

Brother Steward

Money and the Great Commission

Jesus' parting command was: *"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."* (Matthew 28:19-20). Jesus was very direct and explicit with his mandate. There is no question as to where or with whom we are to share the Gospel. The love that God gives to us is to be shared by us with all people everywhere. He has given us our marching orders, and, in his strength, we can give ourselves fully to his work.

Because God has chosen to use us as his tools to bring salvation to all people, we must use our lives and gifts to spread the Good News. Paul wrote, *"We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us"* (2 Corinthians 5:20). One of the tools that God gives us to use in our mission of reaching out to others with the Gospel is our money. According to an old stewardship phrase, "Stewardship without mission is unnecessary and mission without stewardship is impossible." Stewardship and mission are inseparable. The funding of the Great Commission needs to come from believers. The money which God entrusts to us has many purposes, and the funding of mission work is of first importance. Through the giving of our money, we demonstrate our obedience to Jesus' command to reach out to all people. Paul wrote that, through our giving, we *"test the sincerity of [our] love by comparing it with the earnestness of others"* (2 Corinthians 8:8).

For nonbelievers and those who lack spiritual maturity, the giving of money is done begrudgingly out of a sense of obligation. By the grace of God, our attitude toward giving is a "want to" rather than a "got to" give. We view giving as a privilege and an opportunity to spread the Gospel through our money. Our giving expresses our gratitude for who God is and all that he has done for through his Son. Through faith, we hold onto our money loosely and then are privileged to experience the joy of giving as we give God our first and best. As Christians we understand that God has a claim on all that we have, so we willingly and cheerfully give our money to help all people hear of God's love. Money is an important tool for God's mission. Through our faithful giving, we are able to leverage our witnessing to all people.

Brother Steward

Welcome Back!

Summer can be a bummer. Everything comes to a stall until the fall. But, things are picking up. The pews are filling up. The offertory basket is a little heavier. Our ministries have more volunteers. The vacationers are back. Our out-of-town friends are returning. We're getting into high gear!

Praise the Lord! But, let us not be complacent. There's work to be done! Donations are needed for our annual budget, ministries and big projects.

Giving is good.

Remember The Lord's House is everybody's house: Mi Casa, Su Casa. Welcome Home!

God Bless.



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Giving is Good with Tax Free Donations!

Our Brother In-Charge of Greek Translations wrestled through recent IRS rules and came up with the following: If you are 70 and a half and have to make a minimum distribution from your IRA you can avoid paying taxes on it and exclude it from your AIG (Adjusted Gross Income) by donating it directly to a charity.

Here's how it works: a 70 and a half year-old parishioner wants to donate \$10,000 to the church from his or her IRA. He or she tells their broker this is part of the recent tax relief act so there is no tax on the withdrawal, but it has to go directly from the IRA to the church. Other benefits are that the \$10,000 counts toward the minimum distribution requirement, but does not add to the AIG (Adjusted Gross Income). Wow!

Now, if you're not 70 and a half there are other tax deductible ways to support the church: the weekly offertory or annual pledge. Call the church office for details.

And remember, where there's a will there's a way.

God Bless.



Brother Steward

Stewardship and Smartphones

“Do you have a smartphone?” A grade schooler asked.

I answered, “No, but I have plenty of minutes and they’re all free!”

“How’s that?” she asked. I responded, “Well, every day the Lord gives me 1440 minutes to use. 24 hours a day. And it’s up to me how to use them. That’s his gift to all of us of time. All God” wants is for us to use them wisely.”

“Like how?” she asked again.

“Like spending a few minutes each day in prayer for thanks, for guidance, or to help a sick person. Or, we can use our minutes helping someone in need, or doing chores for your parents. Or, even using your smartphone to text positive messages to your friends,” I explained

“Did you have to sign a contract,” she inquired. “No, it was a verbal prayer to the Lord saying that as a good steward I will use the gift of time wisely, as well as the gifts of talent and treasure.”

“How do you talk to the Lord?” she wondered. “Well, I just say or think a prayer and it goes direct to him.”

“And you don’t need a smartphone?”

“No, the Lord hears everything. We’re always connected. God’s the ultimate WIFI and he’s everywhere!

God Bless.

