

## **Taking Inventory Pt. 1- Mindset of a Manager**

Discussion Notes: March 1, 2026

1. If you were suddenly put in charge of managing someone else's house for a year, what would feel easiest? What would feel hardest?

The sermon this week focused on seeing ourselves as stewards rather than owners of everything God has entrusted to us. Scripture teaches that a steward is a manager of what belongs to another, and the primary requirement is faithfulness, not worldly success. Because everything ultimately belongs to God, our mindset should shift from scarcity to trusting His abundant provision. We are called to move from thinking like owners to living like managers who will one day give an account. Faithful stewardship means shifting from simply consuming resources to investing our lives, gifts, and possessions for eternal impact.

### **Read 1 Corinthians 4:1-2**

*"This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful."*

1 Corinthians 4:1–2 sets the foundation for this message by defining how God views His people; not as owners, but as stewards. In the original language, the word steward refers to a household manager who was entrusted to oversee resources that belonged to someone else. The key requirement wasn't creativity, popularity, or measurable success, but faithfulness to the owner's wishes. Paul is reminding believers that everything we have (our lives, gifts, time, and resources) ultimately belongs to God, and our calling is to manage them in a way that honors Him. This shifts our focus from "What do I want to do with what I have?" to "What does God, the Owner, want done with what He's entrusted to me?"

2. Why do you think God emphasizes faithfulness more than success or outcomes?

### **Read Matthew 6:25-30**

*"Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?"*

In Matthew 6:25–30, Jesus addresses one of our deepest human instincts, the desire to feel in control. As people, we often believe that if we can plan enough, manage enough, or hold tightly enough to what we have, we will feel safe and secure. But Jesus gently challenges that mindset by pointing to the birds and the flowers. They don't control their future, yet God faithfully provides for them. He is not teaching passivity, but trust: reminding us that our security does not come from our ability to control life, but from God's faithful care. This connects directly to the mindset shift of a steward, moving from anxiety and self-reliance to trusting that the Owner is both aware of our needs and fully in control of our provision.

3. Which of the three mindset shifts (scarcity to abundance, ownership to manager, and consumption to investment) feels most challenging for you right now? Why?

### **Read 1 Timothy 6:17-19**

*“As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.”*

In 1 Timothy 6:17–19, Paul instructs believers who have resources not to put their hope in wealth, which is uncertain, but in God, who generously provides everything we need. He shifts the focus from simply having possessions to using them with purpose by being rich in good deeds, generous, and willing to share. This passage shows that stewardship is not about feeling guilty for what we have or losing it, but about investing in what truly lasts. When we live this way, we store up treasure for the future and experience a deeper sense of security that comes from trusting God rather than our possessions. This connects to the mindset shift from consumption to investment by reminding us that what we have is meant to serve God’s purposes, not just our personal comfort.

4. What do you think it means practically to “invest in eternity”?

### **Read 2 Timothy 4:6-8**

*“For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.”*

Paul is nearing the end of his life and reflects on how he has faithfully carried out the assignment God entrusted to him. He uses the language of being poured out like a drink offering, showing that he viewed his life as something given fully back to God, not something he owned for himself. Paul describes finishing the race and keeping the faith, which highlights his understanding that success was not measured by comfort, results, or recognition, but by faithfulness to what God had asked him to steward. As he writes to Timothy, he is essentially passing the responsibility forward, encouraging him to continue managing the gospel and his calling with the same faithfulness. This passage beautifully illustrates the mindset of a steward who knows his life, mission, and influence belong to God and who desires to hand them on well to the next generation.

5. What is one thing God has entrusted to you that you want to steward more intentionally?

Prayer Points/Closing:

- Thank God for entrusting us with gifts, resources, and opportunities
- Ask for hearts that trust His provision instead of living in scarcity
- Pray for wisdom to steward time, relationships, finances, and spiritual gifts faithfully
- Invite God to help us live with eternal perspective

### **DEEPER DIVE- Ownership vs. Stewardship in Scripture**

One of the clearest ways to understand the mindset of a manager is by comparing two different heart postures we see in Scripture: people who lived as if their lives and resources belonged to them, and those who recognized everything as something entrusted by God

