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Parents as Stewards

“It is required in stewards that one be found faithful” (1 Corinthians 4:2, NKJV).

“The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it, the world, and *all who live in it*” (Psalm 24:1, NIV; italics added).

It has almost been three years now since my family and I moved to Colorado Springs to allow me to assume my duties as the president of the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI). The summer of 2009 we were preparing for our move. My youngest daughter, Aubrey, had just graduated from Heritage Christian School in Indianapolis, where I served as superintendent for nearly a decade. The third Friday night in July, Aubrey was in downtown Indianapolis, enjoying some final days of fun with her friends.

As I was crawling into bed around midnight, the phone by my bed rang. It was Aubrey. “Dad, I am leaving to come home on Interstate 70. Do I go east or w- ...” I heard a loud *crash* as the phone went dead.

I flew out of bed. As I was pulling on my jeans, the phone rang again. “Dad. It’s Aubrey. I’m OK ... but your Durango ...” After breathing a quick prayer of thanksgiving to God that Aubrey was OK, I quickly came to the thought that the Durango was God’s, and if He wanted me to get a new SUV that was OK with me. But then I thought, “Not only is the Durango God’s, so is Aubrey!”

What is a steward? Simply put, a steward is one who has been given, for a time, the care of something that is owned by another. *Stewardship*, then, can be defined as “the faithful and efficient management of the property or resources belonging to another in order to achieve the owner’s objectives” (Wilson 2010).

Stewards, by definition, act in the best interests of the owner. That is, they serve the owner’s interests and not their own. The power to lead is a gift from the owner, and there will be a day of reckoning—accountability—when the steward will give account to the owner of how the owner’s resources were managed and invested with an expected return in mind (Matthew 25:14–30).

As stewards, parents have been entrusted by God with a very precious resource—their children. They do not ultimately “own” their children, nor do the children “own” themselves: God does!

Because parents are stewards in the raising of their children, then it follows that success for parents begins with a personal relationship with the Master through faith in His Son, Jesus Christ. To one day be found to have been faithful stewards, parents must be aware of the desires and intentions of God for His children. I believe God’s desire for His children is that they are taught in accordance with His truth and are inspired to become devoted followers of Jesus Christ.

Biblical stewardship is a wholly relational term according to R. Scott Rodin (2010). Parents as stewards have a relationship with God. The deeper this personal relationship, the more effective stewards they will be. Parents who are faithful stewards will fulfill God’s intentions for His children. This means that parents as stewards will raise their children to be like Jesus and grow in character consistent with the character of their Father. This means their children will grow to be faithful, loving, kind, gracious, merciful, just, patient, and good. They are “to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with [their] God” (Micah 6:8).

Parents who are faithful stewards will be faithful to God. They will obey Him, be humble, and sacrifice for their children. They will raise their children with integrity. They will pray to God for wisdom, and He will grant it to them. They will be accountable for all their actions to their Master. They will be honest, vulnerable, loving, and always caring for their children’s needs. They will be hardworking, diligent, and passionate in the fulfillment of God’s purposes for His children. Finally, they will have a vision for what their children will one day become to the glory of God.

Parents as stewards will be deserving of God’s trust and delegation. They will enjoy God’s confidence and trust. They will consistently achieve God’s desires for His children, and they will carefully protect God’s children from harm.

In conclusion, if we are to be found faithful by God as the stewards of His children, we must make it a habit to listen to Him. We do this as we read His Word, the Holy Bible. We need to talk to Him regularly. We do this through prayer. Finally, while raising our children, we need to make the decisions that God the Father would make Himself. Parenting as stewards: there is no more daunting challenge, and there is potentially no greater reward than to hear God one day say, “Well done!”



Brian S. Simmons, President ACSI

References

- Rodin, R. Scott. 2010. *The steward leader: Transforming people, organizations and communities*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.
- Wilson, Kent R. 2010. *Steward Leadership: Characteristics of the steward leader in Christian nonprofit organizations*. PhD diss., University of Aberdeen.

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