

Connection to Proverbs 23:17-21,29-35

To steward something means to manage and care for someone else's resources. Both Solomon and Paul point out that we have a responsibility to steward our own bodies as they belong to God.

Introduction/Opening

One of the first words that a child seems to learn is "mine." If it belongs to you, but a child is holding it, they say "mine." If they see you holding something of interest to them, they cry "mine." If it is broken, then it is yours.

If one is to maintain a biblical worldview, the word "mine" becomes obsolete. Nothing we have is "mine," and it all belongs to the Lord. This includes our bodies. Today's study reveals that since our bodies have been purchased by God, we need not let anything master us and should flee all manners of immorality.

Outline

1. A Good Steward Understands Boundaries (v. 12).
 - a) Paul says that everything is permissible, but not everything is beneficial. To be beneficial means to provide benefit or gain as a result of an action. If we understand that we are to steward the resource of our bodies, then we need to ask ourselves if a potential action will result in gain. The answer to this personal inquiry will begin to set healthy boundaries and help us be wise stewards of God's resources.
 - b) Paul goes on to say that he will not be mastered by anything. If we are mastered by something, then that something exercises control over us. Paul didn't want anything outside of Christ to have control over him, and this needs to be our desire too. In order for this to be the case, we must first submit to Jesus and allow Him to be our Master. It is only through a loving relationship with Him that we can truly steward our bodies in the manner He desires for us.

2. A Good Steward Understands to Whom He Belongs (vv. 15,19).
 - a) If someone has surrendered to Christ, then he is a part of Christ's body (v. 15). We all desire to be a part of a larger group. This might be a team as a child or teenager. It can mean belonging to a civic club as an adult. Paul tells us that when Jesus is our Master, then we are a part of a larger group that make up His body. As a part of His body, we have a responsibility to exercise stewardship over our bodies.
 - b) As a part of His body, the Holy Spirit resides within us (v. 19). If we grasp this truth, stewardship becomes multidimensional. Stewardship of our bodies means that I will not drink certain things, I will not watch certain things, I will not engage in certain activities, etc. This view of stewardship need not lead us to simply managing external behavior. Instead, let's submit to Jesus as our Master and then listen to His Spirit that indwells us. The key to stewardship is knowing and following the will of the Master.

3. A Good Steward Will Flee Immorality (v. 18).
 - a) Paul provides the church a command to flee immorality and to do so immediately. The context here is sexual immorality, but the command can apply in other ways. If someone desires to be a wise steward of their bodies, they will flee alcohol abuse, overeating, or a host of other things. Once again, this is not an effort to simply manage behavior in hopes of doing well. Instead, it is understanding that God's Spirit resides within us, and we want to submit to our Master's leadership.

Conclusion

Stewardship is the management of someone else's resources. If we know Jesus as Lord, we are called to manage the resource of our bodies because we have been bought with a great price. God's Spirit who resides within all believers will give us the leadership we need in order to be a good steward.

If you do not know Jesus as Lord, He desires a relationship with you. He paid a great price for your sin and wants you to be a part of His church. It is impossible to be the steward that He wants you to be apart from a relationship with Him.

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