### **Example of an Ownership Mindset:**

#### **Read Luke 12:15-21**

*“And he said to them, ‘Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.’ And he told them a parable, saying, ‘The land of a rich man produced plentifully, and he thought to himself, ‘What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?’ And he said, ‘I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, ‘Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.’” But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’ So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.”*

In this parable, Jesus tells of a wealthy man whose land produced an abundant harvest. Instead of seeking God’s purposes, the man focused entirely on himself. He repeatedly used words like “my crops,” “my barns,” and “my goods,” showing that he saw himself as the owner rather than a steward. His plan was to store everything for personal comfort and security, believing his wealth gave him control over his future. But God calls him a fool because his life was required of him that very night, revealing that his sense of ownership was an illusion. The outcome of his life was spiritual poverty because he invested only in temporary things.

### **Example of a Stewardship Mindset**

#### **Read Genesis 39:2-4**

*“The LORD was with Joseph, and he became a successful man, and he was in the house of his Egyptian master. His master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD caused all that he did to succeed in his hands. So Joseph found favor in his sight and attended him, and he made him overseer of his house and put him in charge of all that he had.”*

Even as a slave, Joseph faithfully managed everything in Potiphar’s house. He did not act as if he owned the resources or the position, but instead diligently served, showing that stewardship is about faithfulness regardless of your status or circumstances. Joseph recognized that his life and responsibilities ultimately belonged to God.

#### **Read Genesis 39:7-9, 19-22**

*“And after a time his master’s wife cast her eyes on Joseph and said, ‘Lie with me.’ But he refused and said to his master’s wife, ‘Behold, because of me my master has no concern about anything in the house, and he has put everything that he has in my charge. He is not greater in this house than I am, nor has he kept back anything from me except you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?... As soon as his master heard the words that his wife spoke to him, ‘This is the way your servant treated me,’ his anger was kindled. And Joseph’s master took him and put him into the prison, the place where the king’s prisoners were confined, and he was there in prison. But the LORD was with Joseph and showed him steadfast love and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. And the keeper of the prison put Joseph in charge of all the prisoners who were in the prison. Whatever was done there, he was the one who did it.”*

Joseph recognized that his life and responsibilities ultimately belonged to God. Even when tempted, he refused to use what was entrusted to him for personal gain, showing the heart of a manager who answers to the Owner. In prison, Joseph's commitment to faithful stewardship did not waver. His life demonstrates that a steward's faithfulness is not dependent on comfort or recognition but on obedience to God.

### **Read Genesis 41:15-16**

*"And Pharaoh said to Joseph, 'I have had a dream, and there is no one who can interpret it. I have heard it said of you that when you hear a dream you can interpret it.'" Joseph answered Pharaoh, "It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer."*

When Pharaoh called for someone to interpret his troubling dreams, Joseph did not rely on his own ability or take credit. Instead, he acknowledged that God was the true source of wisdom and insight. His faithful stewardship in prison (managing what was entrusted to him, remaining obedient and trustworthy) positioned him for this opportunity. It was precisely his consistent faithfulness and reliance on God that led Pharaoh to elevate him from prisoner to second-in-command over all of Egypt. This moment shows that God honors stewards who faithfully manage what He entrusts to them, even when they are in difficult or seemingly powerless circumstances.

### **Read Genesis 50:19-21**

*"But Joseph said to them, 'Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones.'" Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them."*

After Joseph was released from prison, Pharaoh placed him in charge of all Egypt, second only to Pharaoh himself. He was entrusted with the responsibility to manage the land and its resources, especially during a time of great famine that affected not just Egypt but the surrounding nations. Joseph used this authority wisely, storing grain during the years of plenty so that there would be food during the years of famine. His careful management preserved countless lives, including the lives of his own family, who came to Egypt seeking food. When he speaks to his brothers in Genesis 50, he reflects on the entirety of his life—from betrayal by his family to slavery to imprisonment—and recognizes that God had been orchestrating all these events for a greater purpose. Joseph's story demonstrates that faithful stewardship, even in hardship, allows God to turn difficult circumstances into blessings, showing the ultimate fruit of a life managed for God's purposes rather than personal gain.

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. What differences do you notice in how each person viewed their role in life?
2. How did their beliefs about ownership or stewardship shape their decisions?
3. What does this comparison teach us about how everyday choices shape long-term spiritual outcomes?