

# Happy Managers 2 of 2

#0182

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—September 22, 1978

The text is Luke 16:2. Remember that last Friday night, we spoke on the subject, “Happy Managers.” We’re going to talk on the same subject tonight—this is the second part of the subject. We’ll have some different text tonight, and some different things that we’re managers of.

You remember that we found that everything works best when it works like it was made to work. Automobiles work well; they do their best when they have the right octane rating in the gasoline, the right mixture of air and fuel in the carburetor. Human beings work best when they work according to the way they were *made* to work. And, of course, to find that out, we have to go to the Creator. He’s the One that made the laws of our being.

This world is engaged in a demonstration on the one hand, proving the success that follows obeying the Creator’s will and carrying out His law, and the opposite of disappointment, frustration, failure, disease and death that come when the Creator’s plan is not followed. But all this is based upon an understanding, or misunderstanding, or a failure to understand this basic fact: that God has never abdicated His ownership. He made us; we’re His. He made the world; it is His.

Another fact is that He has let you and me be managers, stewards, agents, never to take the place of His ownership. But He has given us such a large opportunity in stewardship, in management, that we can ruin everything as far as what we manage is concerned. I’ve thought about it, friends, what a marvelous thing it is that the LORD would make something of infinite value and then turn it over to somebody and let them choose whether to ruin it or to make it a success. What a love that is. What a regard for us. What a sacred thing, a valuable thing, a costly thing this power of choice is that God has given to human beings.

How are we using ours? Our text says:

“...There was a certain rich man, which had a steward;  
and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted  
his goods. And he called him, and said unto him, How is  
it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy  
stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward” Luke  
16:1–2.

I was interested in the translation from the *New English Bible*. It says, “For you cannot be manager here any longer.” Bring in your accounts. Show your books, show your records. Turn over whatever is left. Your stewardship is at an end. You cannot be manager here any longer.

Every day, 100,000 people hear that summons. Every day, 100,000 people close their stewardship. They're not managers any longer. There may be somebody here tonight that's going to have that summons before another Sabbath comes, I don't know. But I do know this, friend, we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, to give an account of our stewardship, to give a report of our management. We're not owners. We don't own a thing—never did, never will. We are stewards—managers. But remember, so completely has God turned the management of certain things over to us that we can act as if we *were* the owners. We can pretend like, play like, act like, spend like. We can take the money, God's money, that comes into our hands and spend it just as if it were our own. And who's to stop me, after all, I've got it. Who's to stop me? Nobody.

But oh, my friends, it makes God so happy when I realize that none of this is mine, it's His. The silver is mine and the gold is mine, God says in Haggai 2:8. We studied that last week. What a great joy comes to God when I recognize that He's the Owner of the whole thing, and I consult Him as the Owner, as to how I, the agent, will spend, appropriate, disburse, His money, His materials, His property. That makes Him happy. That's partnership with Him. And because I was made to work that way, when I *do* work that way, I achieve real happiness, real success.

“...he that keeps the law, happy is he” Proverbs 29:18.

We noted it also with reference to time. All time is the gift of God. Someone has said that time is so precious that God gives it to us just a minute at a time. But He does not give it to us so that we become owners of the time. We can act like it. We can pretend like it, and we can waste it. We can go to destruction with it. But that breaks the heart of God, for He gave us time to be a great blessing to us and to others.

Are we stewards or are we owners? Do we possess this time as if we made it, or do we accept it as the gift of God, given to us as a responsibility? We're stewards, we're agents, we're managers.

What's the great sign of God's ownership of all our money? The tithe. What's the great sign of God's ownership of all our time? The Sabbath.

Then we also noted last Friday night, the wonderful gift of love for which God has made us stewards. What a great responsibility it is to love as He directs, whom He directs, in the way and at the time He directs. This is basic to all life.

Now this evening, I want to study with you two other great stewardships. The first one we shall note tonight is referred to in 1 Corinthians 6:19:

“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's”  
1 Corinthians 6:19–20.

