

Managing for the Master—Till He Comes

Part of God's Family

Lesson #1 for January 7, 2023

Scriptures: Galatians 3:26-29; Psalm 50:10-12; 1 Corinthians 29:13-14; Philippians 4:19; 1 John 3:1; 5:3; Matthew 6:19-21.

1. As we begin this new series on stewardship, consider this from the Bible study guide.

As Christians, an amazing feature about our relationship with God is that He trusts us to manage His affairs on the earth. At the very outset of human history, God explicitly delegated to Adam and Eve the personal care of a flawless creation. (See *Gen. 2:7–9, 15.*) From the naming of the animals to keeping the Garden, and to filling the earth with children, **God let it be known that we are to work on His behalf here.**

He also blesses us with resources, but we are the ones whom He has entrusted to manage them, such as to collect money, to write the checks, to do the electronic transfers, to make the budgets, or to bring our tithes and offerings to the church on Sabbath mornings. God encourages us to spend the resources that He has given to us for our own needs, for the needs of others, and for the advancement of His work. Incredible as it may seem, we are the ones whom God has entrusted with raising His children, building His buildings, and educating the succeeding generations.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Sabbath Afternoon, December 31.^{†§} [If you were God, would you trust yourself with managing His business?][‡]

2. There are many passages in Scripture suggesting that we are part of God's family. We are to refer to the God of heaven as *our Father* and the Lord Jesus Christ as *our Brother*. We are to pray: "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name." (Matthew 6:9, *KJV** and Luke 11:2, *KJV**)
3. In many places, Jesus referred to God the Father as His *Father* and even *our Father*. (See for example John 20:17.)
4. Notice these words from Ellen White.

From that scene of heavenly joy, there comes back to us on earth the echo of Christ's own wonderful words, "I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God." John 20:17. **The family of heaven and the family of earth are one.** For us our Lord ascended, and for us He lives. "Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." Hebrews 7:25.—Ellen G. White, *Desire of Ages** 835.1.[†]

5. The history of the children of Israel in relationship to Pharaoh and the kingdom of Egypt reminds us that God regarded the children of Israel as His own people. (Exodus 3:10; Exodus 5:3; Galatians 3:26,29)
6. The best human example that God can give of the kind of love He expresses toward us is a family where relationships are very good and love is exercised between members. God shows His love toward us as family members are supposed to love each other.

7. Can you imagine a world in which everyone is treated as a loving brother or sister?
8. Remember that we hope to be a part of the family of God that ascends to heaven where we will be living with people from all cultures and all generations since the time of Adam and Eve! We need to learn to get along with people who may not think exactly as we do!
9. So, how should we relate to the things that God has given us?

Psalm 50:10-12: [The LORD says:] ¹⁰ “All the animals in the forest are mine and the cattle on thousands of hills.

¹¹All the wild birds are mine and all living things in the fields.

¹² “If I were hungry, I would not ask you for food,

for the world and everything in it is mine.”—American Bible Society.

(1992). *The Holy Bible: The Good News Translation** (2nd ed., Psalm 50:10-12). New York: American Bible Society [abbreviated as *Good News Bible*].^{††}

1 Chronicles 29:13-14: [Praising God, King David said:] ¹³ “Now, our God, we give you thanks, and we praise your glorious name.

¹⁴ **“Yet my people and I cannot really give you anything, because everything is a gift from you, and we have only given back what is yours already.”**—*Good News Bible*.^{*††}

Haggai 2:8: [The LORD said:] **“All the silver and gold of the world is mine.”**—*Good News Bible*.^{*††}

10. King David wanted to build a temple for God. But, in essence, God said: “No, you have spent too much of your lifetime in war and killing people. Your son will build the temple.” Then, David asked if he could at least collect the materials that would be needed to build the temple. David concluded by saying, in essence: “We really cannot take any credit for all these special materials because we are just giving You back Your own stuff.”
11. If God had not chosen to bless us, we would have nothing to give back. In fact, we would not even exist. God created us. (Genesis 1&2) Christ and the Father in cooperation made everything.

John 1:3: Through him God made all things; not one thing in all creation was made without him.—*Good News Bible*.^{*}

Psalm 33:6,9: ⁶ The LORD created the heavens by his command, the sun, moon, and stars by his spoken word....

