

The Responsible Christian

A STUDY IN CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP

by José R. Silva Delgado

AN INDEPENDENT-STUDY TEXTBOOK

*Developed in Cooperation With
the ICI Staff*

*Instructional Development Specialist:
Marcia A. Munger*

*Illustrator: Judy Anderson
Unit Art: Bill Stewart*



Global University
1211 South Glenstone Avenue
Springfield, Missouri 65804
USA

Address of the local ICI office in your area:

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THE ICI CHRISTIAN SERVICE PROGRAM



This is one of 18 courses (subjects) that make up the ICI Christian Service Program. The symbol at the left is a guide for order of study in the series, which is divided into three units of six courses each. *The Responsible Christian: A Study in Christian Stewardship* is Course 1 in Unit III. You will benefit by studying the courses in the proper order.

Study materials in the Christian Service Program have been prepared in a self-teaching format especially for Christian workers. These courses provide a student with Bible knowledge and skills needed for practical Christian service. You may study this course in order to receive credit toward a certificate, or for personal enrichment.

ATTENTION

Please read the course introduction very carefully. It is important that you follow these instructions so you can achieve the goals of the course, and be prepared for the student reports.

Address all correspondence concerning the course to your ICI instructor at the address stamped on the copyright page of this study guide.

Course Introduction

Become a Faithful Steward

You are about to study a very important subject: how you can become a faithful steward in all the aspects and areas of your life.

This course is divided into three units of study. The first unit will introduce you to the ideas of ownership, stewardship, and what the Bible has to say about them. In the two lessons of this unit, you will find explanations and examples from the Bible of these ideas. These will help you understand what it means to be a steward.

The second unit will deal with what stewardship has to do with your personal assets—your life, your personality, your body, your time, and your abilities. You will learn what the Bible has to say about them. And because each of these aspects of your life is actually an asset entrusted to you by God, you need to know how to invest it and use it for His glory. The four lessons in the second unit will give you many practical ideas and suggestions for ways of doing this.

Then in the third unit you will learn what your responsibilities are as a Christian steward in relation to the other aspects of your life—your money and possessions, your home, your church, and your community. The four lessons in this unit will show you ways of fulfilling your responsibilities in each of these areas. They will explain what the Bible says about each one and will help you understand the principles you should follow.

May these lessons help you to manage and invest all the goods that God has entrusted to you in such a way that one day you will hear Him say to you: "Well done, you good and faithful servant! . . . Come on in and share my happiness!" (Matthew 25:23).

Course Description

The Responsible Christian: A Study in Christian Stewardship is a study of what the Bible says about stewardship—the role of God as owner and man as steward. It will explain how the Christian should exercise his responsibility for faithful management of the various properties and resources with which God has entrusted him. In addition, it will deal with his relationship to his home, church, and community in the light of his role as a steward.

Course Objectives

When you finish this course you should be able to:

1. Describe the role of God and yourself in relation to stewardship.
2. Explain what it is that you are responsible for managing as a steward.
3. List ways in which you can fulfill each of your responsibilities as a steward.
4. Appreciate the need of dedicating yourself and your possessions to God and of developing your abilities for use in His service.

Textbooks

You will use this independent-study textbook, *The Responsible Christian: A Study in Christian Stewardship* by José R. Silva Delgado, as both the textbook and study guide for the course. The Bible is the only other textbook required (quotations in this course are from *Today's English Version*, 1976 edition).

Study Time

How much time you actually need to study each lesson depends in part on your knowledge of the subject and the

strength of your study skills before you begin the course. The time you spend also depends on the extent to which you follow directions and develop skills necessary for independent study. Plan your study schedule so that you spend enough time to reach the objectives stated by the author of the course and your personal objectives as well.

Lesson Organization and Study Pattern

Each lesson includes: 1) lesson title, 2) opening statement, 3) lesson outline, 4) lesson objectives, 5) learning activities, 6) key words, 7) lesson development including study questions, 8) self-test (at the end of the lesson development), 9) answers to the study questions.

The lesson outline and objectives will give you an overview of the subject, help you to focus your attention on the most important points as you study, and tell you what you should learn.