Here again is this basic fact that we're not owners, we're managers. He relates this principle here particularly to the human body. I'd like to spend a little time on that this evening.

Your body is not yours. Oh yes, my body's mine. Nobody can tell me how to eat or drink, or dress or work or play. No. I have control of it, don't I? But not as owner, but rather as manager. That's what Paul is speaking of here.

"What? Don't you know, that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own..." 1 Corinthians 6:19.

I was riding with a young man out West, a young fellow who hadn't had the opportunity that you young people have, to know God and know the Bible. He and I were riding together for some distance, and I was quite interested in his philosophy of life. He had been involved in the drug scene and other things related to it.

He told me his philosophy, He said, "After all, if I make the wrong choice, I'm the one that suffers. If what I do kills me, it's *my* life. So why should anybody else worry about it—it's my life."

He didn't understand this principle, did he? This is basic to all physical transgression. The man that smokes and gets lung cancer and finally dies may say, "Well, it was my life. I threw part of it away, but it's my life."

No, it *wasn't* your life, my friend. It was God's life. God created you in His image. God bought you with the sacrifice of Calvary. You are bought with a price, a tremendous price. A great ransom was paid for you. And will you dissipate that life that God made to show forth His praise? Will you take what He made for glorious success and cause it to end in dismal failure? Will you go down the road of delirium tremors, hardening of the liver, heart attack, nervous breakdown, or any one of the other many many ways in which men reap the results of wrong choices?

Many times because they *think* that their life is their own, their body is their own, and it *isn't*. They're only agents. And someday, in the words of our opening text, the Great Owner, the Great Creator is going to say, "Give an account of your stewardship. You can't be manager here any longer."

"If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy... for" 1 Corinthians 3:17.

You see, dear friends, this life is a period of probation. It's a great opportunity to find out whether God can trust us for eternity. If you take care of that body that He has *loaned* to you, if you take care of that life and health that He has entrusted to your stewardship, He will extend it through all *eternity*. You can have a million, million, million years of health and happiness. But if you take *this* body and ruin it with unhealthful habits and disgraceful actions, what point would there be in perpetuating that existence? That would indeed be eternal hell. Wouldn't it, friends?

Thank God, He is going to allow sin to destroy itself. He is going to put an end to the misery of those who have chosen to regard themselves as owners rather than agents. Give an account of thine stewardship, for thou may be no longer stewards. You can't be manager here anymore.

Mismanagement leads to dismissal. Misappropriation of funds leads to being fired, and it ought to, shouldn't it, friends? Thank God, there is an opportunity to repent where we have broken the laws of life and health, where we have brought disappointment to our Lord and pain and sorrow to ourselves. Thank God, if we confess our sins, our physical sins as well as the spiritual sins, He, Jesus, who paid the debt on Calvary, is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

And it wouldn't it be a strange twist, an awful perversion of the Gospel for a man to say, "Oh well, Jesus died, and my salvation was all taken care of 2,000 years ago. And whether I smoke or not, whether I drink or not, whether I exercise or not, or what I eat—that's my business. My salvation is not affected by any of those things."

What a terrible perversion that is, my friend. As we read there in 1 Corinthians 6:19–20, the very fact that you are bought with such a price is the urgent reason of the apostle that you should treat this body as the temple of God and take care of it.

I was interested in a wonderful statement in the book *Medical Ministry*, page 230. This was written to a man way over halfway around the world, back before most of us here tonight were born. But it's as up to date as any inspired statement is, and that's always relevant. I want you to notice some very practical, simple things in what I'm going to read, but I want you to get the underlying philosophy of it. I'm a *steward*, not an owner. I'm a *manager*; I didn't make myself. God made me and I'm responsible to Him.

"In regard to that which we can do for ourselves there is a point that requires careful, thoughtful consideration. I must become acquainted with myself" *Medical Ministry*, page 230.

Does the man who understands the working of an automobile usually treat it better than the one who knows nothing about it? Oh, yes. I must become acquainted with myself. Here is the basic reason for studying anatomy and physiology.

