

THE MONEY REVOLUTION

Home Group Discussion Guides



HOME GROUP STUDY 2 : Be active in your stewardship

This is the second in a series of group discussions on biblical principles for handling personal money. Each of these explores one of the principles in 'The Money Revolution', a simple workbook which seeks to help group members build their skills as stewards of the resources God has entrusted to them.

Warming Up

1. Can you think of a skill that you have had to develop, and how you worked at building that skill?

Have a moments pause, whilst each member of the group considers the question. Examples might be cookery, diy, learning an instrument, learning to drive, or a particular sport.

2. Building skills as stewards also takes time and practice. What kinds of skills do you think stewards need?

Bible Passage 1 - Haggai 1:1-6.

A member of the group should read this aloud

3. Verse 4 records the prophet challenging the people : 'Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your panelled houses, while this house remains a ruin?' In effect, people were putting themselves first, and putting God a poor second. Can you see any parallels with today's society?
4. Go back and look at verses 5 and 6. The prophet speaks of putting money into a purse with holes in it. What do you think he meant at the time he was speaking?
5. What does these verses say to us today?

Bible Passage 2 - Matthew 25:14-30.

Again, a member of the group should read this aloud.

6. The word "entrusted" is at the heart of this passage. This links back to the principle we discussed in the first session - that everything comes from God, and we are stewards taking care of that which is entrusted to us.
7. Do you think the master was harsh on the servant who hid his money in the ground? After all, he got his money back. What is wrong with that?
8. Verse 21 reads : "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!' Verse 23 reads similarly. It clearly matters not how much we are entrusted with at the beginning, but what we do with that to which we are entrusted that is important.

9. Does this passage mean that if we are good stewards, we will be blessed financially in this lifetime?

Some have taught a “prosperity gospel” - that if we are good stewards, and if we are generous then we will be financially prosperous. There is a significant danger here that we may be misled! We may be entrusted with more, but it may not be financial. We may be blessed with more, but it may not be financial! We can trust God to take care of our needs (as opposed to our wants and desires) and we may know his blessing, but it may not be in this world.

10. Many find this a difficult passage. Pause for a moment, and reflect on what it might be saying to you.

The leader will need some sensitivity at this point to discern whether people will want to share what the passage may be saying to them, or to ask questions, or simply to let them make some observations and to move on.

Life Application

11. As stewards we need to balance long and short term priorities. Is this something we find easy or hard to do? Why?
12. One of the important tools that stewards need to do is to budget, or manage their money. This suggests we need to make decisions about how we allocate the money we have, rather than simply let spending run away with us. Do you find the concept of “budgeting” attractive or off-putting? Why?
13. When allocating our financial resources, we will normally tackle our priorities first. At a high level, what kind of things might be priorities for our budget?

The kinds of things that might be suggested would be housing, giving, caring for or providing for family, food etc.

14. In the section we encourage participants to review this week, there is a budget planner on pages 20 and 21. You will notice that the first line of the spending sheet is our giving. Why do you think that we have put giving as the first line?

The group should be reassured that they will not be asked to share any personal financial details! The reason is that giving to God should be one of our priorities, out of the first fruits, rather than as an afterthought. This will be covered in more detail in session 5.

Responding in Prayer

At the heart of this week’s study is two elements :

- firstly our desire to be a good steward. Are we going to be active in our stewardship, which will inevitably cause us to take some risks?*
- second, the question of building up skills can be daunting. We will need wisdom to assess our skills as a steward and to be able to develop the ones we are weakest at.*

Follow Up

It is recommended that group members use ‘The Money Revolution’ workbook alongside these group discussions. This week we suggest members might read through pages 18 to 21. Although there is not a large amount to read, these pages to involve some reflection on monthly income and outgoings. This is a fundamental part of the personal study that accompanies the course, and its importance should be underlined by the group leader.