⁹ When he spoke, the world was created;

at his command everything appeared.—*Good News Bible*.^{*}

12. So, what is the most important thing that God has given us? Without a doubt, His greatest gift to His children was Jesus Christ. Think of all the blessings that have come to us through the life and death of Jesus.

[From the Bible study guide=BSG:] Salvation, then, is the foundational gift because, without this gift, what else could we get from God that in the long run would really matter? Whatever we might have here, one day we will be dead and gone and so will everyone who ever remembered us, and whatever good we did will be forgotten, as well. First and foremost, then, we must always keep the gift of the gospel; that is, Christ and Him crucified

(1 Cor. 2:2), at the center of all our thoughts.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** for Tuesday, January 3.^{‡§}

13. Why do you think Paul made the following statement?

1 Corinthians 2:2: For while I was with you, I made up my mind to forget everything except Jesus Christ and especially his death on the cross.—*Good News Bible.**

14. And what did Jesus mean when He said the following?

Matthew 6:33: “Instead, be concerned above everything else with the Kingdom of God and with what he requires of you, and he will provide you with all these other things.”—*Good News Bible.**

15. We need to remember that God not only created us, but He also sustains us in our daily needs.

Psalms 23:1: The LORD is my shepherd;
I have everything I need.—*Good News Bible.**

Psalms 37:25: I am old now; I have lived a long time,
but I have never seen good people abandoned by the LORD
or their children begging for food.—*Good News Bible.**

Philippians 4:19: And with all his abundant wealth through Christ Jesus, my God will supply all your needs.—*Good News Bible.**

16. Jesus went beyond giving Himself. When He was preparing to leave His disciples, He promised to send the Comforter, known as the Holy Spirit.

John 14:15-17: ¹⁵ “If you love me, you will obey my commandments. ¹⁶I will ask the Father, and **he will give you another Helper, who will stay with you for ever.** [sic] ¹⁷He is the Spirit who reveals the truth about God. The world cannot receive him, because it cannot see him or know him. But you know him, because he remains with you and is in you.”—*Good News Bible.*†‡*

17. Each of us should recognize that keeping God’s commandments is the right thing to do! The work of the Holy Spirit is to lead us to understand and appreciate the truth about God.

18. Not only has God given us life and health, but He also distributes to us certain spiritual gifts to be used for the benefit of the church here on earth.

1 Corinthians 12:4-11: ⁴ There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit gives them. ⁵There are different ways of serving, but the same Lord is served. ⁶There are different abilities to perform service, but the same God gives ability to all for their particular service. ⁷The Spirit’s presence is shown in some way in each person for the good of all. ⁸The Spirit gives one person a message full of wisdom, while to another person the same Spirit gives a message full of knowledge. ⁹One and the same Spirit gives faith to one person, while to another person he gives the power to heal. ¹⁰The Spirit gives one person the power to work miracles; to another, the gift of speaking God’s message; and to yet another, the ability to tell the difference between gifts that come from the Spirit and those that do not. To one person he gives the ability to speak in strange tongues, and to another he gives the ability

to explain what is said. ¹¹But it is one and the same Spirit who does all this; as he wishes, he gives a different gift to each person.—*Good News Bible*.^{*}
[BSG:] In short, the God in whom “we live, and move, and have our being” (**Acts 17:28**), the God who “ ‘gives to all life, breath, and all things’ ” (**Acts 17:25, NKJV**), has given us existence, the promise of salvation, material blessings, and spiritual gifts in order to be a blessing to others. Again, whatever material possessions that we have, whatever gifts or talents we have been blessed with, we are indebted in every way to the Giver in how we use those gifts.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*^{*} for Tuesday, January 3.^{†§}

[From the writings of Ellen G. White=EGW:] Parents, in wisdom and love teach your children the grand lesson that in God we live, and move, and have our being. [Acts 17:28] **Every pulsation of the heart is a rebound from the touch of the finger of God.**—Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*,^{*} December 2, 1890, par. 15.^{†‡}

19. God has given us so much. Does He expect any response on our part? See Deuteronomy 6:5 and Matthew 22:37.

Deuteronomy 6:5: “Love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.”—*Good News Bible*.^{*}

Matthew 22:37: Jesus answered, “ ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ ”—*Good News Bible*.^{*}