"I am to learn to take care of this body temple that God has given me. I must be a learner always as to how to take care of this building, the body God has given me, that I may preserve it in the very best condition of health. I must eat those things which will be for my very best good physically, and I must take special care to have my clothing such as will conduce to a healthful circulation of the blood. I must not deprive myself of exercise and air. I must get all the sunlight that it is possible for me to obtain. I must have wisdom to be a faithful guardian of my body. I should do a very unwise

thing to enter a cool room when in a perspiration. I should show myself an unwise steward to allow myself to sit in a draft and thus expose myself so as to take cold. I should be unwise to sit with cold feet and limbs and thus drive back the blood from the extremities to the brain or internal organs. I should always protect my feet in damp weather. I should eat regularly of the most healthful food which will make the best quality of blood, and I should not work intemperately if it is in my power to avoid doing so. And when I violate the laws that God has established in my being, I am to repent and reform, and place myself in the most favorable condition under the doctors God has provided—pure air, pure water, and the precious sunlight” *Medical Ministry*, page 230.

That’s a wonderful statement, isn’t it? Get the underlying philosophy, the foundation of it all—what is it? I’m a steward. I’m not an owner. This body isn’t mine. I can’t do with it as I please. Yes, I *can* do with it as I please, but if I do, and do the wrong thing, I’m to answer for that at the judgment day and I’m to reap the consequences of it beforehand. Sooner or later the wages of sin is death, and what a lot of pain it usually brings along the way.

I was talking with someone just a few days ago. I asked them a question. I’ve asked that question to this audience sometime, and I want to ask it again tonight. You can take what I’ve studied so far, and what I’ve read so far and get a lot of pain and worry out of it. This person that I was talking to was just that kind of person.

I said to them as I saw they were all worried about the requirements of God; it was burdening them. I said to them: “Do you ever make a garden?”

They said, “Yes.”

I said, “Do you ever use a hoe?”

“Yes.”

“Which end do you pick up?”

There was a smile, of course. Which end *do* you pick up, or does it make any difference? Does it? Why sure, it makes all the difference in the world. If a person *insists* on picking up the sharp end of the hoe, he’ll never cut many weeds, but he may cut himself. And that wasn’t what the hoe was *made* for.

All these precious instructions on health, friend, whether it relates to exercise, diet, dress, sunlight, fresh air, sleep, and all the rest; all of this precious instruction, if you *insist* on picking up the sharp end instead of the handle, you can get a lot of worry out of it, and fretting. Do you remember reading about some people that worried so much about after eating that their food would hurt them? They were afraid the food would hurt them, and sure enough it did—even though it was good food. You can worry about this whole health program for fear that you’re not getting enough of this or too much of that, and so on, and you can just worry yourself sick.

That's the person that insists on picking up the sharp end of the hoe. Pick up the handle, friend. Use the sharp end to cut the *weeds*, not to cut *you*. Remember, the Creator's desire is that you be in health and prosper, even as your soul prospers. And if you cooperate with Him, recognizing that He is the Owner and you're the what? The manager, the steward, then you can be a *happy* manager, because that's His purpose in it all.

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace..." John 16:33.

"If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them"  
John 13:17.

Now, there's another great stewardship that's been committed to us that I want to notice tonight. The first stewardship that we noted tonight is the stewardship of ourselves. The second is the stewardship of others. The basic stewardship of others that we will notice first is the stewardship that's committed to parents. The Scripture says:

"Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD..." Psalm 127:3.

God says to the father and the mother, "Take this child and rear it for Me." God never turns over the ownership of that child to you, dear father, dear mother. As you are not your own, the child is not your own. And yet there is a time in the history of that little one, when you can ruin it if you insist.

I marvel when I think of what's going on. God lets parents take little children, so precious that Christ laid down His life to redeem them, so precious that He says, "Suffer little children to come unto Me, or of such is the kingdom of heaven." So precious, He permits parents to take those little ones and treat them as if they owned them. Doesn't He? But they'll not be successful unless they recognize God's ownership. They're only stewards. And when a father or a mother recognizes God's ownership of the child, it will cause them to seek the Lord with all their hearts to know God's will.