Most of the study questions in the lesson development can be answered in spaces provided in this study guide. Longer answers should be written in a notebook. As you write the answers in your notebook, be sure to record the number and title of the lesson. This will help you in your review for the unit student report.

Do not look ahead at the answers until you have given your answer. If you give your own answers, you will remember what you study much better. After you have answered the study questions, check your answers with those given at the end of the lesson. Then correct those you did not answer correctly. The answers are not given in the usual numerical order so that you will not accidentally see the answer to the next question.

These study questions are very important. They will help you to remember the main ideas presented in the lesson and to apply the principles you have learned.

How to Answer Questions

There are different kinds of study questions and self-test questions in this study guide. Below are samples of several types and how to answer them. Specific instructions will be given for other types of questions that may occur.

A *MULTIPLE-CHOICE* question or item asks you to choose an answer from the ones that are given.

Example

- 1** The Bible has a total of
- a) 100 books.
 - b) 66 books.
 - c) 27 books.

The correct answer is *b) 66 books*. In your study guide, make a circle around *b)* as shown here:

- 1** The Bible has a total of a
- a) 100 books.
 - (b)** 66 books.
 - c) 27 books.

(For some multiple-choice items, more than one answer will be correct. In that case, you would circle the letter in front of each correct answer.)

A *TRUE-FALSE* question or item asks you to choose which of several statements are TRUE.

Example

- 2** Which statements below are TRUE?
- a) The Bible has a total of 120 books.
 - (b)** The Bible is a message for believers today.
 - c) All of the Bible authors wrote in the Hebrew language.
 - (d)** The Holy Spirit inspired the writers of the Bible.

Statements **b** and **d** are true. You would make a circle around these two letters to show your choices, as you see above.

A *MATCHING* question or item asks you to match things that go together, such as names with descriptions, or Bible books with their authors.

Example

3 Write the number for the leader's name in front of each phrase that describes something he did.

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| ... ¹ . a Received the Law at Mt. Sinai | 1) Moses |
| ... ² . b Led the Israelites across Jordan | 2) Joshua |
| ... ² . c Marched around Jericho | |
| ... ¹ . d Lived in Pharaoh's court | |

Phrases **a** and **d** refer to Moses, and phrases **b** and **c** refer to Joshua. You would write **1** beside **a** and **d**, and **2** beside **b** and **c**, as you see above.

Ways to Study this Course

If you study this ICI course by yourself, all of your work can be completed by mail. Although ICI has designed this course for you to study on your own, you may also study it in a group or class. If you do this, the instructor may give you added instructions besides those in the course. If so, be sure to follow his instructions.

Possibly you are interested in using the course in a home Bible study group, in a class at church, or in a Bible school. You will find both the subject content and study methods excellent for these purposes.

Unit Student Reports

At the end of the book you will find the Unit Student Report and Answer Sheets. Follow the directions included in the course and in the unit student reports. You should complete and send your answer sheets to your instructor for his correction and suggestions regarding your work. If you are not studying with an ICI office you will still benefit by answering the questions in the Student Report.

Certificate

Upon the successful completion of the course and the final grading of the unit answer sheets by your ICI instructor, you will receive your Certificate of Award.

Author of This Course

José R. Silva Delgado has been in the pastoral ministry for over 35 years and is now pastoring in the city of Valdivia, Chile—his birthplace. Before returning to pastor in Valdivia for the second time, he was pastor of Rio Bueno, La Union, La Pamilla, and La Legua in Santiago, Chile.

In addition to his ministry as a pastor, he has served as a national church official and regional leader. He has also been a Bible institute professor.

Currently, besides his pastoral duties in Valdivia, he writes and translates for Editorial Vida located in Miami, Florida. He is married to Cecilia Mancilla Rios and is the father of six children.

Your ICI Instructor

Your ICI instructor will be happy to help you in any way possible. If you have any questions about the course or the unit student reports, please feel free to ask him. If several people want to study this course together, ask about special arrangements for group study.

God bless you as you begin to study *The Responsible Christian: A Study in Christian Stewardship*. May it enrich your life and Christian service and help you fulfill more effectively your part in the body of Christ.

