

# I Am a Steward

## Bible Verse:

1 Peter 4:10

## Extra Bible Verse:

Matthew 25:21

## Provide:

- 2 duffel bags
- 2 sets of assorted clothes
- 2 tables
- Masking tape

## To Do:

- Set up tables.
- In each duffel bag, place equal amounts of clothes.
- Mark a starting line with masking tape.

## Purpose:

This meeting can help children understand that people are stewards because all things belong to God, the Creator (Psalm 50:10). Stewardship includes sharing our time, talents, and money.

## Bible Material:

Wanted: Good Managers (Matthew 25:14-28)

## Warm-up

Get-involved Activity  
(10 minutes)

As the boys and girls arrive, create two teams. Instruct each team to stand behind the starting line. Explain that approximately 25 feet away, you have placed two duffel bags with various clothes in them.

One at a time, a team member from each team is to race to the duffel bag, remove one article of clothing, fold it neatly, place the article of clothing beside the duffel bag, run back, and tag the next team member, who will repeat the action.

The careful stacking of the clothing is important. Each team member must add his clothing article to the top of the stack. If the stack falls, the team member must refold and stack the clothes. Only one stack is allowed for each team. The first team to unpack the duffel bag, fold all items neatly, and make one stack is the winner.

Continue this game until all children have arrived; then move immediately to WORKOUT.

# Workout

Group Study  
(30 minutes)

**1. Introduce the meeting.** Blow a whistle to indicate the start of WORKOUT.

Move the two teams to the taped area on the floor. Say: “The game you just played was about being organized and being good managers. You were given clothes and asked to stack them in a neat pile. The winner was the team who could stay organized until the race was over.

“The meeting today is about good managers. Two of the three people you will be learning about were good managers. Being a good manager means using the gifts you have been given wisely rather than hiding or not using them. One of the people you’ll learn about today was not a good manager. As we study the Bible story today, see if you can figure out why.”

**2. Tell the Bible story.** Briefly tell the story. Use the following as a guide.

## **Wanted: Good Managers**

Once there was a man of wealth who had to go away on a long trip. Before he went, he wanted to make sure that all of his property would be well cared for, so he called in his three most trusted workers. He told them that they were in charge while he was away.

To one worker he gave \$5,000, to another he gave \$2,000, and to another he gave \$1,000. Then he left.

The worker who was given \$5,000 put the money to work immediately. He made \$5,000 more before his boss returned.

The second worker did the same with the money he was given and doubled his boss’s money.

The third worker, however, got scared when his boss gave him \$1,000. He was afraid that he would lose his boss’s money if he invested it, and he knew that his boss was very, very particular about his investments. He hid the money that was given to him so that it would still be available to the boss when he returned.

The boss returned from his trip and called for the three workers. The first came and handed him his original \$5,000 plus \$5,000 more. His boss was pleased. He told him he was going to give him even greater responsibility.

The second worker came and handed \$4,000 to his boss, doubling what he had been given. His boss was pleased. He told him he was also going to give him more responsibility.

Then the third worker came and handed back the \$1,000 that he had been given. He told his boss that he knew he was particular about his money. He explained that he was afraid he

**Provide:**

- A whistle

would lose the money so he hid it.

The boss was not pleased. He shouted to the worker, “You know me. You know that I reap crops where I have not planted and gather crops where I have not planted seeds. You could at least have deposited the money I gave you in the bank. Then I would have received interest on my money. You are not a good manager. If I cannot trust you with this small amount, I cannot trust you with larger amounts.”

The boss told his servants to take the \$1,000 from the bad manager and give the money to the worker who now had \$10,000. This worker had been a good manager. He knew what to do with the responsibility that his boss gave him. The good manager could be trusted with more money and responsibility.

