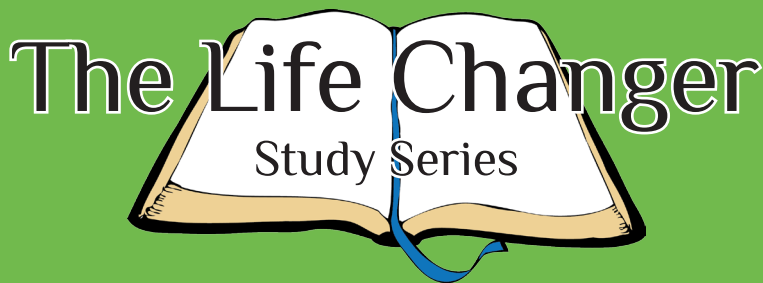


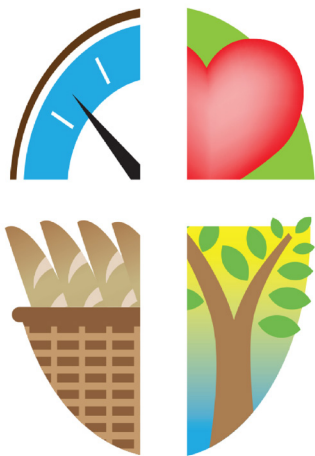
The Life Changer

Study Series



Stewardship: Our Bodies, Abilities and Time

Stewardship is the subject of this lesson. What is stewardship? We will see that stewardship, in its essence, is entering into cooperation with God because of an appreciation for what He has done for us. God saw us in our sinful condition, rebellious by nature and unable to keep His law from an unselfish heart. Our sins have separated us from God and condemned us to eternal death. But God in His mercy did not leave us without hope. He sent Jesus to be a sin-offering and He offers redemption and salvation to all who receive Christ as Savior and Lord. We express our thankfulness to God by living a life that is pleasing to Him through the work of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.



Lesson 15



Shining Stars Series (Philippians 2:14-16)



"Yes that looks very nice on you. The color goes very well with your natural color," Gülsün said with a smile to the woman standing in front of the mirror. The customer, a woman of about 30 years old, beamed with happiness at the compliment.

"Shall I wrap that up for you?" Gülsün asked.

"Yes, I'll take it," the customer said.

Gülsün was so happy to see the young woman pleased at last. She had come into the store with a frown on her face and Gülsün wondered if she would be able to help her. The customer didn't really know what she wanted and was insecure about everything she tried on. Gülsün understood that she needed some assurance that she really did look good in the sweater. Gülsün spent quite a bit of time with the customer trying to find just the right color and cut. As they made their way to the cash register, Gülsün looked up and noticed that there were two other customers lingering near the front door.

She looked around and noticed that the other worker, Ayşe was having tea.

"Ayşe, could I get you to help them while I do this check-out?" Gülsün asked.

Ayşe took a long drag on her cigarette and remained seated. Gülsün watched as the customers, uninvited to the store, left without asking for help or doing any shopping. Not wanting to make a scene in front of her customer she continued with the check-out before addressing the issue with Ayşe. Gülsün's customer could see that Gülsün was upset at the carelessness of Ayşe.

"How long have you owned this store?" asked the customer.

"Oh, it's not my store. I just work here."

"Really? With such care that you give your customers I thought this was your store."

"Thank you. I really do enjoy my work; I like it when I have been able to help people find what they are looking for."

"I am sure the store-owner loves having someone so dedicated working for them."

"The store owner is a really nice lady. She treats me well and I appreciate it. I always want to do my best for her. When I couldn't find work anywhere and I had no skills, she took a chance and hired me. In those days she was just starting out and finances were tight. She really couldn't afford to hire me. But she did. Her business grew and now she has two stores. She comes by to check on things of course but basically she leaves me to run things."

"That's really nice. What's her name?"

"Fatma. Fatma Yıldız."

"Well, have a good day and thank you so much for your help."

Gülsün looked back at the pile of sweaters that they had gone through and Ayşe hadn't lifted a finger to help put them away. She was just sitting there staring out the shop windows as if she were on the beach watching the waves roll in.

When we work for someone, our employer has certain expectations from us. They expect us to come to work on time because they are paying for that time. The employer wants us to work and not slough off, even when their back is turned. After all, they are not paying simply to have a warm body there. They want actual work to be performed. The business owner wants the workers to respect the owner and take care of the property of the business. What business owner doesn't want his or her employees to really expand the business and make it a success, both in reputation and in finances? Many workers do this for their employers.

