

Stewardship of Life

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I heard a sermon many years ago that rested so well with me that I began to apply it to my everyday life, as well as teach it to people that I come in contact with. The sermon was simply titled 'Stewardship of Life.' It brought me to an awareness of my environment and to value the blessings that we so readily take for granted. Things like electricity, safety, fresh food, running water and so much more. What brought this home more powerfully is the recent senseless killings of young people on national service in Nigeria as a result of dissatisfaction with the presidential elections in some quarters. This happened in a country that has the Military as well as the Police. Life is so meaningless to some people that they take other people's lives at will. I am grateful to God for the ability to sleep peacefully at night without worrying that someone might put the house on fire.

In many of the countries that we originate from as immigrants, security, good roads and simple everyday essentials are the heights of luxury if available. In many areas, they are non-existent. When I visited Nigeria recently and saw the way the national electricity company treated the people, I was so disgusted. In many homes where they can afford to buy a generator, it is like a full time job, trying to have ongoing electricity. The energy company would put the light on for about ten minutes and we would rush to turn off the generator, (to save on fuel of course!) as soon as you settle down to enjoy some cool breeze from the fan or air conditioner, or watch the news or a good program on TV, power goes off and you have to get up again to go and turn on the generator. You can do this dance many times in a day. In the more affluent homes, men and maid servants are employed to keep watch over this so that you can sleep in comfort.

There was a woman who used to live in the same apartment complex with me who I had the opportunity to visit twice. One thing that amazed me was that her home was always in semi-darkness. She would sit alone there and not put on any lights and I would wonder why. Eventually, I decided that she was probably trying to save money on her electricity bill. I observed some more people in other houses where the utilities are included in the rent, who would have the lights on all day and night, the tap would run non-stop because they have a nonchalant attitude towards it. Some would say things like, "Oh don't worry about it, it's all included in the rent." Someone pays for it! The attitude is like 'don't worry, as long as long as I am not responsible for the payment.' How about house guests who cannot even afford a place of their own and become your enemy because you dared to caution them about the use of the essential amenities or even the use of your space. What a lot of people will not tolerate in their

own homes, they do to other people. The Bible says to 'do unto others as you would they do unto you.' There have been cases of people who live in subsidized housing and eventually buy their own homes who become tyrants when they in turn have to deal with house guests. There are some Landlords who dictate how many showers their tenants can take in a day to regulate the water bill. Of course, that is taking it to the extreme!

Teach Appreciation of life and its gifts. The woman in the home is usually the culprit because men generally will not voice their input in the situation. She is tagged as intolerant, selfish or unnecessarily prudent. I suppose not. When bills become unpaid, women generally cannot look the other way. Remember the woman in Proverbs 31:10-31? The Scripture in part reads,

"Who can find a virtuous and capable wife? For her price is far above rubies. Her husband can trust her and she will greatly enrich his life. She makes sure that her dealings are profitable. Her lamp burns late into the night. Her hands are busy spinning thread, her fingers twisting fiber. She has no fear of winter for her household, for everyone has warm clothes. She makes her own bedspreads... She carefully watches everything in her household and suffers nothing from laziness" (NKJV)

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The summary of the scripture above is that the virtuous and capable wife does not allow anything to go to waste. If every woman has all of these attributes, and teaches her household to appreciate the amenities that we have like a good Police department, electricity, water, life itself and so much more, the world would be a better place.

Please pray for the families in Nigeria who lost their newly graduated adult children to a lawless society. We are all responsible to make use of everything that God has given us well, not waste them.

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