

INSTRUCTIONS IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

Photo

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Entry 9 - I

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It Is Required

The phrase, ***It is required***, is only written once in the biblical writings of the apostles. It is connected with the role of the steward and concerning stewards, the Bible says, ***“It is required that ... one be found faithful.”*** In modern times we have lost appreciation for the steward, except that is, for ship lines and airlines. Real disciples of Christ also love the role of a steward and are honored to serve the Lord as one. The office of steward has a far reaching legacy. It is a trust extended to a servant who will carry out the care and administration of one’s treasures as if they were their own. A steward cares for people, the administration of food, money, households, estates, legacies, and sacred teachings. A king’s steward might even have to rule in his place if he is unable. No one must be more trustworthy. That is why something is required.

Listen to Paul’s words,
“Let a man so consider us as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God (secret things of God). Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.” 1Cor. 4:1-2

Along with revival, resurrection and the righteous kingdom that is coming, the Lord will relight a fire that has grown dim in the world. It is the fire of faithfulness which has all but vanished in the nations. A cry for faithfulness screams over our churches, our families, our marriages and our friendships because the ancient oaths and treasured vows of faithfulness have been discarded. Although everyone can point a finger at someone else who is unfaithful, none need look far from their own family and friends to find broken faith, betrayal or abandonment. If faithfulness is required in stewards, then Lord help us rediscover the art of stewardship. Although serious saints still walk in faithfulness it is becoming rare for we live in a broken culture.

Many politicians, marriage partners, business associates, church workers and life-long friends have lost the disciplines of faithfulness. Wherever faithfulness fails, trust is broken, and without trust there is no peace, joy or lasting satisfaction in life. It is time to rebuild the trust culture. The trust culture comes with the foundational understanding that all of us are God’s stewards, entrusted with a King’s treasures.

The Bible says a steward must be “found” faithful. The Lord is searching for faithfulness in His disciples and He will not be denied. Faithfulness begins in the private lives of people and then it becomes visible in the community. Faithfulness is an aspect of God’s holiness and one day it will return to the church. When it does, it will stand out in stark contrast to our secular society. That is why God’s people are called to shine as bright lights in the midst of a dark world. It is part of God’s plan so He will establish faithfulness in the church and He will fix it in the families

and marriages of His people. Only then can we expect any change in the political arenas of our nations.

Jesus taught His disciples about faithful and wise stewards. The early disciples were His stewards and He directed His words at their personal lives. He had high expectations for them and He did not hold back from telling them of the terrifying punishments that accompany stewards who are unfaithful.

One of His disciples, the Apostle Peter, echoed His master's teaching when he told us to **be good stewards of the manifold grace of God**. His exhortation recorded in 1Peter 4:1-10 is a clear overview of the high call to stewardship and faithfulness. Peter tells us to arm ourselves and get ready to endure pain in order to deny the lusts of the flesh and follow God.

He teaches that stewards have two areas of required faithfulness:

1. the things we are forbidden to do
2. the things we are expected to do.

First, he lists the things we must not do. We must not walk in lewdness, sexual lusts, drunkenness, revelries (undisciplined behavior), drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. The list is incomplete, but these activities will hinder one from being a good steward. They lead to unfaithfulness in business, marriage, church life, friendships, family and our walk with the Lord.

Peter teaches that faithfulness as good stewards is not just about resisting the things we should not do, but also about doing the things we should do.

He tells us the end of time is almost here and emphasizes our need to be faithful stewards. Besides the forbidden things, he highlights 4 things we must do. Here is Peter's to-do list:

1. Be prayerful
2. Have a fervent love for each other
3. Be hospitable
4. Minister with the gifts God gave you

Notice that Peter says we should do these things, "**as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.**" 1Pe. 4:10

Every benefit we have is part of the grace that God has given us. As stewards we are entrusted with this grace. It is the precious treasure that comes from our King. He is the Lord and we are His stewards. It is required that stewards be found faithful with every grace their master entrusts to them.

Peter's stewardship list has a richer thread to it. In these verses he gives a qualifying requirement for each grace. A deeper study of Peter's to-do list reveals a kind of test to see if we really are being faithful as good stewards.

1. **Concerning prayer**, Peter says, "**be serious and watchful.**" If we are faithful stewards of the mysteries of God, our prayers will have an intensity to them. They will be serious and focused not flighty or casual.

2. **Concerning our love for one another**, we must forgive and cover one another. The kind of love God requires us to have toward each other looks more like the doting compassion of a tender mother, not that of a religious policeman or judge. Many in the church act more like the latter than the former, but to be a faithful steward with God's people requires the ability to **cover the sins of another.**

3. **Concerning hospitality**, Peter tells us to do it **without grumbling.** Faithful stewardship means serving others in our homes, with our own finances and doing it with dignity, grace and joy, not complaints.

4. **Being a faithful minister with your gifts** involves a right attitude. Our ministry is not for self aggrandizement or for selfish gain or promotion. The gifts that God has given us to minister with are **for the benefit and service of others.**

To sum it up:

As stewards of God's treasures, we are required to be faithful in 2 areas:

1. Faithful stewards of God's treasures keep themselves from evil.
2. Faithful stewards of God's treasures pray with focus, love with compassion, open their homes and hearts and minister to serve others.

Lord, we humble ourselves before you today in order to do that which is required of good stewards. AΩ



Christians for Messiah Ministries

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