one's finances.

I'll Receive highlights the "abundances" God gives to sustain life.

Each of these steps requires the exercise of faith. Living by faith is not a leap in the dark; it is stepping in the light. Hebrews 11:1 says faith is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Hebrews 11:6 says, "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

As you put the truths of *Managing Life* into practice, your faith will grow, and you will become a steward whose management pleases God.



LESSON 1

I'll Manage

“Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful” (1 Corinthians 4:2).

I have observed that many people from other countries who live in the United States send most of their employment earnings back to their native land for the support of their families. Many are also investing in a homeland house so they can return and live in their primary country of citizenship.

The Bible identifies the present location of Christians as a temporary dwelling place. Our real homeland is yet future.

1. What terms or phrases that support this truth do you find in the following Bible verses ?

1 Peter 2:9–11

1 Peter 1:17

Matthew 5:13

Matthew 5:14–16

*“Conversation”
in Philippians
3:20 means
“citizenship.”*

Ephesians 5:8

Philippians 3:20

You gained your earthly citizenship by birth or by naturalization. Your citizenship in Heaven came about by being born spiritually through receiving Christ as your personal Savior and by being placed into the family of God.

2. Read Colossians 1:12–14. Describe in your own words what this passage teaches you about who you are.

TWO WORLDS

3. Read the following verses and complete the statements to contrast the two worlds.
 - (a) Colossians 1:13—The unbeliever belongs to the world of _____.
 - (b) Ephesians 6:11, 12—Darkness describes the world of _____.
 - (c) 1 John 2:11—Darkness _____.
 - (d) Colossians 1:13—The believer is a member of the world of _____.

- (e) 1 Peter 2:9—Christ came to deliver us from _____ into His marvelous _____.
- (f) 2 Corinthians 11:14—Satan disguises himself as an _____.

A HEAVENLY LIFE VIEW

Knowing that your citizenship is in Heaven, you need to have a lifestyle that reflects who you are in Christ. You need answers to the age-old philosophical questions: Who am I? What am I doing here? Where am I going?

God's Word provides all we need to know to make right choices. We can learn from a man like Moses. Moses lived by faith (Hebrews 11:1, 2). He made choices by faith. How did he know how to make right choices in worldly Egypt?

4. Read Hebrews 11:23–27. State several actions Moses took that built his godly character and good reputation.

The order of these verses begins with the desired results and concludes with the basis that produced these results. Notice the

While we are in this world of darkness, we are not to be of this world.

The world is looking for answers. As many as 700 cults may practice in the U.S.

Who you are is more important than what you do or have. But what you do or have is a reflection of who you really are.

The Heaven's Gate cult in California lost the value of life. They gave up everything but their Nikes, committing mass suicide, dying while wearing their shoes.

process when you look at the verses in the reverse order.

Verse 27—Moses had a *foundation* in God and His Word. Your view of life must rest on this foundation of Bible truth.

Verse 26—Moses based his *values* on his foundation of faith in God. Your values are shaped by your system of truth.

Verse 25—This victor based his *choices* on his values. Your choices demonstrate your values.

Verse 24—Moses' pattern of choices resulted in good *character* (who he was) and a good *reputation* (what he did).

5. Read 1 John 2:28—3:3. In light of this text, as well as the other passages you have studied thus far, briefly state your philosophy of life as a believer in Christ.

Who am I?

What am I doing here?

Where am I going?

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Does your philosophy of life describe the world of darkness, or the world of light?

Does your view of who you are rest on who you are in Christ?

What is the final, trustworthy authority that guides you in making right, character-building choices?

Remember, as a believer you are free to choose whatever you want, but you are not free to choose the consequences of your choices.

LIFE MANAGEMENT

6. Read 1 Corinthians 4:2. What term is used in this text to describe the believer in Christ?

The Bible term “steward” means “manager.” A faithful steward, or manager, recognizes that life is a holy trust from the Lord. A good way to understand this principle of life is to study a Biblical illustration of life management.

7. Read Matthew 25:14–30. State the narrative in your own words, looking for the basic principles. (Don't try to understand the parable as a basis for doctrine.)



Notice the three basic principles in this parable that outline the believer's management of every resource and choice. Check out the related passages.

Ownership: God owns everything (Psalm 24:1; 50:10–12).

Responsibility: I am to be responsible in managing what belongs to God (1 Corinthians 4:2; Colossians 3:23, 24).

Accountability: God will judge me at the Judgment Seat of Christ according to how I have managed all He has entrusted to me (Romans 14:10–12).

A believer's occupation is to manage the property God has entrusted to him or her. This occupation supersedes all others. Every believer is to be a full-time Christian, a full-time servant of the Lord, and a full-time manager of God's property—regardless of whether his or her career is vocational Christian service or a secular career.

When you live your life under the authority of the Bible and you recognize your occupation as that of manager for God, the Owner, you will know a life of joy and fulfillment. You will experience fulfillment in your personal life, married life, family life, and vocational life.

MY WORK ETHIC

Why work? To pay the bills? to climb the ladder of success? to make lots of money? to buy things? Don't fail to integrate your occupation (serving Christ as a steward/manager)

with your vocation (commonly referred to as what you do for a living).

A steward of Christ will not selfishly divorce Christianity from his workplace, fearing his Christianity will interfere with his potential success, wealth, or lifestyle. Life is not to be segregated between the sacred and the secular within the believer's daily routine. Your work should be part of your Christian faith and service for Christ as His steward.

8. Read Genesis 1:28–31. God introduced Adam and Eve to work *before* they sinned and experienced the results of sin. Summarize God's description of this original workplace.

Made in God's image, man has the capacity for purposeful, imaginative work. Adam and Eve worked in a perfect environment. But as a result of sin, the character of the work was altered.

9. Read Genesis 3:16–19. Describe the ways work changed.

Fellowship with God is possible in your vocation if that workplace does not violate Biblical principles for your choice of vocation.

10. What are some jobs that would destroy your opportunity to be salt and light (Matthew 5:13–16) as a steward/manger for the Lord?

As redeemed people, we have new values and new purpose for living. Our vocation is part of our Christian life. We can enjoy fulfillment in the vocation that is God's will for us.

11. Read Colossians 3:1 and 17. What impact should the truths of these verses have on the way you view your work?

12. In each of the following verses, find an answer to the question, Why work?
Colossians 3:24

2 Thessalonians 3:10–12

1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 8:12;
9:6, 7

Galatians 6:10

Luke 20:25; Romans 13:1–7

FOR FURTHER THOUGHT

1. Does the believer really have any “secular” work?
2. Why is work so hard?
3. What can I do to make my work more enjoyable?



COMMITMENT

Understanding that my occupation as a believer in Christ is that of a steward, or manager, under His lordship, I am determined to be a full-time servant of His in my vocation/work as well as in every aspect of my life. I acknowledge His ownership of everything He entrusts to my care, exercising management responsibility with ultimate accountability to Him.