

SMOKY MOUNTAIN RESCUE, THE MINI-SERIES

(Teachers: before you begin showing this series, please review the following information with your students.)

Stewardship Backstory:

When we choose to give our hearts to Jesus and make Him the Lord of our lives, then He is in charge of everything about us. . . .

“For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Cor. 6:20, NKJV).

From that point on we are managers (stewards) of everything about our lives. We are accountable (responsible) to God for how we relate to everything and everyone, even our own bodies. They all belong to Him. . . .

“The earth is the LORD’s, and all its fullness, The world and those who dwell therein” (Psalm 24:1, NKJV).

God asks us to be faithful in stewarding or managing whatever He has given us (our life, our relationships, our talents, our time, our resources of any kind), and He promises to take care of us and bless us for our faithfulness.

“You were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your Lord” (Matt. 25:21, NKJV).

Smoky Mountain Rescue Backstory:

In this mini-series you will meet several personalities, watch their adventures, and learn principles of stewardship (life management and accountability).

Jack:	Main character, a lost, but valuable, dog.
Grandpa:	Who has a farm where cousins Tony, Drew, and Emily are staying for the summer.
Brothers:	Tony and Drew, sometimes referred to as “Rottweilers.”
Cousin Emily:	From the city, an only child.
Jason:	A young man who raises and trains hunting dogs; guardian of a younger sister.
Katie:	Jason’s younger sister.

Smoky Mountain Rescue Episodes:

- 1) A good steward is kind to animals.
- 2) A good steward accepts responsibility.
- 3) A good steward is considerate.
- 4) A good steward shares with others.
- 5) A good steward is faithful to their master.
- 6) A good steward has self-control.
- 7) A good steward looks out for the needs of others.
- 8) A good steward has a reward waiting.

Teachers, please briefly review the Stewardship Backstory before each episode.

EPISODE ONE:

Introduction: *Episode one begins with Jason, Katie, and Jack on a mountain road. Each of the major characters are introduced in this episode.*

Show the video clip: A good steward is kind to animals.

Debriefing

Ask: What did you notice in this episode? (Allow students to share the thoughts or questions they had while watching the video. Lead the discussion to the main stewardship principle for this episode: **A good steward is kind to animals.**)

Say: This stewardship principle reminds me of a Bible text I would like us to read together. Let's find and read Proverbs 12:10 together.

*"A righteous man regards the life of his animal,
But the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel"* (NKJV).

Now let's find and read Jesus' story in Luke 15:4 together.

"What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it."

Discussion questions:

1. Jack needed rescuing. He needed help. Have you ever felt as if you needed someone to help you?
2. What are some ways that you have been helped?
3. Stewardship of nature includes being kind to animals. Why should we be kind to animals? (*Suggested answers: God created them; He gave man dominion or stewardship over them, which means to care for them; God loves them—He even notices when a sparrow dies, Matt. 10:29-31.*)
4. Have you ever seen an animal that needed help?
5. What are some ways that we can show kindness to animals?

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EPISODE TWO:

Introduction: *Episode two moves all of our characters along and lets us know what each is responsible for.*

Show the video clip: A good steward accepts responsibility.

Debriefing

Ask: What did you notice in this episode? (Allow students to share the thoughts or questions they had while watching the video. Lead the discussion to the main stewardship principle for this episode: **A good steward takes responsibility.** What were the different human characters in this episode each responsible for?)

Say: A steward is someone who takes responsibility for care for what God has brought into their lives. Let's read in the Bible about a good steward who took responsibility for what God brought into his life in Gen. 39:1-6.

"Now Joseph had been taken down to Egypt. And Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him from the Ishmaelites who had taken him down there. ² The LORD was with Joseph, and he was a successful man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. ³ And his master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD made all he did to prosper in his hand. ⁴ So Joseph found favor in his sight, and served him. Then he made him overseer of his house, and all that he had he put under his authority. ⁵ So it was, from the time that he had made him overseer of his house and all that he had, that the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the LORD was on all that he had in the house and in the field. ⁶ Thus he left all that he had in Joseph's hand, and he did not know what he had except for the bread which he ate" (NKJV).

