

Jan, '05

**LIVING
THE
RESPONSIBLE LIFE**

A GUIDED LEARNING BOOK

BY

CECIL A. RAY

ADAPTED AND EXPANDED BY

G. ALONSO HOGG

CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

LIVING THE RESPONSIBLE LIFE

A COURSE IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

**Content By
Cecil A. Ray**

Student Learning Activities By
H. Clifford Graham

Adapted and Expanded By
Gayle Hogg

CARIB BAPTIST PUBLICATIONS



© Copyright 1983 Carib Baptist Publications
7000 Alabama St.
El Paso, Texas 79904

All rights reserved. The reproduction or transmission of all or part of this book by any form or means, without the written permission of the publishers, is prohibited, with the exception of brief portions in magazines and/or newspapers.

Adapted from *Living the Responsible Life* by Cecil A. Ray.

©Copyright 1974 Convention Press. All rights reserved.
Used by permission.

Third Edition: 1997

Dewey Decimal Classification: 248.6
Classify:

1. Stewardship
2. Christian life

Printed by the Baptist Spanish Publishing House
P. O. Box 4255
El Paso, Texas 79914

BSPH Art. No. 72371
ISBN: 0-311-72371-3

.5 M 2 97

CONTENTS

SUPPLEMENTARY TEXTBOOK	4
PREFACE	5
INTRODUCTION	7
MINISTERIAL TRAINING BY GUIDED STUDY	9
INSTRUCTIONS FOR USING THE STUDY GUIDE	10
LESSON 1 God's Purpose for a Good World	13
LESSON 2 Sin Thwarts God's Purpose	24
LESSON 3 God Reclaims His World	34
LESSON 4 The Christian View of Material Things	44
LESSON 5 The Biblical Meaning of Ownership	54
LESSON 6 The Christian and His Standard of Living	65
LESSON 7 The Christian's Responsibility for the Use of Possessions	76
LESSON 8 The Christian Meaning of Giving	87
LESSON 9 The Christian and the Tithe	98
LESSON 10 Developing the Grace of Giving	111
LESSON 11 Churches Living the Responsible Life	122
LESSON 12 The Annual Stewardship Campaign	134
APPENDIX A Checking-up on Stewardship and Finances	147
APPENDIX B Our Church Budget	148
APPENDIX C Report on Our Goals	149
APPENDIX D A Simplified Stewardship Campaign	150
APPENDIX E An Alternate Plan	154
AVAILABLE STUDY GUIDES	157

SUPPLEMENTARY TEXTBOOK

All Levels:

Taylor, Jack R. *God's Miraculous Plan of Economy*. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1975.

PREFACE

A need for a study guide on the doctrine of Christian stewardship has existed for a long time. This volume, *Living the Responsible Life*, attempts to fill this void.

Cecil A. Ray is one of the most knowledgeable people available concerning Christian stewardship. Carib Baptist Publications felt his book would make a good study guide for the Decentralized Theological Education programme. The Baptist Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention granted permission for Ray's book to be adapted and republished to help fill the need for a manual on stewardship.

As originally published, *Living the Responsible Life* contained enough material for ten lessons. Gayle Hogg prepared the two lessons needed to complete the study guide for the DTE format. Ray's book emphasizes the biblical ideal of stewardship. He stresses that stewardship concerns all of life, not just money. He devotes a full lesson to the Christian and his tithe. The lessons prepared by Reverend Hogg are devoted principally to practical matters.

Lesson 12 discusses how to have a financial campaign in the local church. It was not possible to present a tailor-made plan for each and every church within the limits of this book. This lesson, however, attempts to present a campaign that most churches can utilize. If the plan given in Lesson 12 does not meet a church's need, the pastor and church should feel free to adapt this material to the local situation. Other financial programmes are included in the appendix.

The material in Lesson 12 will be appropriate for Third World countries. Most of this material was adapted, with permission, from Dr. Frank W. Patterson's book on stewardship, *Manual de Finanzas para Iglesias*. Dr. Patterson was the long-time General Director of the Baptist Spanish Publishing House. His book was addressed to churches in Latin America.

