

Partnering With God in Our Families and Our Work

Dear Facilitator: We will focus on the importance of work as a way to partner with God, as an act of worship, and as a way to love others.

This week we will continue focusing on God’s plan for us and how God created everything with a purpose, including for our families, workplaces, and communities. We have spent a lot of time thinking about Gen 1-2, which is very intentional because here is where we read that God has a purpose for humanity, to flourish in the world in all aspects of life, including family life, our work, and in our community. In the previous lesson we looked at the idea of “rule”, and in this session we’ll focus more fully on how God has called us to rule, especially in our families and work. We’ll do this by thinking about ruling as “stewardship”.

In this lesson participants will:

1. Explain what stewardship looks like for their families and in their work.
2. Identify one way to apply the idea of stewardship in their families and in their work.


As a reminder, during the lessons on family legacy, we will articulate the “why” of each lesson. We hope that at the end, all will have a better understanding of God’s plans for our lives and for our families. Why do I have a Kingdom purpose? Why does my family have a Kingdom purpose? Because God made us and our families reflect His image and rule over the earth.

We pray that God will give you direction and clarity as you prepare the lesson and activities.


We hope that the families in your group will grow together in God’s love and become a source of friendship and support for one another.

Blessings

Welcome 5 minutes

 **Say:** Welcome back! I hope it's been a good week for all of you, as you have been working diligently on many things that positively influence and help you lead your family.

Last week we discussed why families need to identify their Kingdom purpose.

 **Ask:** Did anyone try something that made a positive difference in your family this past week that you would be willing to share?

Introduction 5 minutes

 **Say:** Today's teaching objectives are to:


1. Explain what stewardship looks like for their families and in their work.
2. Identify one way to apply the idea of stewardship in their families and their work.

This week we will continue focusing on God's plan for us and how God created everything with a purpose, including for our families, workplaces, and communities. Have you ever been put in charge of something? Perhaps you can remember a time when you were told to care for someone else or watch over something to make sure nothing bad happened. Maybe you can remember your first job and the sense of being responsible for something that needed to be done. Perhaps today, you feel overwhelmed by all of the things that you are responsible for. In each of these cases, there is a need for order and stewardship. This is the idea of supervising or taking care of something. This idea of stewardship is at the very heart of God's good plan for how humanity should live and flourish, and it is found right at the beginning of the Bible in His design for humanity.

We've spent a lot of time thinking about Gen 1-2, which is very intentional because it's where we read that God has a purpose for humanity, to flourish in the world in all aspects of life, including family life, our work, and in our community. In the prior lesson we looked at the idea of "rule", and in this session we'll focus more fully on how God has called us to rule, especially in our families and work.

Genesis 1-3 reveals an important principle about how God works today and how we are to work and live in a world corrupted by sin. The principle is as follows: without wise stewardship, there is chaos. The Bible explains that one of the results of the Fall and sin entering into the world is the possibility (and likelihood) that chaos will take over God's good creation. Stewardship is God's plan and invitation to us to live in a way that brings flourishing and prosperity.

Family & Table Talk 20 minutes

 **Say:** Being a good steward means taking care of our responsibilities in a wise way that reflects God's intentions. Let's take some time to think more about what this could mean for us.

1. What examples have you seen of good stewardship in your family?
2. What examples have you seen of good stewardship in your work?
3. What are some consequences of not being a good steward in your family and work?

After the meal, children are dismissed to their group.

As you begin this portion of the evening, explain that each time you will start with the overview and then the lesson time.

<i>40 minutes</i>	
<h1>Parent Training</h1>	
<i>Legacy</i>	PARTNERING WITH GOD

How was the dinner discussion? Did anyone learn anything about stewardship? Did anyone learn anything about what represents your family? Tonight, we want to consider the importance of stewardship for our families and work.

Let's think back to the last lesson; we were beginning to discover our personal and family's kingdom purpose. Having a purpose is important, but it's also vital that we know how to live out our purpose or work towards achieving it. This is where stewardship comes in and provides an essential way of thinking about ourselves, our families, and our work.

