

## **Small-Group Discussion Guide (1/4/2025)**

**Sermon recap:** This week we began our stewardship series with a simple starting point: God owns everything, and He invites us to steward His varied grace for His kingdom. Stewardship is not meant to produce guilt or shame—God's mercies are new every morning, so we can get up and take the next faithful step today. We saw the wonder of stewardship in creation (we bear God's image and are called to nurture what He's entrusted), the weight of stewardship in Jesus' parable (what we do with God's gifts matters), and the relief of stewardship in Christ (Jesus invites the weary to rest and to walk with Him, serving by strength God supplies).

**Main passage:** 1 Peter 4:10–11

**All passages used in the sermon:** Psalm 24:1–2; Genesis 1:26–31; James 1:17; Matthew 25:14–30; Matthew 11:28–30

**Additional Scriptures:** John 15:1–11; Colossians 2:6–7; Ephesians 3:16–19; Psalm 1:1–3

**Brief definitions:**

- *Imago Dei* = “image of God” (the Bible’s teaching that every person has God-given dignity and worth).

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### **Discussion Questions:**

1. When you hear the word “stewardship,” what emotions show up first—pressure, gratitude, confusion, hope? What experiences (church, family, money, work) shaped that reaction?
2. Psalm 24:1–2 says everything belongs to the Lord. What does that reveal about God, and what does it challenge in us? Where do you most feel the urge to “grip” what you have?
3. Genesis 1:26–31 says we bear God’s image. How does that shape the way you see your own worth—and the worth of others? Who is one person you need to treat more carefully as an image-bearer this week?
4. In the sermon, “dominion” was described as nurturing and guarding rather than dominating. Where might God be calling you to cultivate life and goodness (home, work, relationships, habits)? What would “care” look like there in one practical step?
5. In Matthew 25:14–30, the fearful servant hid what he was given. Where do fear and “playing it safe” tempt you to bury what God has entrusted to you? Name the fear underneath it (failure, loss, people’s opinions, past disappointment).
6. Read Matthew 11:28–30 and 1 Peter 4:10–11. What changes when stewardship flows from rest in Jesus and from strength God supplies, instead of self-pressure? What would it look like to “yoke up” with Jesus in your real daily life this week?
7. If you took an honest inventory this week, what are 2–4 gifts/resources/opportunities God has entrusted to you right now (big or small)? Which one could you “put to work” in love—for God’s glory, your joy, and the good of others—in the next seven days?

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### **Prayer**

Lord Jesus, thank You that You are gentle and lowly, and that You give rest to the weary. Help us trust the Father as the rightful Owner of all things. Show us what You’ve entrusted to us, free us from fear and shame, and teach us how to steward Your varied grace with open hands—serving one another by the strength You supply. Make our lives fruitful for Your kingdom and Your glory. Amen.