For the first two lessons, Level 1 students will be asked to prepare a sermon or Bible lesson outline. Beginning in Lesson 3, all students will be asked to write a sermon or lesson. Students who complete this course will have a repertoire of stewardship sermons or Bible lessons. The students should be encouraged to use their sermons or lessons in their own church or mission. Results from this activity can be shared with the seminar group.

God's Miraculous Plan of Economy by Jack R. Taylor is the supplementary textbook recommended for this course. All students are asked to read the supplementary text. But assignments from this book will be made only to Levels 2 and 3.

Appreciation is expressed to the Baptist Sunday School Board for granting permission for Ray's book to be used in this way. Gratitude is given also to Reverend H. Clifford Graham for preparing the learning activities and to Mrs. Alice Walls for her valuable assistance.

The Editor

INTRODUCTION

Living the Responsible Life is more than a title. It describes Christian stewardship. The primary purpose of this study is to help the reader understand the biblical message on the responsible life. This study is aimed also at helping the believer to discover guidelines for his growth in Christian stewardship.

This book grew out of the conviction of stewardship leaders that a diligent search for the spiritual and religious meaning of material things is needed. This search and the discoveries it produces will provide greater understanding of the responsible life.

Stewardship has different meanings to different people. For some, it is the total responsibility for all of life. For others, it is the offering in the plate at church. Most students of the Scriptures agree that stewardship centres in man's relationship to God and in his God-given charge to care for the material world. In this book traditional ideas are not abandoned. However, tradition is not the guide. While the traditional is not avoided, the biblical is followed. In cases of conflict, the Scriptures hold authority over tradition.

This book aims at helping the Christian to see his stewardship as it is related to four major factors. These are God's purpose for man, man's sin, man's responsible management, and Christian giving.

The first factor indicates that a study of Christian stewardship must consider man's unique place in God's creation. Man is made like God—in the image of God. To "image" God is man's unique stewardship role. The second factor requires a careful evaluation of sin and its effect on man's stewardship. God desired a much better life for man than man in sin chose for himself. Much of this study is given to the third factor, man's responsible management. There is a distinct Christian position about earning, spending, and giving. This position shapes the practices of the believer rather than letting him be shaped by the practices of his society. The last three chapters are given to a study of giving, the fourth factor. Christian giving is presented not as something extra to the Christian life but rather as the Christian life expressed. To be a Christian is to be a giving person.

It is the prayer of the author that this book will encourage persons to seek a greater understanding of biblical stewardship and to practise this beautiful life—the responsible life.

The author wishes to acknowledge the major contribution made to this study by participants in the 1971 National Stewardship Seminar sponsored by the Stewardship Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Cecil A. Ray

MINISTERIAL TRAINING BY GUIDED STUDY

Ministerial Training by Guided Study is designed to introduce students on various levels of academic preparation to the Bible and related areas. This is not a correspondence course, nor the traditional lecture system, but a new approach in education. The goal of the programme is to make quality theological training available to all students. Family and church responsibilities and lack of academic prerequisites and finances prevent many men and women who have been called of God from improving their ministry through training. These obstacles can be overcome by an approach which emphasizes self-study and weekly small group discussions. The study guides are designed for students on three levels of preparations:

1. Students with some primary education
2. Students with some secondary education
3. Students with some university qualifications

Although this course is designed primarily for pastors and ministerial candidates with no seminary training, laymen and lay preachers can also benefit from some of the courses. Pastors with divinity degrees might use some of the study guides as refresher courses while serving as leaders of study groups and conveners of the weekly seminars.

Study guides are used to direct private and group activities in the mastery of the content of a subject. They contain the basic content for each subject and recommend supplementary sources for a more advanced study. Questions are included to direct the attention of the student to the important facts in the lessons and to provide an immediate response to the material read. Weekly seminars of approximately an hour for each subject provide opportunities for the discussion of issues related to the subjects and their practical application in contemporary life. A teacher or tutor guides the seminar discussions, but the students from all three levels present and discuss their ideas. When students come to the seminar with a basic understanding of the lesson, the seminar can be dedicated to enrichment of the subject and to discussion of the practical use of the material in the life of the Church.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USING THE STUDY GUIDE

