

Whole-Life Stewardship

STEWARDSHIP OF FAMILY

- **Whole-Life Stewardship**

- **Review**

- **Definition:** "using and managing all the resources God provides for the glory of God"

- **BASICS:**

- **(Basic #1) God owns everything; we own nothing**
- **(Basic #2) God is the owner; you are the manager**
- **(Basic #3) You only have one Master**
- **(Basic #4) You will be accountable**
- **(Basic #5) You will be rewarded**

- **BIBLICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR STEWARDS:**

- **Faithful**

- **Blameless**

- **Stewardship of Family Definitions:**

- **Dictionary definition:** "a basic social unit consisting of parents and their children, considered as a group"

- **Bible definition:** one man & one woman for life & children

- Jesus said: “. . . he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder” (Matthew 19:4-6).

- "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth" (Genesis 1:28).

- **Family Stewardship**

- **God has a plan for the family unit**

- one man, one woman, children (definition)

- **God gave blueprints for that plan in the Bible**

- each family member has a responsibility to manage their resource of family
 - * a God-given role within the family unit

- **Danger in not following God's blueprint**

- **Teaching of Evolution:** no God, no accountability; you own the resources & can do with them as you please
- "Either we are merely an accident of history and therefore completely at liberty to do whatever we want with our lives, or we are intentionally created beings who will be held accountable to our Creator" (Bible.org).
- We must go to the beginning: "In the beginning God created"

- ". . . to miss starting here is like misaligning the top button on our shirt or blouse—nothing else will ever line up. Nothing else in the Bible, including the doctrine of stewardship, will make any sense or have any true relevance if we miss the fact that God is the Creator and has full rights of ownership." (<http://www.gotquestions.org/biblical-stewardship.html>)
- **HUSBAND & WIFE:**
 - **Husband & wife forms a new family unit:** *"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Genesis 2:24).*
 - **Husbands are to love & wives are to submit:** *"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them" (Colossians 3:18-19).*
 - **Husbands are to love as Christ loved:** *"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Ephesians 5:25).*
 - **The wife is a helper:** *"And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him" (Genesis 2:18).*
 - * when husbands fail to love as they should & wives fail to submit according to the Bible, they fail to manage the resource of family that God has given them
 - * **Note:** when wives submit to the authority of the husband, they are teaching the children how to submit to the authority figures in their lives as well
- **PARENTS:**
 - *"And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4).*
 - *"The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame" (Proverbs 29:15).*
 - **Fathers are to provide:** *"But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (1 Timothy 5:8).*
 - * when fathers & mothers fail to follow the Biblical plan for parenting, they fail to manage the resource of family
- **CHILDREN:**
 - *"Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord" (Colossians 3:20).*
 - *"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right" (Ephesians 6:1).*
 - *"My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother" (Proverbs 1:8).*
 - **Commandment #5:** *"Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee" (Exodus 20:12).*
 - * first four commandments deal with our relationship with God
 - * last six commandments deal with our relationships with people
 - * notice that God starts with family (Commandment #5)

- + Our very existence as a society is contingent on the success of the family. . . . It has been said, "A family can survive without a nation, but a nation cannot survive without the family." (<http://www.wnd.com/2010/03/127790/>)
- * When children fail to follow the Bible plan for the child's place in the home, they are mismanaging the resource of family that God has given them.
- **SIBLINGS:**
 - *"And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?" (Genesis 4:9).*
 - * "keeper" = guard, to watch for, to protect, to have charge of
 - * Am I my brother's (sister's) keeper?
 - * **"He's not heavy, he's my brother"** (Boy's Town)
 - + "Back in 1918, a boy named Howard Loomis was abandoned by his mother at Father Flanagan's Home for Boys, which had just opened a year earlier. Howard had polio and wore heavy leg braces. Walking was very difficult for him, especially when he had to go up or down steps. Soon, several of the Home's older boys were carrying Howard up and down the stairs. One day, Father Flanagan asked Reuben Granger, one of those older boys, if carrying Howard was hard. Reuben replied, 'He ain't heavy, Father... he's m' brother.'"

(<http://www.boystown.org/blog/the-story-behind-he-aint-heavy#sthash.Ns1fuDsW.dpuf>)
 - **Siblings Quotes**
 - * Siblings: children of the same parents, each of whom is perfectly normal until they get together.
 - * Sometimes being a brother is even better than being a superhero.
 - * Siblings are the people we practice on, the people who teach us about fairness and cooperation and kindness and caring, quite often the hard way.
 - **Value of Siblings:**
 - * Our siblings help mold us; we have played together, fought together, shared good times & bad times
 - * Our relationship with our siblings is often longer than any other family relationship (parents, spouse, children)
 - * "Siblings are the only relatives, and perhaps the only people you'll ever know, who are with you through the entire arc of your life. Your parents leave you too soon and your kids and spouse come along late, but your siblings know you when you are in your most inchoate [undeveloped] form" (writer Jeffrey Kluger).
 - **How are your siblings a gift from God?**
 - * look past the fighting & disagreements to see the valuable resource God has given you
 - + (ask for one positive quality of the gift of siblings)

