



## A Personal or Small Group Guide for the *Stewardship* WELL DONE JOURNEY

### Welcome

This discipleship guide is the third in a series for the *Stewardship Well Done Journey*.

The first session was about identifying our priorities, and the second focused on wise allocation of our funds entrusted to our care. That is one way we order our lives to reflect wise and godly stewardship. But there is more to the preparation conversation. How can you prepare to protect your priorities? The Word of God offers us wisdom.

“Be sure you know the condition of your flocks, give careful attention to your herds; for riches do not endure forever, and a crown is not secure for all generations.”  
(Proverbs 27:23-24)

### Two key phrases

**Be sure you know... and give careful attention to...**

You may not have flocks or herds, but you do have resources entrusted to your care. The practical wisdom from the Scripture is centered on preparation. Being prepared in times of unexpected and difficult circumstances is wise and life-giving. Here’s a true story about a family who found peace during a challenging time because of wise preparation.

“They found a mass on your mother’s brain.” It was 6pm on a September evening when that voicemail message played over the Bluetooth radio in my car. It stunned me, and it was like time stood still.

Mom was living a full life after losing my stepfather just months prior at the age of 69. How can this be? I cleared my calendar and drove to the hospital – praying the whole way there. Two days of tests and scans showed a glioblastoma – aggressive cancer – and surgery was scheduled.

The hospital staff interviewed my siblings and me, gathering all the needed information and data before surgery. “Do you have a medical power of attorney?” the nurse asked. “Yes. My son is. Get my purse,” mom asked. In mom’s purse was a medical power of attorney and a living will. I remembered well having this document prepared by a professional and honestly thinking it was over-reacting on my mom’s part. “This woman is prepared to a fault!” I thought.

That was just the beginning of a very long journey. In the nineteen months that followed, Mom had so very many difficulties. The surgery left her partially incapacitated, and there was no cure for the type of cancer she had. She had to leave her home, live in an assisted living facility, and ultimately a skilled nursing home. We had to liquidate her belongings and ready the house for a tenant. It was incredibly hard on all of us, and we could not have made it through without the Lord’s presence. It was a tremendous gift that our entire immediate family was Christian, so prayer became more precious than ever!



# PREPARATION

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My mom and stepfather were good savers and lived within their means. I remember the shock we all felt at the monthly cost of the assisted living facility. I looked at my mom and said, "This is what you saved for. Now is the time to spend what you saved. Let's ensure you're well cared for."

Mom's been gone for over five years, but two things still resonate with me from that tough time. First, you simply can't go through situations like that without the Lord. And second, a significant amount of pain was avoided because of how smart my mom and stepfather were. They had everything in order, and it made our emotionally challenging times a bit easier. We could all focus on what mattered most – caring for mom.

List things from the story that reflected how this couple was sure they knew the condition of their resources:

What types of things did they give careful attention to?

### **Give careful attention to essential documents.**

Having a living will, power(s) of attorney, and other essential documents that express your wishes in the event you cannot speak for yourself, are worthy of our attention. They're wise and life-giving.

Below is a list of essential documents and how they are life-giving. Simply place a check next to the ones you have in place. For those you do not have in place, ask yourself why?

- Last Will and Testament  
*This document assures your resources are allocated as you wish after you pass and can also name guardians for minor children.*
- General Durable Power of Attorney  
*Peace comes with knowing that someone you trust will act on your behalf if you are unable to or are incapacitated, and also deals with your financial matters.*
- Health Care Power of Attorney  
*In a medical emergency, a person whom you have chosen is appointed to express your wishes and act on your behalf.*
- Living Will / End-of-Life Provisions (may be combined with a Health Care Power of Attorney)  
*This expresses your wishes for medical care but does not appoint a person to act like a Health Care Power of Attorney does.*

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Something is deemed as Life-Giving when it increases one's quality of life. These documents don't remove our chances of medical events or needs for long-term care. However, taking the time to prepare them will provide lasting peace and not compound the difficulty we may one day experience.

### **Abundant life is *The Free Methodist Way***

As Free Methodists, we embrace five values that shape our identity. The first is Life-Giving Holiness. Read the following and then we'll consider how this applies to this step on the *Stewardship Well Done Journey*.

GOD'S CALL TO HOLINESS was never meant to be a burden, but a gift that liberates us for life that is truly life by delivering us from the destructive power of sin.

All who are born again are made right with God by the finished work of Jesus Christ and called to experience the fullness of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. Forgiven and filled, we approach life with confidence that we are acceptable to God even as He continues to transform our character and behavior to become more and more like Jesus. Life-giving holiness, then, is the fruit of full surrender to the loving reign of God over every aspect of our lives, establishing within us love that is truly love.

Leaving behind the legalism that once hindered our movement, The Free Methodist Way invites every believer to embrace the transforming work of the Holy Spirit that empowers us to love and serve God and others in joyful obedience.

This segment of the *Stewardship Well Done Journey* encourages us to prepare essential documents for unexpected and unwelcome events that may come to pass in our future. These things can often feel like a burden, but truthfully, they liberate us!

Does document preparation feel like "holy" activities to you? Why?

Legalism is defined as "excessive adherence to law or formula" and usually is obedience without any understanding as to why. How can holiness be legalistic?

How can the preparation of essential documents feel legalistic?

How can holiness be experienced as "abundant life – life to the full"?

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How can the preparation of essential documents be experienced as “abundant life – life to the full”?

### **A Prayer**

Lord God,

Thank you for the truth of Your Word that we’ve heard and experienced today. We know that Your desire for us is to be wise stewards of our resources, possessions, and our very lives. Forgive us for any and all ways we’ve been thoughtless or careless with our lives.

You have called us to live an abundant life that is full of Your goodness – set free to live apart from sins of selfishness and wastefulness.

Teach us to be holy as You are holy, and help us take the steps we need to surrender the stewardship of our lives in full and complete alignment with Your holy and wise ways.

We declare that the earth is Yours and everything in it. Thank You for your daily provision of our needs.

We pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.

*Scan the QR Code for more resources pertaining to Essential Documents as part of the Stewardship Well Done Journey.*

