

DISCIPLESHIP COURSE

An Invitation to Follow

PART 7 | FORMATION | TOTAL STEWARDSHIP

"Total stewardship means recognising that everything I have is from God, belongs to God, and is not greater than God."

THE BIG IDEA

What are the most important priorities in your life? Most of us would name the same four: our time, our talents, our money, and our relationships. But here's the thing - the areas we hold most dear are usually the ones we worry about most.

As disciples of Jesus, total stewardship is how we handle these areas differently. We recognise that all of it - every gift, every relationship, every dollar, every hour - came from God. And if it came from God, the wisest thing we can do is ask Him: how do you want me to handle this?

KEY SCRIPTURE

Matthew 6:33

"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

Psalms 24:1

"The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it. The world and all its people belong to him."

FOUR AREAS OF TOTAL STEWARDSHIP

In each area of life, the disciple's question is the same: God, how do you want me to handle what you've given me?

Time

How does God want me to use my time?

Begin each day by seeking God first. Give him the first moments of your day in prayer — and watch how the rest of your time changes when God leads it.

Talents

How do I use my gifts for God's glory?

Your skills and abilities are a gift from God. Whatever you've been given — teaching, creativity, sport, business — the question is: how can I use this to glorify God, not myself?

Treasure

How do I hold money with an open hand?

Money is a gift from God — but it can easily become a master. Seek God first in your finances through generosity and tithing. Don't let wealth worry or rule you; put God first.

Relationships

How do I steward the people God has placed in my life?

Your family, friends, and community are gifts from God. Steward them by serving — not by expecting to be served. Follow Jesus' example: love the people around you and put them before yourself.

WHAT "SEEK FIRST" LOOKS LIKE IN PRACTICE

Jesus' command in Matthew 6:33 is the thread running through all four areas. Here's what seeking God first actually looks like:

TIME	Give the first part of your day to God in prayer. Jesus did this - before daybreak, he withdrew to pray (Mark 1:35). When God leads your day from the start, the rest of the day follows differently.
TALENTS	Do everything first and foremost for God's glory, not your own. Ask: how can the gifts I've been given point people to God rather than to me?
TREASURE	Put God first financially - through tithing and generosity. Jesus taught that worry about money is a sign we've made it a master. A healthy disregard for money comes from trusting the Father who already knows what we need.
RELATIONSHIPS	Step into every relationship as a servant, not a consumer. The people in your life are a gift from God - your role is to love and serve them, not to be served by them.

A FINAL THOUGHT

You will never be sorry for putting God second in these four areas - because when you put God first, the rest follows. Total stewardship isn't about giving things up. It's about recognising where they came from, who they belong to, and trusting the one who gave them to you.

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REFLECTION & DISCUSSION

1. Which of the four areas - time, talents, treasure, or relationships - is easiest for you to hold loosely before God? Which is hardest?
2. What would it look like practically to "seek God first" in your morning? Do you currently have any kind of rhythm to start your day with him?
3. When it comes to your talents, are you primarily motivated by self-glorification or God-glorification? What might need to shift?
4. Think about your key relationships. Are you showing up to serve, or to be served? What's one way you could change that this week?