[BSG:] **How would you love God with “ ‘all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind” ’ ”** (**Matt. 22:37, NKJV**)? Interestingly enough, the Bible gives us the answer, and it’s not what most people expect.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*^{*} for Wednesday, January 4.^{†§}

20. **Read Deuteronomy 10:12-13 and 1 John 5:3. Biblically speaking, what is our proper response in our love relationship with our Father in heaven?**

Deuteronomy 10:12-13: ¹² “Now, people of Israel, listen to what the LORD your God demands of you: **worship the LORD and do all that he commands. Love him, serve him with all your heart,** ¹³**and obey all his laws.** I am giving them to you today for your benefit.”—*Good News Bible*.^{*†}

21. Even in the New Testament near the end of John’s life, he wrote:

1 John 5:3: For our love for God means that we obey his commands. And his commands are not too hard for us.—*Good News Bible*.^{*†}

22. Is keeping God’s commands too big of a burden? Too difficult? Or, is it for our best good? Is trying to keep the commandments, especially the fourth commandment, just a proof of legalism?

23. Do we need to take God’s commands seriously? Look at what Jesus Himself said in the Sermon on the Mount.

Matthew 7:21-27: ²¹ “**Not everyone who calls me ‘Lord, Lord’ will enter the Kingdom of heaven, but only those who do what my Father in heaven wants them to do.** ²²**When Judgement Day comes, many will say to me,**

‘Lord, Lord! In your name we spoke God’s message, by your name we drove out many demons and performed many miracles!’ ²³Then I will say to them, **‘I never knew you. Get away from me, you wicked people!’** **[Does God ever allow the Devil to perform miracles to deceive people?]**

²⁴ “So then, anyone who hears these words of mine and obeys them is like a wise man who built his house on rock. ²⁵The rain poured down, the rivers overflowed, and the wind blew hard against that house. But it did not fall, because it was built on rock.

²⁶ “But anyone who hears these words of mine and does not obey them is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. ²⁷The rain poured down, the rivers overflowed, the wind blew hard against that house, and it fell. And what a terrible fall that was!”—*Good News Bible*.*†

24. Does keeping God’s commandments actually reveal our love to Him? What happens when we disobey God’s commandments? Disobeying God’s laws and rebelling against His government is what Lucifer/Satan did! Do you want to be like him?
25. God only asks us to do what in the end is the best thing for us to do. Even the terrible story of Job ended up being a great blessing for the entire onlooking universe and also for all of us who understand the story in its completeness. It was a great defeat for Satan and a victory for God. Don’t you think we will be celebrating Job for the rest of eternity?
26. So, what about things like money? How does God expect us to deal with those things?

Matthew 6:19-21: ¹⁹ “**Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal;** ²⁰**but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.** ²¹**For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.**”—*New King James Version*.*†

27. Today, we have living among us on this earth a number of people who have amassed great wealth. When they die, what happens to that wealth? People just fight over it. That does not mean that it is wrong to be wealthy. However, **the Bible makes it very clear what we are supposed to do with our wealth.**

[EGW:] Money has great value, because it can do great good. In the hands of God’s children it is food for the hungry, drink for the thirsty, and clothing for the naked. It is a defense for the oppressed, and a means of help to the sick. But **money is of no more value than sand**, only as it is put to use in providing for the necessities of life, in blessing others, and **advancing the cause of Christ.**—Ellen G. White, *Christ’s Object Lessons** 351.3.†

28. Jesus had some challenging words for us. How do you understand these words of Him?

Matthew 6:21: “**For your heart will always be where your riches are.**”—*Good News Bible*.*†

[EGW:] The heart of God yearns over His earthly children with a love stronger than death. In giving up His Son, He has poured out to us all heaven in one gift. The Saviour’s life and death and intercession, the ministry of angels, the pleading of the Spirit, the Father working above and through all, the unceasing interest of heavenly beings,—all are enlisted in behalf of man’s redemption.—Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ** 21.2.‡

[EGW:] If you have renounced self and given yourself to Christ you are a member of the family of God, and everything in the Father's house is for you. All the treasures of God are opened to you, both the world that now is and that which is to come. The ministry of angels, the gift of His Spirit, the labors of His servants—all are for you. **The world, with everything in it, is yours so far as it can do you good.**—Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing** 110.2.††

29. Have you ever tried to sit down and make a list of all the benefits that you get on a regular basis from God? There are many passages in Scripture that talk about how God sustains us on a daily basis. For example, see Hebrews 1:3; Job 38:33-37; Psalm 135:6-7; Colossians 1:17; Acts 17:25-28; and 2 Peter 3:7.

