

Living Differently: 1 Corinthians
"Faithful Stewards" 5 of 17
Cornerstone Church of Poway
Pastor Ed Turley
September 13, 2026

Sermon Teaching

Big Idea: God calls us to faithfully steward everything He has entrusted to us, seeking His approval above all else.

Remember This: God doesn't call me to be successful; He calls me to be faithful.

Three Ways To Live As Faithful Steward:

1. Seek God's Approval Above People's Applause

¹ So then, men ought to regard us as **servants of Christ** and as those entrusted with the secret things of God. ² Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must **prove faithful**. ³ I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed, I do not even judge myself. ⁴ My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me. ⁵ Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. **He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts.** At that time each will receive his praise from God.

1 Corinthians 4:1-5 (NIV)

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, ²⁴ since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. **Colossians 3:23-24 (NIV)**

Notes: _____

➔ Faithfulness begins when God's approval matters more than people's applause.

2. Receive God's Gifts With Humility

⁶ Now, brothers, I have applied these things to **myself and Apollos** for your benefit, so that you may learn from us the meaning of the saying, "Do not go beyond what is written." Then you will not take pride in one man over against another. ⁷ For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not? ⁸ Already you have all you want! Already you have become rich! You have become kings--and that without us! How I wish that you really had become kings so that we might be kings with you! ⁹ For it seems to me that God has put us apostles on display at the end of the procession, like men condemned to die in the arena. We have been made a spectacle to the whole universe, to angels as well as to men. ¹⁰ **We are fools for Christ, but you are so wise in Christ!** We

are weak, but you are strong! You are honored, we are dishonored! ¹¹ **To this very hour we go hungry and thirsty, we are in rags, we are brutally treated, we are homeless.** ¹² We work hard with our own hands. **When we are cursed, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure it;** ¹³ when we are slandered, we answer kindly. Up to this moment we have become the scum of the earth, the refuse of the world.

1 Corinthians 4:6-13 (NIV)

Notes: _____

Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. **James 1:17 (NIV)**

Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. **1 Peter 4:10 (NIV)**

→ Everything we have is a gift from God to be used for the purposes of God.

3. Reflect Christ Through Faithful Action

¹⁴ I am not writing this to shame you, but **to warn you**, as my dear children.

¹⁵ Even though you have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have **many fathers**, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel.

¹⁶ **Therefore I urge you to imitate me.** ¹⁷ For this reason I am sending to you **Timothy**, my son whom I love, who is faithful in the Lord. He will remind you of **my way of life in Christ Jesus**, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church. ¹⁸ Some of you have become arrogant, as if I were not coming to you.

¹⁹ But I will come to you very soon, if the Lord is willing, and then I will find out not only how these arrogant people are talking, but what power they have. ²⁰ **For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power.** ²¹ **What do you prefer? Shall I come to you with a whip, or in love and with a gentle spirit?** **1 Corinthians 4:14-21 (NIV)**

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.
James 1:22 (NIV)

→ The strongest evidence of our faith is not what we say about Jesus but how faithfully we reflect Jesus.

Notes: _____

This week, I will be faithful with what God has entrusted to me by:

[] Identify What God Has Entrusted to You

[] Examine Whose Approval You Are Seeking – Jesus or ?

[] Take One Faithful Step This Week



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Talk It Over

Icebreaker: What Would You Trust Me With?

Go around the group and have each person answer: “What is one responsibility—serious or lighthearted—that people know they can trust you with?”

Examples might include:

- Planning a trip
- Keeping a secret
- Fixing something
- Bringing dessert
- Giving good advice
- Remembering important dates
- Showing up when someone needs help

After everyone answers, ask: “What qualities make someone trustworthy?”

Transition to the Study

Tonight we will discover that God has entrusted each of us with time, abilities, relationships, resources, influence, and the message of Jesus. The question isn’t whether we have been entrusted with something—it is whether we will be faithful with it.

Talk It Over

For Families with Children

1. What is something God has given you that you can use to help others?

2. Why is it more important to please God than to impress people?

For Teens and Adults

3. What stands out to you most as you read 1 Corinthians 4?

4. What does it mean to be a faithful steward?
5. In what area of your life has God entrusted you with something to care for?
6. Are you more concerned about God's approval or the opinions of others? Why?
7. How does remembering that everything belongs to God change your perspective?
8. What does faithful stewardship look like in your home, work, church, or community?
9. What would change if we measured our lives by faithfulness instead of accomplishments?
10. What is one step you can take this week to become a more faithful steward?

This Week's Challenge:

11. Each morning this week, begin your day by praying: "Lord, help me be faithful with what You've entrusted to me today." Look for opportunities to serve, love, and obey—even when no one else notices.

Close In Prayer: