



# Stewardship 2017

The stewardship of today...is about more than money. It is about the caregiving of yourself and other people. Each of us has been given the responsibility of caregiving. This caregiving includes giving of your time, relationships, talents, passions, energy, lifestyle, the environment and money. Try thinking of Stewardship as a developing attitude of gratitude. We have been given much. What we don't have should be dismissed as an unnecessary want. What we have is what we need and must be cared for wisely and shared generously before more is given. Stewardship is an important daily activity. How you take care of all that God has blessed you with should be a priority. For a life of stewardship you may want to start by tending to your health, your relationships, your work, your possessions, your finances, your recreation, God's creation, your community or your faith life.

## **Stewardship in a culture of hyper-consumption**

Stewardship can be a difficult action plan in the current culture of hyper-consumerism. Lifestyle pressures are often exhausting when we find ourselves over-scheduled, over-worked, over-spent and over-committed. A good steward must refocus on activities that give fulfillment and meaning, slow down and adapt our calendars to match our need. If your world is framed by "instant," you may be left frustrated and wanting-looking for instant news, constant contact, unlimited access, or meals provided with no waiting in the drive-through lane. You might seek instant gratification; abhor silence, and get constant stimulation by your electronic devices. If your personal life is filled with cellphones, credit cards, and keys you may be instantly available, scheduled for every opportunity, able to buy without price, and protective of your stuff. Worst of all, you may not notice that your possessions begin to possess you.

## **Stewardship conversations in a culture of hyper-consumerism**

It is often a challenge to think that stewardship / personal giving is a spiritual experience rather than a financial transaction. When you recognize God's abundant love, grace and blessings you realize that God has provided you with everything you need. Jesus calls you to put your trust in him, to grow in faith through living as his disciple and to put your possessions into proper perspective (to possess them and not be possessed by them). Jesus invites you to put your trust in God's abundance, not in your possessions. When you see the motto on your money-In God We Trust-let it be a reminder that your trust is in God and allow your conversations about stewardship can take on an enthusiastic and energetic tone. We constantly receive information about the economy, possessions, financial markets, and the price of things. Consider that it may be time, necessity and opportunity to create a simpler life where you can focus upon your relationship with Jesus, grow as a disciple and learn to be a better steward of all that God has blessed you with.

Self-care is never a selfish act - it is only good stewardship of the only gift I have, the gift I was put on earth to offer others.

Parker J. Palmer

## Three ways to develop healthy stewardship

1. Engage in conversation about your personal stewardship journey and especially your steps toward planned giving practices. Look for and use financial tools for preparing a budget and balance sheet of assets and liabilities.
2. Become a stewardship leader. The Competencies of a well-formed Stewardship Leader are; engage, discern and shape a path marked by your giving.
3. Build confidence and invite others to participate in a well-developed stewardship strategy. Regularly reflect on the six principles of stewardship:

### 6 key principles of stewardship –

1. Gratitude
2. Sharing
3. Sacrifice
4. Commitment
5. Generosity of spirit, self and Giving freely
6. Abundant joy



Adapted from Stewardship 101 as found in *Make It Simple*  
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