[EGW:] **The power of God is manifested in the beating of the heart, in the action of the lungs, and in the living currents that circulate through the thousand different channels of the body. We are indebted to him for every moment of existence, and for all the comforts of life. The powers and abilities that elevate man above the lower creation, are the endowment of the Creator. He loads us with his benefits. We are indebted to him for the food we eat, the water we drink, the clothes, we wear, the air we breathe.** Without his special providence, the air would be filled with pestilence and poison. He is a bountiful benefactor and preserver. The sun which shines upon the earth, and glorifies all nature, the weird, solemn radiance of the moon, the glories of the firmament, spangled with brilliant stars, the showers that refresh the land, and cause vegetation to flourish, the precious things of nature in all their varied richness, the lofty trees, the shrubs and plants, the waving grain, the blue sky, the green earth, the changes of day and night, the renewing seasons, all speak to man of his Creator's love. He has linked us to himself by all these tokens in heaven and in earth.—Ellen G. White, *Review and Herald*,* September 18, 1888, par. 6.†† *Sons and Daughters of God** 17.2.†††

30. So, why do we believe that Jesus is the greatest gift that God has given? Where would we be if we did not have the plan of salvation confirmed by the life and death of Jesus? One atheist writer depicted humans as nothing more than “hunks of spoiling flesh on disintegrating bones.” Is that true? Would that be true if we did not have the gospel?
31. Without Jesus Christ, there would be nothing beyond this life. And there would be no reason for God to continue giving us even this life. There was no reason for Jesus to have come the first time if He is not planning to come back!
32. What examples do we find in the Bible that can help us to understand what God might expect of us?

[BSG:] “The importance of the family in ancient Israel was partly due . . . to the fact that in those days it was a society of worship.”—T. K. Cheyne and J. Sutherland Black, *Encyclopaedia Biblica* (New York: MacMillan Company, 1903), p. 1498.—[as quoted in *Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 13].‡§

33. Think about what God's original plan was for Adam and Eve. It was His plan that, eventually, the Garden of Eden would expand to include the entire livable surface of our world where everyone would live in peace and harmony and in love with our Father God.

34. So, what plan does God have for His church in our day?

Ephesians 3:10: In order that at the present time, by means of the church, the angelic rulers and powers in the heavenly world might learn of his wisdom in all its different forms.—Good News Bible.*†

35. Is it really possible that individuals in the heavenly world might learn about God from our examples? What might they learn about God? How does God deal with rebellion?

36. We would still be living in the Garden of Eden if no one had ever sinned. So, what happened?

Genesis 2:15-17: ¹⁵ Then the LORD God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to cultivate it and guard it. ¹⁶He said to him, “**You may eat the fruit of any tree in the garden, ¹⁷except the tree that gives knowledge of what is good and what is bad. You must not eat the fruit of that tree; if you do, you will die the same day.**”—Good News Bible.*†

37. So, what was the purpose of that tree of knowledge of good and evil? **Did God need to put it in the garden? If so, why?**

38. ***The tree of knowledge of good and evil was intended to be a protection for Adam and Eve. So long as they did not approach the tree, they would be safe; but, if they approached the tree, they would be tempted and tested.***

[EGW:] The tree of knowledge had been made a test of their obedience and their love to God. The Lord had seen fit to lay upon them but one prohibition as to the use of all that was in the garden; but if they should disregard His will in this particular, they would incur the guilt of transgression. **Satan was not to follow them with continual temptations; he could have access to them only at the forbidden tree. Should they attempt to investigate its nature, they would be exposed to his wiles.**—Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets** 53.3.†‡

39. Because we chose to rebel against God and believe the words of the talking serpent, God had to change to “Plan B.” He sent His Son to live that incredible life and die that terrible death for the benefit of the entire universe.

