

Lesson 7.27- Parable of Three Servants: Stewardship

Topic: Conflict Management

Subtopic: Stewardship

3B. Be Holy

3F. Spiritual Gifts: Evangelism and Service

Class: Standard VII (Grade 7)

Objectives: **Knowledge:** Students will express, in writing, a desire to use their abilities and resources wisely.

Attitude: Students will realize they are stewards of God's resources and be thankful for the gifts they have.

Materials Needed:

Blackboard and Chalk

Exercise book

References: Matthew 25:14-30

Memory Verse: Matthew 22:37-39

Teacher Activities

Introduction: *Optional* Song(s) and prayer
Ask students to think about talents or resources that they have. Point out that today's story talks about the importance of making wise choices in how we use our talents and resources.

Bible Story: *Parable of the Three Servants*
Have student Readers read the story while other students act it out. Discuss the story using questions in the Teacher's Notes.

Application: Write *Stewardship* and explain that a steward cares for property that somebody else owns. We are stewards of the gifts and abilities. God has given us. Give the students three application situations to discuss.

Have students write in their journals.

Evaluation: Are you, as the teacher, encouraging students to think creatively and come up with a variety of ideas rather than one right idea? Do you use your own resources for the good of others as well as your family?

Student Activities

Introduction: Listen to a story and discuss it. Students think about the talents and resources they have.

Bible Story: Readers divide up the story of three servants, Matthew 25:14-30, as others students act it out. Answer questions about the story. Give examples of how people use resources wisely or how they waste resources.

Application: Students discuss three application situations. *How can these people be good stewards of the talents and resources they have so that they can help others and improve their communities?*

- Business men and Business women
- Artists and Musicians
- Students

Journal reflection: How can I be a good steward of my abilities and resources?

Evaluation: Do student reflections show gratitude to God and a concern for others? Are students able to brainstorm a variety of ways to use abilities and resources wisely?

Extension Activities: *Memory Verses.* Review the memory verses from last week.

Talent show. Your students might enjoy planning a talent show. Let students volunteer to demonstrate something they are talented at doing—music, art, an athletic skill, writing, or a craft. Set aside one class period to share, in groups of 5-7, the talents each person brought to share.

Notes for Teacher

Last week the importance of faithfulness and perseverance were introduced. Today we continue discussing faithfulness as we examine how students can use their time, talent and resources to help others. Our resources, talents and time are gifts from God. We should be thankful to Him and make wise choices about the use of our resources. God rewards those who are faithful.

Key Points: Everything we have and everything we are comes from God. Understanding this should lead to gratefulness and generosity.

Introduction: Ask students to think for a minute about the things they are good at doing. Then ask them to think about what kinds of resources they have available to them. You may have to give them some examples. Examples of talents might include being good at sports, math, English, caring for children, helping with animals, and so on. Examples of resources might include clean water, uniforms for school, books, friends, and so on.

Point out that many of these things were gifts. They may have improved their talents by working hard but some people are better at certain things. They were born that way. Some of their resources are the result of being born into their family or someone giving something to them. Other resources may be the result of their own hard work but even the ability to work hard is a gift from God. Today's story talks about the importance of making wise choices in how we use our talents and resources.

Bible Story: Have students Readers divide up the story of *The Three Servants*. Choose three students to be the servants and one to be the Master. Have them act out the story as the Readers read. Discuss the story briefly after it is read.

- Does everyone have the same amount of money to start with? (No)
- Does the Master expect everyone to have the same amount when He returns? (No)
- How is this like our talents and resources? (Everyone has something but not the same abilities or same amount of resources; God does not expect the same thing from each person)
- What did the first two servants do? (invested and earned more;)
- Give examples of how people can use their resources wisely. (taking care of our school books; being careful with our uniforms so they aren't damaged as we play; not cutting down so much of the rainforest that the land becomes dry; investing in wells and equipment that clean water; sharing what we have with others; practicing until we are really good in the area of our best abilities—practicing math, sports, and so on)
- Why was the Master so angry with the last servant? (The Master gave the servant money so he could use it and make more. He just wasted the Master's resources)
- Give examples of how people waste resources.

Application: Write the word *Stewardship* on the board. The attitude that our abilities and resources are God's and we are just taking care of them for Him is called *Stewardship*. A steward does not own his own property but he or she takes care of somebody else's property, finances or household. The steward on a plane takes care of the passengers and the food on the plane. The steward at a hotel manages meals or lodging for someone else.

In the parable, the Master represents God. God created this world and gave it to us to use for a while. Every person is entrusted with some abilities and some resources. If we work hard and make wise choices we can increase our abilities and our resources. God wants us to make wise choices. He tells us to use our resources to help others and to improve our communities and nations. We must always remember the law of love as we make choices about how to use our resources. God will reward those who are faithful and make wise choices. Good stewardship means that we make wise choices about how to use the gifts God has given us to use. God will hold us accountable for the choices we have made.

Write the following situations on the board and invite students to discuss them in small groups. *How can these people be good stewards of the talents and resources they have so that they can help others and improve their communities?*

Situation one. Men and women who are talented in business have puzzled over how they can use their talents and resources to help poorer people in Kenya become productive workers and citizens. Do you have some ideas how businessmen and women can help others?

After students have discussed this question for several minutes, share these three examples from Friends in the Turkana area of Kenya. (1) The Friends Church in Turkana has used gifts of money to build apartments which they rent out. The money from the rentals is used to help pay village pastors who start churches and schools in poor villages in Turkana. (2) It takes capital (money) for people to start businesses. Some business people have made micro-loans (small business loans) to others who want to start a small shop or business. (3) The women of the Lodwar Friends Church have a plan for helping the girls of Turkana. They plan to raise money by selling baskets and jewelry and use that money to build a girls secondary school.

Situation Two. How can someone who is talented in art or music use their talents to help others? After students share answers in small groups, share about Elisha Miller. A Jamaican man named Elisha Miller is an artist. He uses his talent to paint colorful pictures of Jamaican life. He paints in a small shop in a little village in Jamaica but he sells his oil paintings in an art gallery where many people can see his work. He earns money from the paintings to help support his family but to tourists and nationals who see the pictures in the art gallery or purchase them for their home; his pictures also give enjoyment and appreciation for the Jamaican way of life.

Situation Three. How can a student use his or her resources in ways that show faithfulness? After small group discussion, invite students to share some examples of ways they can use their talents or resources. Point out that intelligence and education are gifts from God. Students can study hard and make the most of this opportunity to learn or they can waste the gift of education as the lazy servant did.

Summary: Everything we have comes from God, Our Creator. He is our Source. We should thank Him and make wise choices about how we will use our gifts. There is an eternal reward for using our gifts well.

Journal: After a few moments of silent reflection, write about how you can use your own abilities and resources wisely.