

Stewardship

Thanksgiving Day

Here is a question intended to make you think: On Thanksgiving Day, would you prefer to be among those who need help, including having a wonderful meal, or would you rather be someone who provides help, not only serving the meal, but also in other ways that meet human needs?

Of course that is a no-brainer, isn't it? Any right-minded person would want to be a helper/server instead of a poverty-ridden person who is not completely certain of work, food, shelter, health-care or anything else except the burdens of life.

A certain woman of means began thinking about just such stricken people. She examined her well-endowed life and decided to make her way into a slum area to use her brains, physical strength, and her financial resources to ease at least some of the burdens she observed many poor souls were carrying. It was an eye-opener for her, and a great blessing as well.

As she thought about the experience later, she began to urge others to get involved. She said, "I believe all of us can make the world better in tiny gestures that add up to a lot of energy."

Quite true! If it is impossible for us to help someone who needs our physical presence and our aid this Thanksgiving, then we should remember how blessed we are.

And also, we should remember that the poor are always with us and in need

of our "tiny" or large gestures to "make the world better." To help them is to help Christ himself. Your pastor can tell you how you can serve in a meaningful way. 

Necessity of Sharing

Over a thousand years ago, a saintly Christian made the following comment:

"If a man were given all the material things of the world, all the cattle, lands, lakes, he would be unhappy unless he could share them with someone he loved." St. Aelred

When one thinks about sharing seriously, the likelihood is that one will come to understand that sharing is an absolute necessity. Especially if we are to have good spiritual and mental health. God has made us to give, to share. It is part of loving. It is part of what brings inner joy. It is surely one of the reasons that Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). Giving does as much, often even more, for ourselves as it does for the people and good causes we support. Think about that when the offering is taken during worship. Think about that when you have an opportunity to share your God-given resources with legitimate charities or someone who desperately needs a handout and a hand up.

Then enjoy the blessings you will receive in return. 

In this month of Thanksgiving, we all should feel the joy of sharing of time, talent, treasure; sharing not only our money, but also some of our time specifically offered to God, and talent, the special things we can do in his name who gave us these special gifts.



Cannot spell
Church without U.

Cannot spell
Ad It without U.

Cannot spell
Yo th without U.

Cannot spell
M sic without U.

Cannot spell
S nday without U.

Cannot spell
S ccess without U.

Clearly, our
Church needs “U”.

Pastor John's musing...



Some of those who have not had previous experience of Christian stewardship may think that it is a financial whip-round; that a target is announced; that the familiar fund-raising thermometer appears outside the church and that when the target has been reached the whole project is dismantled, along with the thermometer, and that they are left in peace until the next financial crisis arises.

Now that type of purely fund-raising activity has its place. Everyone likes a good fete. But these things should not be confused with Christian stewardship, which is something much, much deeper. It is about every department of a Christian life. It is about our need first to respond with thanks to God for all his blessings and then to offer God through Jesus Christ our souls and bodies to be a living sacrifice.

Someone once said there are two ways of looking at life: you can take it for granted or you can take it with gratitude and the choice you make determines your character.

Think of the good things that God has given you and your family; the relative freedom and luxury we enjoy in our country. Giving thanks for what God has given us in life and for what God

(Continued on page 4)

His Cup Runneth Over

Gerry is my buddy. He helps out at church by leading the Junior High ministry. Week after week he's there teaching, mentoring, providing a listening ear for struggling teenagers, or just helping out. He runs his own landscaping business so he is free all winter. He spends that time chaperoning weekend retreats and all-night lock-ins in our church gym where the teens can play sports, listen to music, hear a Gospel message and have fun until six a.m. His infectious enthusiasm has inspired other parents to get involved. The teen ministry has grown dramatically because of Gerry's example of sacrifice and sharing.

Gerry's dad wasn't very involved with the family while he was growing up. As a matter of fact, he was very much detached from his children's lives. Gerry has determined that he wants to make a difference in the lives of the teens at our church.

"It's so important for them just to have someone there who cares and listens," he says. "If I can impact one life, it's more than worth it!"

Who knows how many generations to come will be positively affected by one man's stewardship of his time! Might you be another Gerry? 



More than Artistic or Musical

Have you ever stopped to consider that talents include many more abilities than merely athletic, artistic or musical? In God's Kingdom, each of us is given a talent according to our ability and the opportunity to use and develop that talent. Jesus does not pass judgment on how many talents we have. He holds us accountable for using the one we have to his glory.

A dormant talent?

Come and discover that talent which may be lying dormant within you or which you may be using every day but because it isn't a painting you can display for everyone to see, you may believe that you don't have any talent.

Outside the church

God does not require our talents to be used necessarily in the church. A candy-striper in the hallways of a local hospital sharing her talent of giving comfort and hope to burn victims is certainly glorifying God with her talent as much as a Sunday School teacher who loves the children in her class. 

Cheerful Steward?

I've tithed for most of my Christian life. It's a blessing to be able to contribute to the work of the Lord. Yet recently God showed me I'm not a cheerful giver. I write the check, but not with the right attitude, I look at it more as an expense, a bill to pay, rather than a privilege to give thanks for. God doesn't need my money. God could get it anywhere he chooses. Yet he gives me the opportunity to partner with him in doing his will on earth. When I pay my tithe begrudgingly, it's just like my wife getting me a birthday gift because she has to. If she doesn't enjoy doing it and would rather skip the event altogether, I take no pleasure in opening the gift. It was given under compulsion, not freely. A gift shows our appreciation for the other person. It conveys we value them highly. If it's a chore for me to give, there's something wrong with my heart. I've forgotten who it rightly belongs to. Money doesn't truly belong to me. Like everything else, it's on loan. I want to joyfully give it back! 

"Charge them to do good, to be rich in good works and generous, sharing what they have." 1 Timothy 6:18

May Timothy's letter move us to better see how we are using all that the Lord has entrusted to us; our income, our talents. This sense of stewardship will help us grow in faith and concern one for another. That's what faith community is all about.





On Thanksgiving Day, would you prefer to be among those who need help, including having a wonderful meal, or would you rather be someone who helps serve not only the meal, but also in other ways that meet human needs?

Continued from page 2...

Some of those who...

has done for us through Jesus Christ is a starting point. And then comes our response.

We are invited to offer back to God ourselves, including our time, abilities and our money.

As stated at the beginning of this article, Christian stewardship is very different from fund raising, but of course it does say something very important about money. Will not God call us to account for what we have done with our money? And if we can pass the money test, will it not say something about the character of our life, and whether or not it is Christian at all?

For a Christian is distinguished by being someone who carries with them

a sense of indebtedness, whose life is lived as a response to the generosity of God. And what about each of us? Freely we have received: freely give. 

