



A CALL TO BE FAITHFUL STEWARDS

By Rev. Ishaku Izang, IB Member, Nigeria

Mathew 25:14-20 *“Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more. So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more. But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money. After a long time, the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See I have gained five more’.”*

Luke 12:35-44 *“Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning, like servants waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks, they can immediately open the door for him. It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. Truly I tell you, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them. It will be good for those servants whose master finds them ready, even if he comes in the middle of the night or toward daybreak. But understands this: If the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him”. Peter asked, “Lord, are you telling this parable to us, or to everyone?” The Lord answered, “Who then is the faithful and wise manager, whom the master puts in charge of his servants to give them their food allowance at the proper time? It will be good for that servant whom the master finds doing so when he returns. Truly I tell you, he will put him in charge of all his possessions”.*

Albert Mohler in his book, “The Conviction to Lead” defines a steward as, “someone who manages and leads what is not his own, and he leads knowing that he will give account to the Lord as the owner and ruler of all”.

The scripture in **Mathew 25:14-20** (the parable of the Bags of Gold); is a call for diligent investment of whatsoever that is entrusted to us for greater productivity or yield. While the text in **Luke 12:35-44**, it is a call for watchfulness, always being ready for service that pleases the Master (the Lord). Admiral Vern Clark of the US Navy, said, “Managers do things right, but leaders do the right things”. We are called not only to do things right but also to do the right things that honors and bring glory to God as his faithful witnesses.

As ambassadors or representatives of the Lord Jesus Christ, we have to manage whatever that is entrusted to us well and with integrity; in **1 Cor. 4:1-2** *“This, then, is how you ought to regard us: as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the mysteries God has revealed. Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful”*; we are called to be faithful stewards. Our stewardship is to be voluntary **1 Cor. 9:17** *“If I preach voluntarily, I have a reward: if not voluntarily, I am simply discharging the trust*

committed to me"; as each of us uses or deploys his/her various gifts and graces faithfully to serve others, *1 Pet. 4:10-11, "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, they should do as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen"*.

In order for us to be faithful stewards, we ought to have the character of integrity, and also possess the requisite skills and knowledge to do God's work and ministry, *Titus 1:7-9 "Since an overseer manages God's household, he must be blameless, not overbearing, not quick tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught"*.

As leaders in our different spheres of influences, lives and calling; we must never forget that the Lord by his grace has made us stewards of:

- ❖ Human lives and their welfare (as Nurses, Midwives, and other medical and health professionals)
- ❖ Time and opportunity
- ❖ Assets and resources
- ❖ Energy and attention
- ❖ Reputation and legacy (the Church, NCFI)
- ❖ Truth and teaching (the word of God)

Therefore, we have the onerous responsibility to manage these resources well and faithfully too, knowing fully well that we will give account one day to the Lord who is the owner and ruler of all.