Discussion questions:

1. What have we been learning that stewardship is? (*Stewardship is managing the things God owns and has given to us to take care of.*)
2. What are some of the things you have been given to take care of? (*Managing your time, your money, your talents. It means taking good care of your body, and of the animals and world that God created for you. It also means to accept and share with others the grace God has given you; that is called the Good News, or Gospel.*)
3. What type of person do you think a good Steward is? (*He/she is honest, faithful, responsible, accountable, kind and forgiving, grateful and generous.*)
4. Which of those traits do you think is the most important?
5. Which would you like your best friend to have? Your parents? Yourself?

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EPISODE THREE:

Introduction: *Episode three shows Grandpa being considerate to whomever lost Jack, as well as to his grandchildren.*

Show the video clip: A good steward is considerate.

Debriefing

Ask: What did you notice in this episode? (Allow students to share the thoughts or questions they had while watching the video. Lead the discussion to the main stewardship principle for this episode: **A good steward is considerate.** (Considerate: thoughtful of the rights and feelings of others.)

Say: Let's read 1 Corinthians 10:24 together.

"Let no one seek his own, but each one the other's well-being."

And, can anyone remember a Bible story in which a young boy joined with Jesus in being considerate of the hunger of those around him? It's found in John 6:1-14.

Discussion questions:

1. What are some ways that you can help those around you? Your parents? Your brothers and sisters?
2. How often do you think about what others around you may be needing before you decide what you are going to do?

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EPISODE FOUR:

Introduction: *In episode four the “Rottweiler” brothers and their cousin Emily share with one another and with Jack.*

Show the video clip: A good steward shares with others.

Debriefing

Ask: What did you notice in this episode? (Allow students to share the thoughts or questions they had while watching the video. Lead the discussion to the main stewardship principle for this episode: **A good steward shares with others.**)

Say: There are so many things we have to share with others. We can share our time, our talents, and our treasures. Let’s read 1 Peter 4:10 together.

As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God” (NKJV).

Who remembers a Bible story about a women who was always sharing her talent and treasure with others? The one I am thinking about is in Acts 9:36-41. Let’s read verse 36 together:

“At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which is translated Dorcas. This woman was full of good works and charitable deeds which she did” (NKJV).

Who can tell me the rest of the story?

Discussion questions:

1. How do you think it made Dorcas feel when she helped others?
2. What are some ways that you can help people at your school?
3. How about people at church?
4. How about people in your neighborhood?
5. It takes time to help others. How much time would you like to spend helping others?

Teachers, please briefly review the Stewardship Backstory before each episode.

EPISODE FIVE:

Introduction: *In episode five cousins Emily, Tony, and Drew search for the dog's owner and encounter danger.*

Show the video clip: **A good steward is faithful to their master.**

Debriefing

Ask: **What did you notice in this episode? (Allow students to share the thoughts or questions they had while watching the video.) Lead the discussion to the main stewardship principle for this episode: A good steward is faithful to their master.**

Say: When things get difficult, an every man for him or herself attitude may seem like the right way to go. But God shows us that even when the situation seems scary or impossible to overcome, trusting and listening to directions leads to a much better outcome.

It reminds me of when God spoke to Joshua right after Moses died, telling him he would take over the job of leading the children of Israel to the land He is giving them.

Let's read Joshua 1:9 (NKJV), where God says to Joshua:

"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

In the next chapter, Joshua sends two spies into Jericho, which God eventually gives to the children of Israel. Joshua trusted God, followed His directions and God delivered on His promise in a big way.

Discussion questions:

1. What might have happened if Drew and Tony hadn't listened to their cousin Emily, when she told them to leave the tent? What if they had decided it was every man for himself?
2. Why do you think Jack stayed close by Emily? (Suggested Bible verse: "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends." John 15:13)
3. Now let's talk about Joshua. Do you think he felt scared or overwhelmed with the idea of being in charge of leading the children of Israel after Moses lead for so many years?
4. How do you think the story would be different if Joshua had not believed God's promise, that He was with them everywhere they went and that everyplace "the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you"? (Joshua 1:3 NKJV)

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EPISODE SIX:

Introduction: *In episode six, flashbacks to before and after the accident are used to fill in missing pieces of the story.*

Show the video clip: A good steward has self-control.