Some workers reach a standard of excellence in their work life like Gülsün. She not only wanted to do these things for her employer because she was paid to do so, but also because she appreciated her boss, Fatma. Gülsün not only worked for Fatma, she really entered into cooperation with Fatma. No, Gülsün was not a partner in the firm, but she was partnering with the owner to make it a success. What was the reason for that dedication? It was appreciation for Fatma. Fatma had done something for Gülsün.

Stewardship is the subject of this lesson. What is stewardship? We will see that stewardship, in its essence, is entering into cooperation with God because of an appreciation for what He has done for us. God saw us in our sinful condition, rebellious by nature and unable to keep His law from an unselfish heart. Our sins have separated us from God and condemned us to eternal death. But God in His mercy did not leave us without hope. He sent Jesus to be a sin-offering and He offers redemption and salvation to all who receive Christ as Savior and Lord. We express our thankfulness to God by living a life that is pleasing to Him through the work of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.

When Gülsün was without work and needy, Fatma hired her. Gülsün expressed appreciation for this by offering her very best service in everything entrusted to her. This is the essence also of stewardship to God. God gave His Son to save us. We express our appreciation for this by offering our very best service in everything entrusted to us. God has entrusted to us certain responsibilities; we are stewards of what God has given us. We see stewardship expressed in the life of the believer in four main areas. They are: stewardship of our bodies, stewardship of our abilities, stewardship of our time, and stewardship of our material goods or wealth. The last of these we will look at in the next lesson.

② Q1. Who is the ultimate owner of the world and everything in it?
Read Genesis 1:1; Psalm 24:1, 2 and Colossians 1:16-20.

A. _____

The world and everything in it belongs to the Creator. God made the world through Jesus Christ and redeemed the world through Jesus Christ. Therefore the world and all that is in it, including every person, belongs to God and Christ.

② Q2. What special blessing did God bestow upon Adam and Eve when they were created? Read Genesis 1:26-28, 2:15.

A. _____

Our first parents were made stewards of God's creation. They were given dominion over everything and a responsibility to keep it in proper order.

② Q3. What did the apostle Paul say about the stewardship of our bodies? Read 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 and Romans 12:1-2.

A. _____

The believer approaches life with the understanding that God gave life in the beginning and it belongs to God. Furthermore, we have been purchased back from a destiny of permanent death by the blood of Christ. We are indebted to Christ for our eternal life. Together with these, we see that the Holy Spirit lives in us and this is the gift of God. As the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, the body is sacred and therefore must be treated with reverence and respect. Our reasonable service to God is to honor God with the life we live. We serve God and Christ out of an appreciation of their activity in our lives and their position as Creator and Redeemer.

Some people think, "It is my body, I will do whatever I want with it." That logic has no place in the believer's life. "Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31).

Some people think, "I have good health and a strong body. It won't make much difference if I eat and drink poorly or not. I am strong enough."

There once was a rich man. He had two cars, a Mercedes and a Tofaş and a driver for each car. He used the Mercedes for his formal business activities and he used the Tofaş for getting small errands done.

When the rich man was buying the Mercedes the salesperson said, "If you take care of this car, it should run for 1.5 million kilometers." When the rich man was buying the Tofaş the salesman said to him, "If you take care of this car, it should run for 150,000 kilometers."

The Tofaş driver took very good care of his car. He put new oil of the best quality in it regularly. He carefully observed the times for maintenance on the tires, brakes and timing belt. The driver of the Mercedes was very proud of the fine car he drove and when he saw the care that the Tofaş driver showed, he made fun of him. Mockingly he would say, "Look at that box of bolts you are driving! Get a real car! Why are you taking such care of it? Don't waste your time. That car is so pitiful, it won't last long anyway. This Mercedes will last forever because it is a good car. Look, I don't even have to change the oil in it much and it runs just fine. The Mercedes seemed to run just fine in spite of the poor care. But the Tofaş driver did not pay attention to the Mercedes driver and continued to take good care of his car.

When the Tofaş reached 200,000 kilometers it quit running. The Mercedes driver just laughed. "I told you! The Mercedes runs on and on." When the Mercedes reached 300,000 kilometers it also quit running. The rich man retired and had need of one car and one driver. He went down to the Mercedes dealer to get a car for his retirement. Who did the rich man retain as his driver? Why? What does this tell you about taking care of your body?

Allegorically speaking perhaps you feel that God has only equipped you with a Tofaş quality of health. You can still be a good steward! Take care of it well because how you manage what you have been given is most important to God.

② Q4. How much of ourselves is devoted to God? Read Luke 10:27.

A. _____

We serve in proportion to our appreciation of what we have received.

② Q5. In the following parable, what do the talents represent? Read Matthew 25:14-30.

