

Saturday, March 20

Stewardship Principle

Readings: Psalm 126; Exodus 12:21-27; John 11:45-57

Prayer: *Lord God, You alone are the source of every gift, of the vast array of our universe, and of the mystery of each human life. We praise You and we thank You for Your great power and Your tender, faithful Love.*

*Everything we are and everything we have is Your gift, and after having created us, You have given us into the keeping of Your Son, Jesus Christ.*

*Fill our hearts with Christ’s truth and our hearts with His love, that in His Spirit we may be bonded together into a community of faith, a parish family, a caring people.*

*In the Name and Spirit of Jesus, we commit ourselves to be good stewards of the gifts entrusted to us, to share our time, our talent and our material gifts as an outward sign of the treasure we hold in Jesus. Amen.*<sup>54</sup>



**Contribute regularly**

means practicing our stewardship on a daily basis. By doing so this becomes a lifestyle. Paul instructs us:

**“On the first day of every week, each of you is to put aside and save whatever extra you earn.”  
1 Corinthians 16:2**

Focal Verse: “The Lord has done great things for us, and we rejoiced.” Psalm 126:3

Reflection: Stewardship means giving 100 percent to God. As long as we think that “giving to God” and “giving to the church” are the same thing, the concept of 100 percent stewardship will be lost on us

When we think about “financial stewardship,” then, we must not be concerned exclusively or even primarily with that portion of our money that we give to the church or to other good causes. We are to consider the matter of financial stewardship in terms of what we give to *God* – and God wants it all, not just a percentage. Think of it, rather, as an invitation, as an offer from God to take charge of this often troubled area of our lives and to bring us to that place of integrity and satisfaction that the apostle Paul calls *contentment* (Philippians 4:11-12).

Faithful living entails at least four things: When we are faithful stewards, 1) we *acquire* our money in God-pleasing ways; 2) we *regard* our money in God-pleasing ways; 3) we *manage* our money in God-pleasing ways; and 4) we *spend* our money in God-pleasing ways.

The most important point here may be a simple recognition that using our money as faithful stewards of God involves more than just giving to churches, charities and other worthy causes. God definitely wants us to give some of our money away, but God is also interested in what we do with the *rest* of our money. As faithful stewards, we want to use all of our money in ways that are pleasing to God.<sup>55</sup>

What do you hear?  
How does it make you feel?  
Toward what are you being drawn?  
What do you sense you should do?

<sup>54</sup> <http://www.mpls-synod.org/stewardship/prayers>

<sup>55</sup> Powell, Mark Allan, *Giving to God: The Bible’s Good News about Living a Generous Life*, © 2006, Errdmans Publishing, p. 79-81, and 102.