

What Is the True Meaning of Stewardship?

When you think of stewardship, what comes to mind?

Maybe fundraising or a capital campaign. Possibly taking care of the environment. Or, maybe you think it's just a stale old word you've seen in history books. Maybe, if you're being honest, you're not really sure what it means.

The reality is that many people today, including lots of Christians, don't understand the true meaning of stewardship. And that's a tragedy. Why? Because stewardship is our ultimate calling as Christ followers.

It's the first assignment God gave the human race in Genesis 1:28. That's when God told Adam and Eve to "[r]ule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

Stewardship is managing God's blessings God's ways for God's glory. The Bible tells us in Psalm 24:1 that He owns it all: "The earth belongs to the Lord, and its fullness ...".

And if He's the owner, that means we're not. Instead, we're His stewards—His managers. God commands us to be stewards over everything He blesses us with. *Everything*. That means our time, talents, treasure, relationships, jobs and, yes, stuff. It's all God's, and He trusts us with it.

Did you catch that? We *get* to manage all of the *Creator's* stuff. How awesome is that? It's both an honor and a serious responsibility! When we get that in our spirit, well, it changes things. It changes our perspective on our family budgets, our daily decisions, even our purpose in life. When we understand true, biblical stewardship, the trajectories of our lives change with every decision we make.

We begin to build a legacy of stewardship in our families. We treat our spouses and kids differently. We approach our work with a new sense of purpose. We become grateful for everything we have. We live within our means. We have more money to give. And we have hope for the future.

I'm here to tell you that I want to reclaim the word *stewardship* in the church today. But it's up to all of us to make sure every believer understands God's role as owner and our role as stewards. When we get to heaven and have to give an account of how we managed God's resources (1 Corinthians 4:2), I hope God will reply to all of us, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Chris Brown is a nationally syndicated radio talk show host, pastor, and dynamic speaker carrying the message of stewardship and intentional living nationwide. Available on radio stations across the country, Chris Brown's *True Stewardship* provides biblical solutions and sound advice for questions on life and money. You can follow Chris online at , on Twitter at @ChrisBrownOnAir, or at