40. Dealing with the scribes and Pharisees in His day must have been a terrible burden and disappointment for Jesus.

Matthew 21:33-41: ³³ “Listen to another parable,” Jesus said. “There was once a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a hole for the winepress, and built a watchtower. Then he let out the vineyard to tenants and went on a journey. ³⁴When the time came to gather the grapes, he sent his slaves to the tenants to receive his share of the harvest. ³⁵The tenants seized his slaves, beat one, killed another, and stoned another. ³⁶Again the man sent other slaves, more than the first time, and the tenants treated them the same way. ³⁷Last of all he sent his son to them. ‘Surely they will respect my son,’ he said. ³⁸But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, ‘This is the owner’s son. Come on, let’s kill him, and we will get

his property!’³⁹ So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him.

⁴⁰ “Now, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?” Jesus asked.

⁴¹ “He will certainly kill those evil men,” they answered, “and let the vineyard out to other tenants, who will give him his share of the harvest at the right time.”—*Good News Bible*.*

41. ***How long do you think it took for the scribes and Pharisees to realize that they had just condemned themselves and their ancestors and their nation?***

John 14:1-3: “Do not be worried and upset,” Jesus told them. “Believe in God and believe also in me. ²There are many rooms in my Father’s house, and I am going to prepare a place for you. I would not tell you this if it were not so. ³And after I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to myself, so that you will be where I am.”—*Good News Bible*.*

42. So, in brief outline, what does it mean to be a *steward of God in God’s family*?

- A. [BSG:] There are titles that denote the Father’s sovereignty.
- B. All God’s children are His stewards.
- C. The family’s resources are lent by the Father.
- D. The family’s treasure is laid up in heaven.—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 13.‡

43. We know that God is the Creator. Without His creative ability, we could not possibly exist. (Genesis 1:1; Hebrews 11:1-3; Romans 11:36) God is also our Father.

[BSG:] **The father figure is key in the Bible’s notion of family. The expression paternal home (*bet ab*) points to the patriarchal system, wherein the father had full authority over the possessions and family, being their keeper and protector. The father also had the power to judge and decide the fate of the family members. The father was the priest, and as a rule, the family and religion were intimately connected** (J. E. Maldonado, *Fundamentos bíblico-teológicos da casamento e da família* [Viçosa, Brasil: Editora Ultimato, 1996], pp. 11, 12).—[as quoted in *Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 14].†‡§

44. As part of His sovereignty: (1) God is holy; (2) He is King; (3) He is Keeper, Judge, and Savior; (4) He is all-wise, all-powerful, and all-loving.

45. So, what do we mean when we say *Jesus is Lord*? The idea of *Lord* in the ancient Greek and Hebrew suggests that He owns all things. There is no other Lord. (Mark 12:29)

46. Our pathway to understanding God comes through the Holy Spirit. None but those who have the Holy Spirit can understand the Lordship of Christ. The greatest gift that the Holy Spirit has given to us is the Bible. He is the One who inspired the Old Testament prophets and the New Testament apostles to write what we have in Scripture. He has preserved it.

1 Corinthians 12:3: I want you to know that no one who is led by God’s Spirit can say “A curse on Jesus!” and **no one can confess “Jesus is Lord”,** [sic] **without being guided by the Holy Spirit.**—*Good News Bible*.*†‡

47. What does God expect of us as His stewards? Can we really somehow manage the Lord's possessions? **God expects us to manage His goods individually and collectively.**

[BSG:] The church must exercise stewardship faithfully because God has made her the custodian of material and spiritual blessings. However, the church's stewardship does not replace the responsibility of individual members....

The Spirit is the Author of faithful stewardship in each believer. The decision to return tithes and offerings generously and regularly is a spiritual work that each believer must experience individually. This faithfulness is a form of religious service that neither prayer nor other church activities can replace.—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 15.‡

[EGW:] **Prayer offered ever so often and ever so earnestly will never be accepted by God in the place of our tithe. Prayer will not pay our debts to God.**—Ellen G. White, *Youth's Instructor*,* August 18, 1898, par. 4; *Messages to Young People** 248.1.†‡

48. So, what motivates some human beings to do God's work?

[BSG:] It is a true miracle of God's love that fallen human beings dedicate their lives and gifts unselfishly for the sake of the gospel. God gave us His spiritual gifts, and we must respond to His generosity by using and increasing these gifts in the Lord's work.—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 15-16.‡

49. So, what does God expect from us? To begin with, He requires 1/7 of our time, and He also requests 1/10 of our increase.