Text and Learning Activities

The Study Guide is designed primarily for home study. When the Guide is opened, the text appears on the left side of the page, and questions requiring an immediate response to the material read are on the right. The student should read a paragraph before reading and answering the question or questions for that paragraph. If there are no questions for a paragraph, he may wish to make a few notes on that paragraph and move on to the next. The questions and answers should be covered with a strip of paper (see following page) until the paragraph has been read and the student is ready to answer each question. Then the cover sheet should be moved down the page far enough to enable the reading of the question and the writing of the answer. The answer according to the text appears immediately under the question. After the student has written his own answer, he may then compare it with the given answer. If the two are not the same, the paragraph in the text should be read again.

Home Study Exercises

A **Home Study Exercise** appears at the end of each lesson. The Study Guide contains the basic content for each lesson, and the questions of the **Basic activity** are to be answered by all three levels. After reading the text and doing the learning activity on each page, the student should be able to answer most of the home study questions without further reference to the text. These questions are self-testing exercises. If a student is unsure of the correct answer, he has not adequately learned the material in that particular section, and he should review until he is sure that he understands the content. Some questions call for more extensive answers and require concentrated effort for mastery. The completed questions serve as a summary of the lesson and should be helpful as a review.

Students on *Levels 2 and 3* are required to do **Supplementary activities** in addition to the basic exercises. The supplementary activities sometimes include a reading assignment in another book with questions to be answered.

Level 3 is required to do **Advanced activities** in addition to the basic and supplementary work. This work will vary according to the availability of library resources. Sometimes there will be questions over a parallel reading assignment in a recommended resource book. At other times, the questions will require independent or individual research. Bible dictionaries, encyclopaedias, and books on the subjects of the study guide are sources which should be consulted.

Seminar

It is suggested that the students of all three levels in a geographical area meet for an hour each week with a teacher or tutor to discuss the lesson with reference to:

1. problems encountered in home study in answering questions or in understanding the textual material;
2. the application of the lesson to the practical work of Christian ministry and conduct;
3. the significance of the lesson as a whole and its place in the total programme of ministerial training.

The fragmentary questions of the lesson may sometimes be answered without getting a picture of the lesson as a whole. It is also possible to learn the facts about Christianity without seeing their application in the life of the Church. The student is responsible for getting the detailed information of the lesson in his home study. Understanding the overall meaning of the lesson and its practical application should be the goal of the seminar.

Some seminar questions have been included with each lesson. Their purposes are:

1. to stimulate interest (some are controversial questions which have not been resolved by scholars);
2. to guide in the beginning of the seminar discussions;
3. to direct attention to problems related to the materials studied;
4. to require original thinking which will lead to suggestions for the practical application of the material.

Teacher or Tutor

The teacher or tutor may offer other seminar questions which are more relevant in a given situation. He should feel free to use any approach he chooses as long as the discussion remains related to the material of the lesson. It is his responsibility to prevent the seminar discussion from departing from relevant issues.

The teacher may find that a brief test at the beginning of the seminar will be helpful. The test will encourage students to more adequately prepare their home study assignments and enable the teacher to evaluate the progress of each student. Two or three questions from the basic studies should be sufficient. Students who are not making satisfactory progress may need personal help and encouragement in preparing their lessons. They should not be overlooked!

LEARNING ACTIVITY

Use this sheet of paper to cover the learning activity on each page.

When you have finished reading each paragraph, slide the sheet down just far enough to expose the learning activity for that paragraph.

If there is no activity, continue to the next paragraph.

Write your answers

Then slide the sheet down farther to expose the suggested answers.

Compare your answers with the suggested ones.

If they do not agree, reread the paragraph.

Continue to the next paragraph.

LEARNING ACTIVITY

Use this sheet of paper to cover the learning activity on each page.

When you have finished reading each paragraph, slide the sheet down just far enough to expose the learning activity for that paragraph.

If there is no activity, continue to the next paragraph.

Write your answers

Then slide the sheet down farther to expose the suggested answers.

Compare your answers with the suggested ones.

If they do not agree, reread the paragraph.

Continue to the next paragraph.

Cut to separate