

Week 1  
Sun 2 June 2024

# THE SPIRITUALITY OF STEWARDSHIP



JOURNEY WITH US AS WE EXPLORE STEWARDSHIP

2 - 30 June 2024

## EMBRACING GOD'S VISION



### THE SPIRITUALITY OF STEWARDSHIP

<b>Week 1</b>	Sunday 2 June	<b>Embracing God's vision,</b>	Rev Thabiso
<b>Week 2</b>	Sunday 9 June	<b>Being good Steward of 'my' gifts.</b>	Rev Boitumelo
<b>Week 3</b>	Sunday 16 June	<b>For his Glory, not mine.</b>	Tony Matthee
<b>Week 4</b>	Sunday 23 June	<b>God knows how to give.</b>	Khanyiso Njwabule
<b>Week 5</b>	Sunday 30 June	<b>The cheerful giver.</b>	Rev Kamogelo

## Week 1 - SUNDAY 2 JUNE



### Embracing God's vision

*Embrace the vision by giving, growing and by serving.*



#### WORSHIP SONG

**Bring God into the meeting by prayer / lighting a candle / listening to a worship song...**

Song: **Send Me** - Jenn Johnson feat. Chris Quilala - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IO-UkeNNxaQ>



#### BIBLE READINGS

**Ponder, picture, and personalize God's word...**

#### Exodus 16:6-31

<sup>6</sup> So Moses and Aaron said to all the Israelites, "In the evening you will know that it was the LORD who brought you out of Egypt, <sup>7</sup>and in the morning you will see the glory of the LORD, because he has heard your grumbling against him. Who are we, that you should grumble against us?" <sup>8</sup> Moses also said, "You will know that it was the LORD when he gives you meat to eat in the evening and all the bread you want in the morning, because he has heard your grumbling against him. Who are we? You are not grumbling against us, but against the LORD." <sup>9</sup> Then Moses told Aaron, "Say to the entire Israelite community, 'Come before the LORD, for he has heard your grumbling.'" <sup>10</sup> While Aaron was speaking to the whole Israelite community, they looked toward the desert, and there was the glory of the LORD appearing in the cloud. <sup>11</sup> The LORD said to Moses, <sup>12</sup> "I have

heard the grumbling of the Israelites. Tell them, ‘At twilight you will eat meat, and in the morning you will be filled with bread. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God.’”<sup>13</sup> That evening quail came and covered the camp, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp.<sup>14</sup> When the dew was gone, thin flakes like frost on the ground appeared on the desert floor.<sup>15</sup> When the Israelites saw it, they said to each other, “What is it?” For they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, “It is the bread the LORD has given you to eat.”<sup>16</sup> This is what the LORD has commanded: ‘Everyone is to gather as much as they need. Take an omer for each person you have in your tent.’”<sup>17</sup> The Israelites did as they were told; some gathered much, some little.<sup>18</sup> And when they measured it by the omer, the one who gathered much did not have too much, and the one who gathered little did not have too little. Everyone had gathered just as much as they needed.<sup>19</sup> Then Moses said to them, “No one is to keep any of it until morning.”<sup>20</sup> However, some of them paid no attention to Moses; they kept part of it until morning, but it was full of maggots and began to smell. So Moses was angry with them.<sup>21</sup> Each morning everyone gathered as much as they needed, and when the sun grew hot, it melted away.<sup>22</sup> On the sixth day, they gathered twice as much—two omers for each person—and the leaders of the community came and reported this to Moses.<sup>23</sup> He said to them, “This is what the LORD commanded: ‘Tomorrow is to be a day of sabbath rest, a holy sabbath to the LORD. So bake what you want to bake and boil what you want to boil. Save whatever is left and keep it until morning.’”<sup>24</sup> So they saved it until morning, as Moses commanded, and it did not stink or get maggots in it.<sup>25</sup> “Eat it today,” Moses said, “because today is a sabbath to the LORD. You will not find any of it on the ground today.”<sup>26</sup> Six days you are to gather it, but on the seventh day, the Sabbath, there will not be any.”<sup>27</sup> Nevertheless, some of the people went out on the seventh day to gather it, but they found none.<sup>28</sup> Then the LORD said to Moses, “How long will you refuse to keep my commands and my instructions?<sup>29</sup> Bear in mind that the LORD has given you the Sabbath; that is why on the sixth day he gives you bread for two days. Everyone is to stay where they are on the seventh day; no one is to go out.”<sup>30</sup> So the people rested on the seventh day.<sup>31</sup> The people of Israel called the bread manna. It was white like coriander seed and tasted like wafers made with honey.



## REFLECTION ON READING

Written by Rev Thabiso Mcinga

We begin this series by exploring the first of our topics and I invite us to see what it means to embrace God’s vision. In a world filled with distractions and challenges, the concept of stewardship invites us to pause, reflect, and align ourselves with the divine purpose that God has set before us. Stewardship, at its core, is about more than just managing resources; it is about honouring the trust that God has placed in us. It is a call to live our lives in a way that reflects our gratitude, faith, and commitment to God’s vision. This vision is one of love, justice, compassion, and abundance—not just for ourselves but for all of creation.

In understanding stewardship, we must first recognise that everything we have is a gift from God. Our time, talents, resources, and the very earth we inhabit are blessings entrusted to us. This means that we are not owners, but caretakers, called to manage these gifts with wisdom and responsibility. Of course, this responsibility and challenge to embrace this vision gets hindered by our romanticising the ideology of scarcity. It gets us belittling what we have or the value of contribution we can make, living with a mindset that nothing is enough. Not enough money, not enough food, not enough love, not enough time, not enough of anything. So, we live in fear – it can also be financial fear so much that we hoard for ourselves – at least for security. Such fear makes selfishness make sense to us.