Malachi 3:8: "I ask you, **is it right for a person to cheat God?** Of course not, yet **you are cheating me. 'How?' you ask. In the matter of tithes and offerings.**"—*Good News Bible*.*†

[BSG:] **Laying up treasure in heaven means investing in God's work.** Heavenly beings are involved in this work alongside us. Our heavenly investment requires us to place God's kingdom first, above all things (*Matt. 6:33*). **Heaven cares about what happens on earth, especially with regard to God's redemptive work. Jesus is personally involved, watching every faithful and generous act** (*Mal. 3:8–10, Matt. 25:31–46*). Jesus saw the offering of the poor widow (*Mark 12:41–44*), and He still sees us today.—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide** 16.†‡§

50. One more aspect of our stewardship was taught by Jesus as recorded in Mark 12:41-44.

Mark 12:41-44: ⁴¹ As Jesus sat near the temple treasury, he watched the people as they dropped in their money. Many rich men dropped in a lot of money; ⁴²then a poor widow came along and dropped in two little copper coins, worth about a penny. ⁴³He called his disciples together and said to them, "I tell you that **this poor widow put more in the offering box than all the others.** ⁴⁴**For the others put in what they had to spare of their riches; but she, poor as she is, put in all she had—she gave all she had to live on.**"—*Good News Bible*.*†

51. So, why was that very tiny gift so important? She gave all she had to live on.

52. What motivates you to follow God's commands? Is it the fear of heavenly judgments? Or, gratitude to Jesus for being the Creator and Savior? Are we motivated by recognizing what blessings God has given to us? Do we want to do something for Him in exchange? Or, are we motivated simply by God's incredible love so that we want to partake in His work?
53. Sin, of course, has made us selfish. That was a basic motivating force in the experience of Lucifer/Satan. But, God wants to work in us each day.

[EGW:] Sin not only shuts us away from God, but destroys in the human soul both the desire and the capacity for knowing Him. All this work of evil it is Christ's mission to undo. The faculties of the soul, paralyzed by sin, the darkened mind, the perverted will, He has power to invigorate and to restore.—Ellen G. White, *Education** 28.3-29.0.‡

54. The apostle James gave a very stark and interesting comment about how we should sustain the work of the church.

James 2:14-26: ¹⁴ My brothers and sisters, what good is it for people to say that they have faith if their actions do not prove it? Can that faith save them? ¹⁵ Suppose there are brothers or sisters who need clothes and don't have enough to eat. ¹⁶ What good is there in your saying to them, "God bless you! Keep warm and eat well!"—if you don't give them the necessities of life? ¹⁷ So it is with faith: if it is alone and includes no actions, then it is dead. ¹⁸ But someone will say, "One person has faith, another has actions." My answer is, "Show me how anyone can have faith without actions. **I will show you my faith by my actions.**" ¹⁹ Do you believe that there is only one God? Good! The demons also believe—and tremble with fear. ²⁰ You fool! Do you want to be shown that faith without actions is useless? ²¹ How was our ancestor Abraham put right with God? It was through his actions, when he offered his son Isaac on the altar. ²² Can't you see? His faith and his actions worked together; his faith was made perfect through his actions. ²³ And the scripture came true that said, "Abraham believed God, and because of his faith God accepted him as righteous." And so Abraham was called God's friend. ²⁴ You see, then, that **it is by people's actions that they are put right with God, and not by their faith alone....** ²⁶ So then, as the body without the spirit is dead, so also **faith without actions is dead.**—*Good News Bible*.*†

55. ***If God owns everything, why does He need my tithes? How can I cooperate with Jesus for my spiritual growth and the growth of others that I might be able to help? What does it mean to suggest that faith without works is dead? What ultimately do we need to do to be reconciled to Jesus Christ?***

©2022, Kenneth Hart, MD, MA, MPH. Permission is hereby granted for any noncommercial use of these materials. Free distribution of all or of a portion of this material such as to a Bible study class is encouraged. *Electronic version. †Bold type is added. ‡Brackets and content in brackets are added. §Italic type is in the source. ¶Compared with the first source, this source has punctuation and/or capitalization differences only. Info@theox.org

Last Modified: December 17, 2022