Debriefing

Ask: What did you notice in this episode? (Allow students to share the thoughts or questions they had while watching the video.) Lead the discussion to the main stewardship principle for this episode: **A good steward has self-control.**

Say: Merriam Webster dictionary defines self-control as “restraint exercised over one’s own impulses, emotions, or desires.” That applies to how we treat people as well as animals. Numbers 22 tells the story of how God used a donkey to save Balaam’s life. The donkey can see what Balaam cannot, that the Angel of the Lord is standing in their path, with a drawn sword. Three times the donkey tries to avoid the Angel and three times Balaam gets angry, loses control and hits the donkey. Let’s read Numbers 22: 28-33 (NKJV).

“Then the Lord opened the mouth of the donkey, and she said to Balaam, ‘What have I done to you, that you have struck me these three times?’

“And Balaam said to the donkey, ‘Because you have abused me. I wish there were a sword in my hand, for now I would kill you!’

“So the donkey said to Balaam, ‘Am I not your donkey on which you have ridden, ever since I became yours, to this day? Was I ever disposed to do this to you?’

“And he said, ‘No.’

“Then the Lord opened Balaam’s eyes, and he saw the Angel of the Lord standing in the way with His drawn sword in His hand; and he bowed his head and fell flat on his face. And the Angel of the Lord said to him, ‘Why have you struck your donkey these three times? Behold, I have come out to stand against you, because your way is perverse before Me. The donkey saw Me and turned aside from Me these three times. If she had not turned aside from Me, surely I would also have killed you by now, and let her live.’”

Discussion questions:

1. What does Jason mean when he says selling Jack will pay for a meal for Katie?
2. Do you think that Jason is exercising self-control over his impulses, emotions, or desires? Is he exercising self-control while training Jack to be a hunting dog?
3. When are some times you can practice self-control?
4. When you are struggling with worry or anger, what are some techniques you can use to help yourself calm down?
5. What if it doesn’t work and you do something you regret? What are some things you can do? (Suggested answers: pray for forgiveness and ask forgiveness of whoever you hurt.)

Teachers, please briefly review the Stewardship Backstory before each episode.

EPISODE SEVEN:

Introduction: *In episode seven the cousins offer everything they have to help a special friend.*

Show the video clip: A good steward looks out for the needs of others.

Debriefing

Ask: What did you notice in this episode? (Allow students to share the thoughts or questions they had while watching the video. Lead the discussion to the main stewardship principle for this episode: A good steward looks out for the needs of others.)

Say: It's easy to give a little, when you have a lot. But what about giving everything you have? Let's read what it says in 2 Corinthians 9: 6-7 (NKJV).

“But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.”

There's also the story of the widow in Luke 21: 1-4, who gave more than everyone else, because she gave all that she had.

Discussion questions:

1. Do you think Jason feels good about selling Jack?
2. Why is he doing it?
3. What are some things we can do to look out for the needs of others? Does it always have to mean giving money?
4. What does it mean in 2 Corinthians 9:6, if you sow sparingly, you will also reap sparingly? (Suggested additional Bible verses to read: Galatians 6:7-10.)
5. Why do you think God loves a cheerful giver? Why isn't it the same to give grudgingly or out of necessity?

Teachers, please briefly review the Stewardship Backstory before each episode.

EPISODE EIGHT:

Introduction: *Episode eight wraps up the story, with a happy ending for all but one.*

Show the video clip: A good steward has a reward waiting.

Debriefing

Ask: What did you notice in this episode? (Allow students to share the thoughts or questions they had while watching the video. Lead the discussion to the main stewardship principle for this episode: A good steward has a reward waiting.)

Say: God doesn't promise it will be easy, being a good steward. He does promise, however, that the reward will be well worth it. Let's read Luke 12:32-34 (NKJV) together.

"Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell what you have and give alms; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

It also reminds me of Acts 20:35 (NKJV), which tells us to support the weak because "It is more blessed to give than receive."

Discussion questions:

1. Did your impression of Jason change any, after watching the last two episodes? Why or why not?
2. Does anyone know what the phrase "give alms" means? (The New International Version of Luke 12:33 says, "sell your possessions and give to the poor.")
3. What does it mean to lay up treasures in heaven? When we support the weak and give to the poor are we laying up treasures in heaven?
4. What are some ways you can support the weak and give to the poor? (Suggested answers: volunteer at a soup kitchen, food shelf or animal shelter, donate toys or money to the less fortunate, help a younger child when you see someone being unkind to them.)