A. _____

In previous lessons we learned that God has given to everyone gifts and abilities to use for God's service in building up the church which is the body of Christ.

② Q6. What gifts and abilities has God given you? How are you using them for His service?

A. _____

② Q7. Does God make any claims on our time? Read Exodus 20:8-11 and Isaiah 58:13, 14.

A. _____

One seventh of every week is sacred and unique. The Sabbath is His holy day and He wants and expects us to enter into relationship with Him in a more undistracted way on that day.

② Q8. What else does the Bible say about the use of our time? Read Ephesians 5:16, 17.

A. _____

The expression "fırsatı değerlendirin" in the Greek can be literally translated "buy back or redeem the time" or even "make the most of the time." Life is made up of time and how we use our time is how we use our life. A person is not good simply because he is not bad. Good

people are doing God's work. They have entered into cooperation with God's purposes as Jesus did. "And He said to them, 'Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?' " (Luke 2:49).

Q9. What kind of activities will God's people be doing? Read Matthew 25:31-46.

A. _____

Q10. If you brought food to the shared meal at church on Sabbaths, would that be stewardship? How?

A. _____

Q11. What kind of attitude can we bring into the service of the Lord? Read Colossians 3:23, 24.

A. _____

Q12. Did Ayşe care whether customers came into the store and bought something? Why?

A. _____

Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. "But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep" (John 10:11-13). The business owner wants the business to succeed. But many times the worker could care less about the business or the business owner. They are only interested in a paycheck.

Q13. What is our relationship to God in the great controversy between Christ and Satan? Read 1 John 3:1 and Romans 8:16, 17.

A. _____

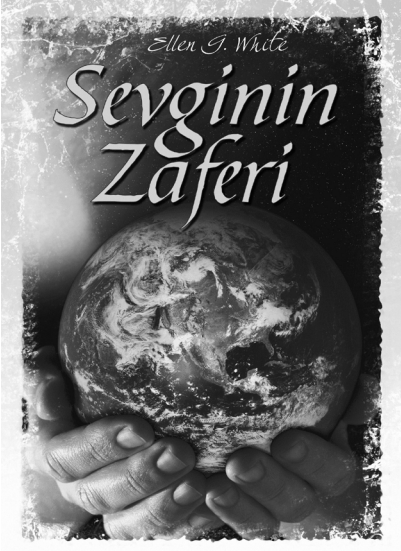
① Q14. How does our relationship to God and Christ affect how we view our stewardship?

A. _____

Stewardship is entering into cooperation with God because of an appreciation of who He is and what He has done for us. Like Gülsün, our service goes beyond meeting the requirements of what is expected of us. It involves wholehearted service.

Call to commitment through prayer

SEVGİNİN ZAFERİ



Kötülüğün kaynağı, henüz çözülememiş bir sırdır. Neden kötülük var? Nereden geliyor? Kötülüğün bir sonu olacak mı? Bunlar yanıtlanması gereken çok önemli sorulardır.

Büyük mücadele, görünen dünyayı, görünmeyen dünyadan ayıran perdeyi aralamakta ve bu dünyanın tüm sakinlerinin dahil olduğu doğüstü savaşı gözler önüne ermektedir.

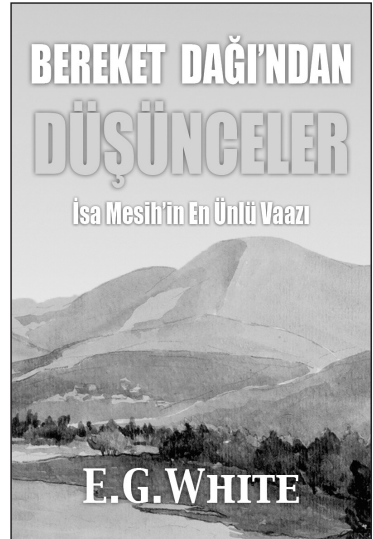
Kitap, uğrunda savaştıkları şey için çok önemli olan iki tarafın, iyinin ve kötünün arasında geçen evrensel savaşın nasıl başladığından ve nasıl sonlandırılacağından bahsetmektedir. Geçmişten, şimdiki zamandan ve gelecekte söz etmekte, çok dokunaklı bir ricayla ve ciddi bir uyarıyla sona ermektedir. Bu kitabı okurken, sanki Tanrı ile röportaj yapıyormuş hissine kapılacaksınız.

Güzel olduğu kadar şok edici bir yolculuğa çıkmaya hazırlanın. Okuduktan sonra artık aynı kişi olmayacaksınız.

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Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 2:1-5)



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