

Being a Good Steward of Your Family

Xenos Summer Institute 2015 – Ben Foust

4 Kinds of Stewardship

Active Role

The “Owner”

Plays a large, unspiritual role

PURPOSE: for my spouse and kids to enhance / complete *my* life

ROLE: controlling in marriage (expectations manipulation, even domineering)

with children, role can be to push kids to success, or to get affirmation / acceptance from child

FEELS: embattled, fear/anxiety, under pressure

NEEDS TO UNDERSTAND: who the True Owner is

The “Good Steward”

Plays a large, spiritual role

PURPOSE: to help family develop mature relationship with the Lord.

ROLE: shepherd, coach, mentor, model of God’s love

FEELS: awed, privileged, motivated, YET also unified with God, rest/peace/confidence, eager anticipation

Temporal Values

The “Bad Steward”

Plays a small, unspiritual role

PURPOSE: mutual bystanders as we pursue our own goals / desires

ROLE: what role?
to keep them from blocking my goals

FEELS: irritated, suffocated, detached, distracted

NEEDS TO UNDERSTAND: the eternal value of his/her family

Eternal Values

The “Means Well” Steward

Plays a small, spiritual role

PURPOSE: has the correct goal; genuinely wants to see spouse/children walking with God

ROLE: underestimates his/her role in accomplishing the purpose – plays a passive role

FEELS: along for the ride, oblivious, confused, fearful, paralyzed, guilty

NEEDS TO UNDERSTAND: their unique, God-empowered role;
being a good steward takes discipline

Passive Role

Questions to guide, focus, and enhance your Prayer and Vision-Making for Your *Spouse and Children*

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Tip: these aren't supposed to be easy to answer! This is meant as a brainstorm-style tool to stimulate productive thought, prayer, and vision-making about members of your family. Questions are meant to be pondered one or two at a time, not all in one sitting.

Praise and Gratitude

- What is *unique* about how God has created them?
- What good qualities has God given them that I do not have?
- What amazes me about them?
- What am I especially grateful for regarding their role in my life?
- How would my life be impoverished without them?
- What is something about them that I take for granted?
- How do you think God's perspective on them as His son or daughter differs from how you view them on a daily basis?
- Why do you think God paired you with your spouse in this life?

Diagnostics

- What is God up to in their life right now?
- Is my spouse living out their full potential for the Lord?
- How is God using them in the lives of others?
- What are some attitude/sin areas/false beliefs that hold them back from maturing?
- How are their spiritual vital signs these days? Motivation, Joy, satisfaction?
- Do they have a spiritually-based vision for their life?
- How are their relationships? Do they have a strong support system of other believers who encourage/speak truth in their life (other than you?)
- Are there any unhealthy distractions, addictions, idols that are playing an increasing role in their life? What is the #1 threat to their spiritual life?
- How are they doing in the key ways we grow spiritually? (learning from God's word, prayer, serving others, sharing their faith?)

Vision

Choose one strength/area of gifting they have:

How could God use their gifts to impact others in the future?

How could God use their gifts to glorify Himself?

What could this strength look like if they continued to invest in it, develop it, and present it to be used by God in 1 year? 5 years? 10 years?

Choose one area of concern you have for their spiritual life: **(This is a cautionary/negative vision)**

What holds them back in their relationships and ministry?

What in their character, attitude, or behavior is most threatening to their spiritual health?

Imagine what could this concerning area look like if it were to run rampant over the next 1, 5, 10 years. What if the severity grew to where the issue was consuming and enslaving?

Imagine your marriage in 10 years:

What problem area would you like to see improve?

What strength would you like to see preserved/enhanced?

Imagine your relationship with your child in 10 years:

What problem area would you like to see improve?

What strength would you like to see preserved/enhanced?

What is my family about? What do we stand for? What is our role in this world?

How could I communicate this vision to my family in a way that would be exciting to them?

If my family stays on its current course in all things, what would probably be the best and worst aspects of my family in 10 years?

If you were Satan, what would be the most effective way to derail your family from following the Lord?

Action

Is there any truth that I need to be speaking to this person right now?

What adversity are they facing? How can I come alongside them with encouragement?

Where do I need to ask for God's help/guidance/power in my stewardship of my family?

Are there any challenges facing my family that I have been avoiding dealing with because I don't know what to do?

Do I need to repent for having a *Bad Steward*, *Passive*, or *Owner* mentality toward my family?

Who are the wise people in my life that I could seek out to ask for counsel and insight into my marriage and parenting?

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Notes

Introduction

Stewardship

The *Good Steward* Acts on 2 key convictions:

#1 God is the true, ultimate, eternal owner

#2 I have a tremendously important role

Purpose of Relationship:

“Eternal Values/Passive Role”

“The _____ Steward”

Temporal Values / Passive Role:

“The _____ Steward”

Temporal Values / Active Role

“The _____”

Eternal Values / Active Role

“The GOOD Steward”

In Parenting:

In Marriage:

What you Teach and Fight for:

The “Means Well” Steward:

The “Bad Steward”:

The “Owner”:

The Good Steward knows 3 things about discipline:

**#1 We have to be willing to “go to bat” with our spouse and children
*for their good***

#2 Based on the “instruction of the Lord”

#3 Knows which battles to choose

Having a Vision:

The “Means Well” Steward:

The “Bad Steward”:

The “Owner”:

Good Steward forms a vision that is:

- **Long and short-run**
- **Multifaceted & specific**
- **Aligned with God’s eternal priorities**
- **Flexible as God’s work unfolds**
- **Articulated and held out to the family**

Stewardship and Prayer:

The “Means Well” Steward:

The “Bad Steward”:

The “Owner”:

Pray for what?

- **Praise**
- **Thanksgiving**
- **Personal petitions**
- **Intercessions for them**
- **Entrusting**

Practical ideas:

- **Set aside to time to pray *with* and *for* family**
- **Pray as a couple for your children**
- **Pray with your kids for your spouse**
- **Share your personal prayer life with them**

Stewardship and Time:

The “Means Well” Steward:

The “Bad Steward”:

The “Owner”:

The good Steward makes 2 crucial moves with their time:

- **#1 Sacrificially spend time with your children**
- **#2 Sacrificially spend time with your spouse**

Practical Ideas:

- **Date Night**
- **Family Time – get creative**
- **Take Vacations**
- **Put your phone away**
- **Invite them in to what you’re doing**

Conclusions:

- **Steward your family from the security of total forgiveness!**
- **Make your own relationship with your Heavenly Father priority #1**
- **Talk to each other about this work!**
- **Stewardship of your family may not be glorious work, but it is HEROIC work!**

Books:

Barna, George, *Revolutionary Parenting: Raising Your Kids to Become Spiritual Champions*, (Tyndale, 2007)

Tripp, Paul, *Forever: Why You Can't Live Without It*, (Zondervan, 2011)

Murray, Andrew, *The Children for Christ*

Keller, Timothy, *Facing the Complexities of Marriage with the Wisdom of God*, (Penguin Group, 2011)

Check out the Xenos Study Center for a selection of great books on parenting and marriage topics!

Contact:

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Breakout Session resources <http://www.xenos.org/xsi/breakout-information>

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