- * **List:**
 - + No one understands Mom & Dad like they do
 - + Often they are more understanding of you because they're a lot like you
 - + They taught you how to share
 - + They taught you teamwork
 - Older siblings teach, guide, encourage younger siblings
- * Siblings are your first experience in developing getting along skills
 - + home is the practice ground for learning how to get along with people
 - + parents often **MAKE** you get along until you learn this skill on your own
 - learn to listen to each other, share, compromise
- * You can confide in them
 - + Siblings are sometimes the first or only person(s) you can tell some things to
 - + break up with boyfriend
 - + bad grade at school
- * Siblings often speak the same "language"
 - + can tell just by looking at each other what's being thought
 - + can sing together better (instinctively know where the other is going)
 - + can work together better
- * Multiple siblings – can go to for different problems/ideas
 - + one might be better at math or working on cars or in English
- * *The Gift of Siblings* (by Frank Bruni): ". . . they aren't people he would have likely made an effort to know or spend time with if he'd met them at school, say, or at work. And yet a reunion with them thrills him more than a reunion with friends, who don't make him feel that he's 'a part of a larger quilt,' he said. His brothers do. My friend Campbell, who's as fond of her two sisters as I am of my siblings, put it this way: 'With a friend, I have to be more articulate. With my sisters, I can be my most primal self: inarticulate, childishly emotional. I'll have a fight with my sister and say, "O.K., I know we're in a fight, but I need your advice on something," and we can just put the fight on hold. They're the only people in the world you can be your worst self with and they'll still accept you.' My siblings have certainly seen me at my worst, and I've seen them at theirs. No one has bolted. It's as if we signed some contract long ago, before we were even aware of what we were getting into, and over time gained the wisdom to see that we hadn't been duped. We'd been graced: with a center of gravity; with an audience that never averts its gaze and doesn't stint on applause. For each of us, a new home, a new relationship or a newborn was never quite real until the rest of us had been ushered in to the front row."

■ **Mismanagement of the Gift of Siblings:**

- * because of sin, Cain killed his brother Abel

- * because of lying and deception (Jacob), Esau threaten to kill his brother
 - + they didn't see each other for 20 years
- * because of jealousy, Joseph was sold into slavery by his own brothers
- * what ending might these stories have had if the brothers had valued their gift of siblings?
 - + what does your management of your gift of siblings look like?
 - + are you mismanaging your gift of siblings?
- **The Value of God's Resource of Family**
 - Family is the foundational building block of society:
 - As goes the home, so goes the church. As goes the church, so goes the nation. As goes the nation, so goes the world.
 - God has a blueprint that works (the Bible)
 - because of this, the devil is fighting to redefine/destroy family on many levels
 - redefining marriage (two people – can be same sex; can be closely related in New Jersey)
 - commonly heard – "marriage is just a piece of paper"
 - divorce is common (1 out of every 2 marriages)
 - often family looks like: single parent, divorced parents, blended families, etc.
 - **How are you managing your gift of family?**
 - You are each holding the gift of family in your hand right now
 - you have a family (father, mother, grandparents, siblings)
 - your family doesn't look like anyone else's (no gifts are alike)
 - do you want a family as good or better than the one you have right now?
 - (ask for show of hands)
 - Parable of Talents: only the ones who manage their current talents (resources) wisely were given more (additional resources)
 - if you want the gift of family in the future, you need to steward (manage) your gift of family now to God's glory (according to God's plan)
- **How to Steward the Resource of Family**
 - Cultivate your relationship with family members
 - communicate (listen & talk)
 - Offer a helping hand: help each other with problems, responsibilities, etc.
 - Spend more time together
 - Family Devotions
 - Family Activities
 - Family Dinner
 - * eating dinner together as a family:
 - + greatly lowers risk of children smoking, drinking, using drugs
 - + lowers depressive symptoms & suicidal thoughts

- + results in better grades
- + girls less likely to have eating disorders
- + a place of community (unifying)
- * **Importance of Family Dinner**
 - + an opportunity to learn about each other's day
 - + strengthen's the family bond
 - + show that you care (practice listening skills)
- * you are establishing family traditions
 - + your family traditions make your family unique
 - + traditions often reinforce family values
 - + tell stories of growing up (past family traditions)
- * opportunities to discuss favorite menus/food preparation
 - + everyone can (should) have a part in creating or cleaning up family dinner
- * opportunities to make plans
 - + family vacations
 - + rest of the week
 - + whose turn to do dishes
- **What does family dinner look like in America today?**
 - * 33 percent eat dinner together every night per week
 - * only 26 percent eat dinner together 4-6 nights per week
 - + (<http://www.harrisinteractive.com/NewsRoom/HarrisPolls/tabid/447/ctl/ReadCustom%20Default/mid/1508/ArticleId/1319/Default.aspx>)
 - * discuss family dinner in other countries, such as Italy and Germany
 - + often sit at dinner table for hours
 - * what does family dinner look like at your house?
 - + same room? same time? conversation?
 - + if you don't have family dinner, what could you do (as a steward of family)?
 - * **Ingredients for family dinner:**
 - + food
 - + entire family (or as much as possible)
 - + prayer
 - + conversation (everyone taking turns)
 - + manners
 - + laughter
 - + no criticism, no negativity, no corrections (except table manners)
 - + everyone helps with preparation and/or cleanup