To understand this more fully, we must go back to the opening chapters of Genesis. Remember that these chapters tell us about God's plans and purpose for humanity. What was God's plan and purpose for Adam and Eve? In Gen 1:28, God commands Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply, to fill the earth and subdue it, so they would flourish. The image we're given is that God created Eden as a perfect place for Adam and Eve to live, yet beyond the boundaries of Eden there was a world to explore, fill, and subdue. This would require work,

creating new tools and structures, forming communities, and working together. In fact, we see these exact patterns emerge as early as Genesis 4 where some people are living in tents and raising livestock, others are building cities, others are making instruments, and others are forging tools out of iron and bronze.

In summary, all of this activity would require wise rule or stewardship. This is all part of God's original good design for humanity, and is still our purpose today! Despite the presence of sin in our world, we are still called to be stewards of what God has given us.

A significant element of stewardship is that we play a major part in God's work in the world. God is at work to redeem all of the places and structures where sin has brought corruption. One way the Bible talks about this is that sin brings chaos into our lives and communities. For example, in

Job 28:22, Death and Destruction are presented as two characters or partners. In the Law, the effects of disobeying God are often seen as leading to chaos or destruction (e.g., Deut 7:10). God wants to bring His order, and He does this through us and our wise stewardship. Take a moment to think about your own family. Imagine if there was no wise stewardship, no order, and no rule. What would happen to family life?

In the same way, take a moment and think about your work. Imagine if there was no wise stewardship, no order, and no rule. What would happen to your ability to do your work effectively?

We can also envision this for our communities. One practical illustrative example is thinking about our yards. If we fail to cut our grass, don't weed the flowerbeds, or neglect to shovel snow off the sidewalk, then we will see chaos take over. With no wise rule we'll be left with overgrown spaces we can't use or enjoy that will be an eyesore and probably upset our neighbors. Instead, wise rule and stewardship mean that we take care of our yard so that we (and others) can enjoy the goodness of God's creation. When we understand that God intends for us to bring wise rule and stewardship to our families, workplaces, and communities, we are part of God's work to overcome the effects of sin, to bring order in place of chaos, and to help bring about flourishing.

Where do we start? The Bible describes how we begin this stewardship journey, and it begins with whatever we already have responsibility for. Zechariah 4:10 says that we are not to despise the day of small beginnings. As we seek to be wise stewards of what God has given us, we do not want to simply hoard or hide what we have. Matt 25: 14-30 describes the parable of the talents where the servant who was faithful in stewardship with a few things was put in charge of more because he invested wisely. How can we live as wise stewards of what God has given us, even if it feels small to us at this time?



Scripture SUPPORT

Genesis 1:28

God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

Genesis 4: 20-22

Adah gave birth to Jabal; he was the father of those who live in tents and raise livestock. His brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all who play stringed instruments and pipes. Zillah also had a son, Tubal-Cain, who forged all kinds of tools out of bronze and iron.

Zechariah 4:10

Who dares despise the day of small things, since the seven eyes of the Lord that range throughout the earth will rejoice when they see the chosen capstone in the hand of Zerubbabel?

Matthew 25:29

For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.

1 Peter 4:10

As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace.

DISCUSS

- In what areas do you currently have stewardship, especially in your family and work?
- Describe how you could put stewardship into practice in your family or work where it is currently missing?

We want to help everyone think about their role as a steward of what God has given them so that they seek to flourish and help others in their families, workplaces, and communities.

SUMMARY

We covered a lot of material in the lesson.

Our objectives were to:

1. Explain what stewardship looks like for their families and in their work.
2. Identify one way to apply the idea of stewardship in their families and their work.

Does anyone want to share their thoughts on stewardship?

We hope that you are encouraged as you think about how special your role is in God's kingdom as a wise steward.

To end our lesson, please answer the following:

1. Who has an insight tonight about something you've learned or want to try?
2. What will you change or improve in your role as parents this week?