As the father and mother of Samson cried to the angel that announced his coming birth, "How shall we order the child?" God thought the birth of John the Baptist was so important that He sent the highest angel from glory to Zacharias there in the temple, and gave special instruction regarding his diet and other phases of his upbringing. And that same angel, thank God, has come in these latter days and given us thousands of pages that parents may read and study for the training of their children. And God knows, dear fathers and mothers, that we need them, don't we?

Thus the basis of prayer, the basis of the earnest supplication of fathers and mothers is this fact: we are not owners of those children. We are managers.

This leads me to another point, friends. If we were owners of those children, we might say, "Well, I think it's easier to just let them do what they want to do than to have a hassle." But if I'm not an owner, but instead I'm a manager, do I have any *right* to abdicate?

No, I don't. I may do it, certainly. God is up there in Heaven, and He'll let me spoil my child to death; He'll let me do it. But what a tragedy for me to take things in my hands and say, "Since I have the control, instead of insisting on obedience, instead of teaching conformity to law, I'm going to let the little one do more or less as it pleases. I love it so much I couldn't punish it. And I love myself too well to get into problems over discipline. It's easier to just let it ride, let it run."

Do you see that recognition of God's ownership is basic to a true understanding of parental responsibility?

Dear children, you boys and girls, any of you that are old enough to understand what I'm saying, don't think that your parents can properly decide whether you should or shouldn't obey. God requires you to obey your parents. He put that right in the heart of His law in the Fifth Commandment. And just as God requires you to obey your parents, God requires your parents to require obedience of you. And if they don't do it, they must answer for it at the judgment bar of God.

Boys and girls and young people, do you want your parents to be lost because they haven't stood up and required obedience on your part? Do you want your parents to be lost because they thought it was easier to let you have your own way? Oh boys and girls, I plead with you. Remember, you don't belong to yourselves. Your parents belong to God, and you belong to God. The only way you can be happy, and the only way you can make your parents happy, is to cooperate with your parents in cooperating with God. You're not owners; you're managers, parents.

I'm always happy when I see parents and children working together, praying together, having recreation together, coming together to the house of God, and sitting together in the church; sharing together in missionary activity.

Isaac stayed with his father and inherited the blessing. Jesus was subject to His parents until He was 30 years of age, and went out to be a great source of inspiration and blessing to thousands. Daniel and Joseph were snatched away from their homes in their late teens, but it wasn't by any choice of theirs. But they had learned so thoroughly the lesson of obedience in co-operation with their parents that they were faithful in cooperating with God when they met the gods of Egypt and of Babylon.

God is developing some young people today; some children and young people who will be to this generation what Joseph and Daniel were to their time. They will be the ones who *know* that they're managers, not owners; who understand that true success can come only in obeying the laws that govern us.

I would like to broaden this to others than parents. In *Desire of Ages*, page 641, I read these significant lines:

"To every soul a trust is given..."

To how many? Every soul.

“...Of everyone the Chief Shepherd will demand, ‘Where is the flock that was given thee, thy beautiful flock?’” *The Desire of Ages*, page 641.

So it isn't just to fathers and mothers. God has made you, my dear teenager friend; God has made you, some dear man or woman in your 20s, 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s, wherever, you may have no children, but God has made you responsible for some people other than yourself. Somebody that God has given you such responsibility for that He is going to *require* a return on the stewardship.

“Why,” somebody says, “Brother Frazee, I didn't know that. I don't know who I'm responsible for.”

Well, if I were you, friend, and I say this tenderly if I were you, I'd find out. If God has made you a steward of somebody, He does not want you to be in ignorance. If you've been so busy or so careless that you've missed the appointment, God is still holding it in reserve for you. May I read these inspired words again?

“To every soul a trust is given. Of everyone the Chief Shepherd will demand, ‘Where is the flock that was given thee, thy beautiful flock?’” *The Desire of Ages*, page 641.

