

**EXPERIENCING GOD'S PLEASURE AS HIS MANAGERS****By Austin Pryor**

Whether at the start of a new year or the middle of one – as we are now – it is good not to dwell on the past but to enjoy the present and anticipate a promising future. Our failures, financial and otherwise, are behind us. Of course, our successes are behind us as well. We cannot rest on our laurels. We can approach each day with a clean slate. New opportunities await and there is much yet to be done.

Our God-given stewardship responsibilities are lifelong. He is the owner, as 1 Chronicles 29:11 tells us: “Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is yours.” But He has made us managers of what He owns. As Jesus expressed in one of His parables, “Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his property to them” (Matthew 25:14).

Each of us has been given a small plot where we serve in His vineyard, and we are to labor according to the gifts He has bestowed on us. With respect to financial matters, we are to be diligent in our work (Colossians 3:23-24); wise in our spending (Proverbs 21:20); purposeful in our saving (Proverbs 6:6-8); strategic in our investing (Ecclesiastes 11:2); and generous in our giving (2 Corinthians 9:7).

As Christ's followers we learn how to do everything “in the name of the Lord Jesus” (Colossians 3:17); that is, on His behalf or in His place. That also means learning “to conform to everything I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:20). In the Lord's presence our inner life will be transformed, and we will become the kind of people exhibiting His natural (and supernatural) course of action. In Jesus' eyes, there is no good reason for not doing what He said to do, because He only tells us to do what is best.

So, we are to be obedient because that is what disciples do. But that last phrase, “He only tells us to do what is best,” should comfort and encourage us. God has all the best information on what makes for a happy and fulfilling life, and He has given us these prescriptions for our good.

And when we use our gifts in obedience, we are doing what we were made to do – glorifying God and helping to advance His kingdom. There is nothing so personally satisfying. We see this in the award-winning film, *Chariots of Fire*, which tells in part the story of Eric Liddell, a Scot who became a gold medalist at the 1924 Olympics and later a missionary to China.

My favorite part of the film is the subplot between Eric and his sister, Jennie, who is concerned his running will take him away from his missionary efforts. In one scene, Eric tells Jennie the good news he has been accepted by the mission society to go to China. Then he adds, “But I've got a lot of running to do first. Jennie, Jennie, you've got to understand. I believe that God made me for a purpose — for China. But He also made me fast, and when I run, I feel His pleasure.... To win is to honor Him.”

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**香港工商基督徒協會 (CBMC Hong Kong Ltd)**

地址：香港上環禧利街2號東寧大廈11樓1102室 Tel: (852) 2805-1923

Email: [enquiry@cbmc.org.hk](mailto:enquiry@cbmc.org.hk) Web: [www.cbmc.org.hk](http://www.cbmc.org.hk)

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In an emotional moment later, we see Eric in the final moments of his race. With head thrown back, legs pumping, arms flailing, he is exhilarated, having given his best to what he believed God called him to do. God was honored and Eric's running called attention to, and gathered support for, his mission work.

There are many ways each of us is called to serve the Lord. Exercising Spirit-led stewardship, properly managing the resources God entrusts to us, is one of them. It is your race. Run it with passion.

*© 2025. Austin Pryor has 40 years of experience advising investors and is the founder of the Sound Mind Investing newsletter and website. He's the author of The Sound Mind Investing Handbook which enjoys the endorsements of respected Christian teachers with more than 100,000 copies sold. Austin lives in Louisville, Kentucky, with his wife Susie. They have three grown sons and many grandchildren.*

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### Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. How does it make you feel to read that God owns “everything in heaven and earth,” which includes your financial resources and all your material possessions? Do you believe that is true? Why or why not?
2. What do you think it means in a practical, everyday sense to be a steward or manager of what God owns and has entrusted to your care?
3. Do you believe it is true that “He only tells us to do what is best”? What about when your well-considered plans, even things you have prayed about, do not turn out as you expected or had hoped they would?
4. Have you ever “felt God’s pleasure” while you were doing or pursuing something, as Eric Liddell did, or believed that He had truly called and gifted you to something specific? Explain your answer.

### Challenge

This might be a good week to pause and re-evaluate your attitude toward the things you “own,” considering the biblical teaching that God owns all things and that we are to serve as His stewards or managers of what we have been given.

It might be helpful to meet with a small group, perhaps your CBMC team if you are in one, or a trusted friend or mentor to discuss your perspectives and have them share their own with you. What changes – if any – do you conclude might be necessary?

### NOTE:

For more about what the Bible says, consider the following passages:

Proverbs 6:6-8, 21:20; Ecclesiastes 11:2; 2 Corinthians 9:7; Colossians 3:23-24; Hebrews 12:1

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