Ages 4-16

40 minutes

Student Training

Legacy

PARTNERING WITH GOD

Objectives

- Help children to be aware that their family has a purpose.
- Help children to be aware of the meaning of stewardship.
- Help children to be aware of ways to apply stewardship in their lives.

The last lesson talked about our families' Kingdom purpose. This is an important way to think about how God has created each of us to have a special role and to make a difference. Today, we're going to talk about the ways to fulfill the special plan God has for each of us.

To do this, we need to remember that God made Adam and Eve to have a special relationship with Him and to have a special job. Adam and Eve were to live as a family in close relationship with each other, to grow their family, and eventually people would fill the earth. As this happened, people would live in new places and form new families and communities. They would work and explore the earth finding new things to do and places to live. This would require working hard, creating lots of new things, and working together with other people. This is exactly what started to happen in the Bible as people began to

explore the earth, live in new places, and create lots of new things. Today, we have the same purpose as Adam and Eve and we call that purpose "stewardship".

Stewardship is how we play a major part in God's work in the world and it means that we are looking after something the right way. Think about a time when you've had to look after something. Maybe it was someone else in your family, or a pet, or something important to make sure nothing bad happened.

Can you think of a time when you had to look after something? What did you do?

When we look after something we want to make sure it is safe and is able to do what it's supposed to do. Imagine if you were supposed to look after something important for your family and you decided to leave it in the middle of the floor where everyone walks and it breaks! Were you a

good steward? Not really! Maybe, instead of putting it out where it will break you could put it on a shelf to be safe. Then, it is more likely to be ok. This is a better example of being a good steward. If we aren't good stewards or look after what we have, then there's a good chance that things will break or somehow go wrong. Take a moment to think about your own family. Imagine if there was no wise stewardship, no order, no rule. What would happen to your family? One practical example is thinking about our house. If we never cleaned up or put things away we'd be falling over things, tripping, breaking things, and we'd soon find it difficult to live in our house. This would not be a good example of stewardship!

Where do we start? We can start with the things that we are already responsible for. That could be things in our house or things we're in charge of doing. Whatever this looks like, we can start to be good stewards by taking good care of what we already have.

DISCUSS

- Lead children in a discussion about the meaning of "stewardship."
- Lead children in a discussion about how God helps families so that they can be good stewards.
- Lead children in a discussion about what would happen without good stewardship in their family.
- Ask children what kinds of ways they can be good stewards in their families, schools, and neighborhoods.



Activities

Activities are age appropriate. One is focused on ages 4-11, and the second is for older children ages 12-16.

AGES 4-11

Materials

Paper sheets

Stickers

Markers/Crayons

On one side of paper have the children draw their house or neighborhood in a way that shows their family being good stewards. This could include pictures of what different people are doing, how things are ordered and organized, and the ways things are being looked after. Once this picture is done, ask the children to use the other side of the paper and draw their house or neighborhood in a way that shows no stewardship. Once this is done, you can use both images as a way to talk about the different ways we can be good stewards of what God has given us.

AGES 12-16

Materials

Paper sheets

Markers

Glue

Pictures from magazines

On one side of paper have the children draw their house, school, or neighborhood in a way that shows their family being good stewards. This could include pictures of what different people are doing, how things are ordered and organized, and the ways things are being looked after. Once this picture is done, ask the children to use the other side of the paper and draw their house, school, or neighborhood in a way that shows no stewardship. Once this is done, you can use both images as a way to talk about the different ways we can be good stewards of what God has given us.

Notes



CHALLENGE QUESTION

DO I LIVE AS A GOOD STEWARD
THROUGH MY WORDS AND ACTIONS?

CHALLENGE COMMITMENT

WHAT ARE YOU WILLING TO DO
TO WORK ON THE CHALLENGE
QUESTION THIS WEEK?



AFFIRMATION *Have children repeat:*

*I was made to work
alongside God as a wise
steward to help others!*