That text is quoted from Jeremiah 13:20. “Where is the flock that was given thee, thy beautiful flock?” It was given to you not to be the owner, remember, your children are not your own; your flock isn't your own; the people that God has made you responsible for; you are not the owners of them, but you're the agent of God to minister to them—to lead them, to help them, to bless them, to instruct them, to win them to Christ, or to help hold them in the Christian way. This is the responsibility that every Sabbath School teacher has, that every elder, deacon, deaconess, and every other officer in the church or Sabbath school—everyone who carries responsibility in an institution for God.

But beyond that, as I have indicated, every soul has some influence on somebody. Your influence is a tremendous talent, friends. God is looking to you to help somebody. Did you know that? And He's going to ask you, “What did you do with that person that I put under your influence? What did you do with that person that I made you a steward of?”

Let it not be said of you, or said by you, as that man that was speaking to the king of Israel: “While thy servant was busy here and there, he was gone. The man that I was put in charge of while I was busy here and there, about this and that, the man that I was made responsible for was gone.” Oh friends, let it not be.

Let us thank God that He can help us to know our stewardship and carry it out. What do you say?

[Audience] Amen.



Hebrew 2:13, the last part of the verse. Paul is quoting and applying it to Christ and His identification with you and me.

“Behold I and the children which God hath given me”  
Hebrews 2:13.

Won't it be a wonderful thing in the judgment day when the Great Creator, Redeemer looks down into our faces and says, “Where is your flock?” If we can look up and say, “Behold I and the children which God hath given me.” No higher honor, no greater joy can be ours all through eternity. And remember, this applies, as I have proved to you, not merely to parents with their flesh and blood children, it applies to you and everybody that God has made you responsible for. If you don't know who that is, seek God on your knees to you know *who* He has given you responsibility for; because He has for somebody, friend. Somebody, somebody you've been put in charge of. Your influence is to help them.

“Behold I and the children which God hath given me”  
Hebrews 2:13

And this applies, as I have proved to you, not merely to parents with their flesh and blood children. It applies to you and everybody that God has made you responsible for. If you don't know who that is, seek God on your knees until you do know who He has given you responsibility for; because He has for somebody you've been put in charge of. Your influence is to help them.

“Behold I and the children which God hath given me” Hebrews 2:13.

This is quoted, as many of Paul's statements in Hebrews and Romans are, from the Old Testament. I want you to turn over to Isaiah 8 and see the original statement that Paul is quoting. It applies especially to this last generation. The whole 8<sup>th</sup> chapter of Isaiah relates especially to our time. In the 17<sup>th</sup> verse, we see the people waiting for the Lord and looking for Him. The 16<sup>th</sup> verse, we see them putting the seal back in the law. Here we find the great principles of the third angel's message—looking for the coming of Jesus, putting the 7<sup>th</sup> day Sabbath seal back in the law. Knowing this setting, look at the 18<sup>th</sup> verse. Will you read it with me?

“Behold, I and the children whom the LORD hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts, which dwells in mount Zion” Isaiah 8:16–18.

God desires that you and your children shall be signs and wonders in Israel. They will be if you and they recognize that you're not owners, but stewards.

Signs and wonders in Israel. A sign, a wonder, is something different from the ordinary. Dear boys and girls, if you live the life that God intends, you shall, you will be different from the young people around you. You'll not be panting after their enjoyments, eating what they eat, living the way they live. You will be like Joseph, like Daniel, like Mary of Nazareth—something different, something unusual. Signs and wonders in Israel.

Dear parents, if you accept the responsibility that we've been studying about tonight, as agents, as managers rather than owners, you will understand that it is not from the world around you that you are to learn how to exercise your stewardship. Rather it is in the deep study of the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy, and on your knees in prayer, finding out the will of God.

Oh, won't it be wonderful to look up and see Jesus coming, and have with us those we have helped to get ready, what do you say?

“Behold I and the children which God hath given me”  
Hebrews 2:13.

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