—based on Matthew 25:14-28

**Provide:**

- Poster board
- Marker

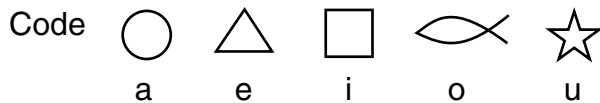
**3. Discuss the Bible story with the Children.** Ask them questions such as:

- Did the boss tell the workers what they should do with the money he gave them? What would you do if one of your parents or someone you know gave you \$200?
- Newspaper articles often trace those who have won large sums of money. One couple won \$20 million, or \$1 million a year for 20 years. In the first four years, they bought two car dealerships and a restaurant, fixed up their house, fixed up their in-laws’ houses, and spent everything they had received. In addition, they had accumulated a large debt. They filed for divorce after the fourth year and fought over who would get the remaining \$16 million. Discuss what went wrong. Ask: “What would you do if you had the money? How would you be different from the couple? Are there any principles or rules you would follow in spending the money?”
- Not all gifts are money. Ask the children to think about themselves and the gifts God has given to them. Allow them to share what these gifts are and why they consider them gifts. Try to question each child. Write down each child’s name on the poster board. Next to the name, write a gift that the child has received from God. (*Some might be playing or singing music, playing sports, doing well in school subjects, helping others, being a good influence, drawing or painting, comforting others, and so forth.*)

After the children have had some time to discuss the story, review their comments. Say: “God has given you everything you have. He has given you a world to live in, your families, your food, and your homes. Jesus told the story about the three managers to illustrate that God expects you to be good managers of whatever you have been given, regardless of the size of your gifts or how you feel about what you have been given. We have discovered that not all gifts are money. You are accountable to God for how you use the gifts He has given you.”

**4. Decode the Bible verse.** Explain that the Bible verse for today is written in a code. The children are to decode the verse. Say: “Sometimes we have to discover or decode what we have been given to understand how best to use it. The code on the chalkboard has assigned symbols for vowels in the alphabet. Your job will be to decode the verse without pencil or paper.”

Allow one child at a time to guess one word. Repeat the words as they are decoded. After the verse is decoded, ask the children to repeat the verse with you. Use the following code:



**5. Shout out the word.** Review the Bible verse for today by dividing the group into two teams. Explain that one team will say the first word in the Bible verse, and the other team will then repeat the word. Then the first team will say the first two words of the verse, and the other team will repeat these.

After both teams have shouted the complete verse, ask the other team to begin saying the verse but slightly faster. Repeat the verse one more time, with the first team saying the words even faster.

**6. Discover your gifts.** Show the children the three gifts you have wrapped. Describe the three gifts. The first gift should be a large box wrapped in shiny or brightly colored paper. Put a large bow on this gift. Inside the box place a card which says *talents*. The second gift should be smaller and wrapped in a colorful paper with a bow. Inside this box place a card which says *time*. Wrap the third box with a brown paper sack. Do not place a bow on this box. Inside this box place a card which says *love*.

Ask the children to describe the boxes. Ask them to guess what is in each box. Select a child to choose which she would like to open. Ask the member to explain her choice.

Explain that in each box is a description of something that money cannot buy. Ask the children to read what the card says. Continue opening each box.

Say: “Today you have discovered that you each have gifts that money cannot buy. You are to be good managers of these gifts God has given you.”

**7. Use a litany for God’s gracious gifts.** A litany is a prayer in which a theme is chosen and one person voices the request or thanksgiving and the rest of the group responds in agreement. Distribute copies of the following litany to the group.

**Provide:**

- Chalkboard
- Chalk
- Construction paper
- Masking tape

**To Do:**

- Write the code symbols and coded Bible verse on the chalkboard. Write the verse on the chalkboard leaving a blank for each vowel.
- Cover all the words of the verse except the first word.  
*1 Peter 4:10*

**Provide:**

- 3 gift boxes
- Wrapping paper and bows
- Poster board
- Tape
- Scissors

**To Do:**

- On 5-by-6-inch pieces of poster board print one of the following words: *talents*, *time*, and *love*. Put one word in each of the gift boxes.
- Wrap the gift boxes as described.

**Provide:**

- A copy of the litany on the next page for each child

## LITANY

*Reader:* Your world is full of things You have made and share with us.

**Group: Thank You, God, for Your many gifts.**

*Reader:* Our families and friends show us the love You have for others.

**Group: Thank You, God, for Your many gifts.**

*Reader:* Your Son, Jesus, taught us how to pray, how to live, and how to be like You.

