

Forms and Usage of οἰκονόμος ("stewardship" "dispensation" "manager")

Greek	Reference	Translation	Passage / Meaning
VERB: οἰκονομία	Lu.16:2 (16:1-8a)	"stewardship" –NASB "Management" –NIV	"And he called him and said to him, 'What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.'" –NASB
			A trusted slave given the responsibility and oversight of a household for his owner.
NOUN: οἰκονόμος	Lu.16:1, 3, 8 (16:1-8a)	"steward" –NASB "manager" –NIV	" ¹ Now He was also saying to the disciples, 'There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and this steward was reported to him as squandering his possessions' ³ ... What shall I do, since my master is taking the stewardship away from me?' –NASB
			It appears the "rich man" is unjust in this case, for he praised the steward for acting shrewdly, and he dismissed the steward on a false accusation. The Lord uses a bad example to teach a good lesson. Planning ahead should be the Christian response, but not like the people of this world.
	Lu.12:42 (12:42-48)	"steward" –NASB "manager" –NIV	"And the Lord said, 'Who then is the faithful and sensible stewardship, whom his master will put in charge of his servants, to give them their rations at the proper time?'" –NASB
			Jesus referred primarily to the leaders of Israel who will be judged more severely because of their lack of faith than those who simply do not know of the coming of Christ.
	Ro.16:23	"treasurer" –NASB "chamberlain" –AV "director of public works" –NIV	"Gaius, host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer greets you, and Quartus, the brother." –NASB
			This is Paul's greeting to believers as he closes his epistle to the Romans.
	1Co.4:1, 2	"stewards" –NASB "entrusted" –NIV	" ¹ Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. ² In this case, moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy." –NASB
			Paul exhorts the servants/stewards of Christ to proclaim this message in the interests of Christ their master.
Ga.4:2	"managers" –NASB "governors" –AV "trustees" –NIV	"but he is under guardians and managers until the date set by the father" –NASB	
		Paul is illustrating the spiritual immaturity of those under the Mosaic Law. The Jewish father makes a formal acknowledgement when his son has matured as heir.	
Ti.1:7	"steward" –NASB "entrusted" –NIV	"For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain." –NASB	
		Paul lists qualifications for an overseer.	
1Pe.4:10	"stewards" –NASB "administering" –NIV	"As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." –NASB	
		God's gifts to believers are to be used to serve one another manifesting His grace to bring Him glory.	
NOUN: οἰκονομία	Lu.16:2, 3, 4	"stewardship" –NASB "manager" –NIV	" ² And he called him and said to him, 'What is this I hear about you? Give an account of your stewardship, for you can no longer be steward.'" –NASB
			The stewardship can be taken away.
	1Co.9:17	"stewardship" –NASB "dispensation" –AV "trust" –NIV	"For if I do this voluntarily, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have a stewardship entrusted to me." –NASB
Paul is simply discharging the trust (God's grace through the gospel) committed to him by God.			

	Ep.1:10	“administration” –NASB “dispensation” –AV	“with a view to an administration suitable to the fulness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things upon the earth...” –NASB
			God gives us grace to grasp some of His purpose in the coming kingdom when both spiritual and material are under the rule of Christ.
	Ep.3:2, 9	“stewardship” –NASB “administration” –NASB, NIV “dispensation” –AV	“ ² if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God’s grace which was given to me for you... ⁹ and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God, who created all things” –NASB
			Paul is to administer the grace of God to the Gentiles. This truth was hidden (not known) before the church age.
	Co.1:25-26	“stewardship” –NASB “dispensation” –AV “commission” –NIV	“ ²⁵ Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God, ²⁶ that is, the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations; but has now been manifested to His saints” –NASB
			The church as Christ’s body could not have been known in the Old Testament. The baptism of the Holy Spirit inaugurated the church age (Ac.1:5; 2). The mystery of Christ in the believer is distinct from any prior age.
	1Ti.1:4	“administration” –NASB “edifying” –AV “work” –NIV	“nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which give rise to mere speculation rather than furthering the administration of God which is by faith. –NASB
			Speculation by human imagination is to be avoided, having no spiritual value. Spiritual truth, having value is to be grasp by faith.

Summary

- The study of the word οἰκονόμος provides five principles: (1) The stewardship was given to another (Lu.16:3; Ep.3:2; Co.1:25); (2) The receiver is to act upon what was given (Lu.12:42; 1Pe.4:10; Co.1:25); (3) The receiver has a responsibility to the giver (Lu.16:2; 1Co.4:2; T.1:7; 1Co.9:17; 1Ti.1:4); (4) That which is given may have an appointed period of time (Ga.4:2; Ep.1:10; Co.1:26); (5) That which is given may be taken away (Lu.16:2).
- The word οἰκονόμος literally means “house (οἶκος) law (νόμος).” A dispensation is a “house” with its own laws or rules. This can be charted as time periods, though it is primarily the giving of responsibility to someone trusted.

“trusted responsibility”

“a trusted slave given the responsibility and oversight of a household for his owner”