



Stewardship in the Second Testament

Lesson 7: Two Stories for Consideration

Overview

This concluding session invites participants to reflect on stewardship as an act of trust and full commitment. Through two powerful stories, participants will consider what it means to step out in faith and fully embrace their role as stewards of God's gifts. (**Note:** While this lesson is intended to be used as a conclusion to the **Stewardship in the Second Testament series** featuring Rev. Dr. Ronald J. Allen, it can also be used as a stand-alone piece.)

Preparation for the Teacher

- Read the texts (found below) ahead of time.
- Watch the video (link below)—it may stimulate additional questions appropriate for your context. Make certain you have tested the equipment necessary for showing the video—it helps to keep the technical gremlins away!
- Do a little homework about your church and community. This lesson is about both trust and full commitment.
 - Can you name individual examples in your congregation or community that represent either or both of these concepts?
 - Apart from individuals, can you name a time when your congregation has “stepped out on the water despite the storm” in its witness and practice of the faith?
 - What was the result of exercising that trust?

Pray for your students as you prepare this week's lesson.

Facilitating the Lesson

As the class begins, welcome the class and engage in your usual opening exercises (taking attendance, collecting an offering, prayer concerns, other announcements, etc.).

Scripture Reflection

Ask the class to read the following texts aloud (invite different individuals to read to increase engagement):

- Acts 5:1–11

- Matthew 14:22–33

Video Segment

Have the class watch the video: <http://youtu.be/gbAcG377dcU>

Discussion Questions

Invite the class to wrestle with the following:

1. Partial vs. Full Commitment

- Do you ever feel like Ananias and Sapphira?
- Are you committed and want to give to the community but are reluctant to make a full commitment of your stewardship?
- What would it take for you to be fully committed?

2. Stepping Out in Faith

Think of a situation in which you were like Peter—a good but partial steward—when you made an effort and then gave up.

- What would enable you not only to “get out of the boat” as a steward but to continue “walking on the water,” that is, exercising your full role as a steward of the gifts of the Realm of God?

3. Effort and Failure

- Do you think you “get points” for trying, even if you fail?

4. Responding to the Call

- Where is Jesus calling you to “get out of the boat” as a steward?

5. The Stakes of Stewardship

- Do you think faithful stewardship really is a matter of life and death? Why or why not?

6. Trusting God’s Provision

- What role does trusting God to provide play in the practice of stewardship?
- Is it realistic to trust God to provide?

Closing

Close your class session with prayer.

This is part of a 7-session series on Stewardship in the Second Testament, designed to be used as a Sunday School or small group lesson. Content is provided by Rev. Dr. Ron Allen in partnership with the Center for Faith & Giving (www.centerforfaithandgiving.org).