**Group: Thank You, God, for Your many gifts.**

*All:* Help us to be good managers of Your many gifts. Amen.

**8. Make a transition.** Divide the group into teams for STRETCHING and encourage the children and their coaches to begin immediately.

## Stretching

Activity Page Time  
(20 minutes)

Answers for activity pages are found on the last page of this meeting. You may choose to provide photocopies of this page to the STRETCHING coaches.

## The Tournament

Games and Activities  
(20 minutes)

Blow the whistle to begin THE TOURNAMENT. Choose from the following games and activities.

### *Treasure Hunt*

Before the game create a treasure hunt by writing two different sets of clues that will lead each team in two different directions but will bring them to the same treasure box at the end. The treasure box should contain a small prize or food treat for each player on both teams.

Form two teams. Give each team their first clue and let them begin their treasure hunt. Be sure to send a coach along with each team.

After both teams have found the treasure, remind the players that God has given each of us treasures in our lives. These may be money, talents, or time. God asks us to share these with others around us and with Him.

### Provide:

- A whistle

### Provide:

- Box for treasure
- Treats or prize for each player
- 3-by-5-inch cards
- Pen

### To do:

- Create clues and write them on the cards.

### *Sharing Stewards*

Instruct the players to sit in a circle on the floor. Choose two players to be the gift bearers and give each a bowl filled with candy. Each bowl should contain one piece of candy for each player in the group.

Tell the gift bearers to stand in the middle of the circle. Play a song on the CD. When the music begins, the gift bearers hand the bowls to different players in the circle. The players either take one piece of candy or put one back and hand the bowl back to the gift bearers. The gift bearers then hand the bowls to the next players who do the same thing. Players try not to be caught with more than one piece of candy in their hands when the music stops. You may want to choose new gift bearers for each round.

Remind the players that it is not wrong for us to have things in life. However, we are called to share these things with others.

### *Musical Gifts*

Before the game wrap a box of miniature candy bars (one for each player) with several layers of gift wrap. Instruct the players to sit in a circle on the floor. Turn out the lights. Give the gift to one of the players and tell her to pass it to the person on her right. Tell players to keep passing the gift as long as the lights are off. Turn the lights on and say, "The gift is yours!" The player with the gift in his hands very carefully unwraps the first layer of wrapping paper. Turn off the lights and play another round. Continue playing in this way until all the layers of paper have been torn off. The last player can then open the box and share the prizes inside.

Remind the children that God expects us to share our gifts with others. Ask the players to name some of the gifts they feel they have to share with other people.

## **Cool Down**

Refreshments and Conclusion  
(10 minutes)

Assemble the group and announce that God has given us so many gifts. One of them is the world in which we live. He has placed hundreds of thousands of animals, birds, plants, and trees in His world for us to enjoy and use. He asks that we be good managers of all His creation.

Today's snack will be animal crackers and juice. Ask the children to see how many animals they can name on the crackers.

After snacks have been finished, reassemble the group. Ask them how many animals or birds they can name which are endangered because of man's bad management of God's world. Ask them to name specific ways in which they can help to be good managers of God's world.

### **Provide:**

- 2 bowls
- Candy
- a CD of Christian music
- CD player

### **Provide:**

- Miniature candy bars
- Box
- Gift wrap

### **To Do:**

- Place the candy bars in the box and wrap it with several layers of gift wrap.

### **Provide:**

- Animal crackers
- Fruit juice
- Napkins
- Cups

Say: “Today you have learned that you need to be good managers of what God has shared with you. You have learned that you have special gifts that God has given you. How you share your gifts is up to you. Will you be like the managers who were given \$5,000 or \$2,000, or will you be like the one who was given \$1,000? Will you be like the couple who won the large sum of money? The Bible says you are to use whatever gifts you have to serve others. How will you respond to this command?”

## Meeting 1: Answers for Activity Pages

### *Grades 1–3*

#### **Gifts from God**

World, Food, Homes, Talents

### *Grades 4–6*

#### **I Am a Steward**

caretaker

#### **Being a Good Steward**

1. mind, 2. work, 3. talent, 4. time, 5. body