The reading from Exodus 16:6-31 not only narrates the life and journey of the Israelites from Egypt to the Promised Land, but it also imparts profound lessons on the concept of stewardship. It is beyond the miraculous acts in the story that we beautifully grasp the experiences in the relationship between humanity and God – echoing the concepts of trust, obedience, and thus communal responsibility.

This reminded me of a quote from a book titled: *Let’s Live Again*, wherein Elenor Powell says: “What we are is God’s gift to us. What we become is our gift to God”. As also narrated through the instructions given in Exodus 16 wherein God’s vision becomes somewhat sketched, we learn that as we share, we exercise an act of love – creating a community.... people bound by a common mission, a common idea, a set of values, of virtues, sharing of their abundance. The Israelites were instructed to share their daily provision with others, fostering a sense of unity and solidarity within the community. This act of sharing not only ensured that everyone’s needs were met but also reflected God’s vision of compassion and generosity.

In conclusion, revival of good stewardship challenges us to draw lessons from the narratives of the Israelites in the wilderness which include remembering that even in times of uncertainty and desperation, God always comes through to manifest abundance in and through us, providing for us. It is in our embrace and obedience to that - that we then ought to receive enough and share enough to manifest love and justice - as values that embody the essence of God in the world. We are called to be agents of that.



## LIFE APPLICATION

The applicative challenge in this scripture therefore lies in overcoming self-centeredness and adopting a culture of equity and trust. In a world where individualism and accumulation often prevail, the lesson from Exodus 16 calls us to gather and share resources thoughtfully, ensuring that everyone's needs are met. This, therefore, requires a shift from personal gain to collective well-being, which can be difficult in competitive environments. Embracing this challenge means actively practicing restraint, generosity, and empathy, working towards a community where resources are distributed fairly, and everyone feels cared for and valued, mirroring the divine provision and unity demonstrated in the wilderness. That is the will of God for God's creation.

### PRACTICAL THING TO DO

1. **Trust in God's Provision:** Cultivate a mindset of trust in God's continual provision for your needs, both materially and spiritually.
2. **Serve Others:** Look for opportunities to serve others in your community, demonstrating love and compassion in action.
3. **Share Generously:** Embrace a spirit of generosity by sharing your resources, time, and talents with those in need, reflecting God's abundant love for all.
4. **Limit Excessiveness:** Avoid excessiveness in consumption and accumulation, recognizing that true fulfilment comes from a balanced and mindful approach to material possessions.

### MEMORY VERSE

**Luke 16:10** - "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much."

### PRAYER:

*God of Creation and God of abundance, you created all things and bless us with all that abundance. Entrusted with the gift of such abundance, we pray for wisdom and strength to embrace your vision for our lives by sharing our giftedness, our time, and our resources. Help us O Lord to be forever mindful of our responsibility to care for those around us and most of all, for your vision for your creation. In Your mercy and grace, empower us to live in harmony with your divine plan, bringing glory to you – always. Amen.*



## SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

1. How does our reliance on routine affect our ability to recognize God's daily provision?
2. Can we distinguish between our needs and wants in a culture of excess?
3. How can we challenge ourselves to serve others and our church sacrificially, reflecting God's love and care?
4. What concrete actions can we commit to as a group to align more closely with God's vision, starting today?

## FAMILY TIME:

**BY JENNY BLAKE – CHILDREN'S PASTOR - [jennyb@bmc.org.za](mailto:jennyb@bmc.org.za)**



**Week 1: Embracing Gods Vision**  
**Scripture Reading: John 17:15-19**

*"My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified."*

### Materials Needed:

- A bowl of water
- A small, waterproof toy or object
- A sponge
- A Bible

## Activity:

1. **Introduction:** Gather everyone around and start with a simple question: "What does it mean to be 'in the world but not of the world?'" Allow everyone to share their thoughts.
2. **Object Lesson:**
  - **Water and Toy:** Show the bowl of water and the small toy. Place the toy in the water and say, "This toy is in the water, but it doesn't absorb the water. It stays separate, even though it's surrounded by water."
  - **Sponge:** Now take the sponge and dip it in the water. Squeeze it and let it soak up the water. Explain, "This sponge is in the water too, but it's absorbing the water. It's taking in everything around it."

## Lesson:

Explain that as followers of Jesus, we are like the toy, in the world but not absorbing everything the world offers that goes against God's will. We should not be like the sponge, soaking up the negative influences around us.

3. **Scripture Reading:** Read John 17:15-19 together. Discuss what Jesus prayed for his disciples and how it applies to us today. Focus on these points:
  - Jesus asks for protection from the evil one.
  - Jesus says we are not of the world, just as he is not.
  - Jesus prays for our sanctification through the truth, which is God's word.
  - Jesus sends us into the world with a mission, just as he was sent by the Father.
4. **Discussion Questions:**
  - What do you think it means to be "sanctified by the truth"?
  - How can we stay in the world but not be of the world?
  - What are some ways we can protect ourselves from negative influences?
5. **Application Activity:**
  - **Protective Bubble:** Have each family member take turns sharing one thing they do to stay close to God and avoid negative influences. Write these down on a piece of paper and place it in a "protective bubble" (you can use a plastic container or a clear bag). This symbolizes that we are protecting ourselves with God's truth.
6. **Prayer Time:** Close in prayer, asking God to help your family stay strong in the world without being influenced by it. Pray for protection, guidance, and the strength to follow Jesus' example.

**Closing Thought:** Remind everyone that just as Jesus was sent into the world with a purpose, we too are sent to share God's love and truth with others. We can do this without letting the world change who we are in Christ.

**Memory Verse:** Encourage everyone to memorize John 17:17: "Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth."