

South Central Synod of Wisconsin Bishop’s Convocation

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1. A Biblical Look at Stewardship
2. Rostered Leaders Are Steward Leaders
3. Ask
4. Creating a Culture of Thanksgiving
5. Stewarding that which has been Entrusted into the Congregation’s Care
6. Talk about Money in Two Different Ways

A Biblical Look at Stewardship

Pastor Chick Lane

What does “stewardship” mean?

For most people, “stewardship” is a code word.

- For most congregation members, it is code for “What the congregation does to get some of my money out of my pocket and into the offering plate.” (and my job is to give just enough to not feel guilty)
- For most congregation leaders, it is code for “Those things we have to do to get enough money to pay the bills.” (and we know how well we have done at year end when we know if we have enough money to pay all the bills)

What does “stewardship” mean?

“Stewardship is a wonderful word that describes how a follower of Jesus Christ faithfully travels through this life.”

- Stewardship is about discipleship
- Stewardship is not about a congregation’s bills and budgets

The #1 Stewardship Resource
regardless of your ministry setting

The Bible

What does it say about stewardship?

It all belongs to God.

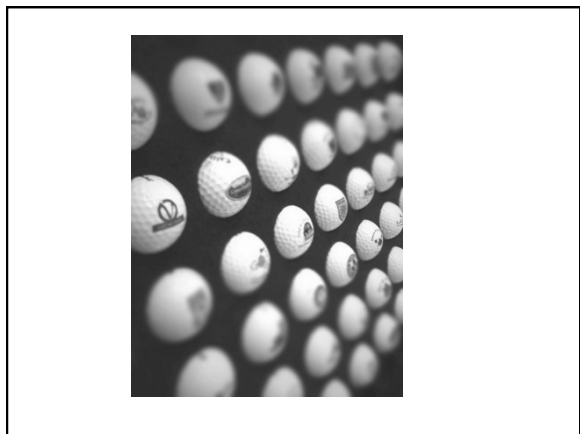


God is the creator and owner of all that is.

Psalm 24:1-2
The earth is the LORD's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it; for he has founded it on the seas, and established it on the rivers.

Psalm 95:3-6
The Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods. In his hand are the depth of the earth; the heights of the mountains are his also. The sea is his, for he made it, and the dry land, which his hands have formed. O come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker.

Psalm 89:11
The heavens are yours, the earth also is yours; the world and all that is in it--you have founded them.



Morning Prayer

“Into your hands we commend ourselves: our bodies, our souls, and all that is ours.”

“Into your hands we commend ourselves: our bodies, our souls, and all that is yours.”

It all belongs to God.

We are stewards.

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I Corinthians 4:1-2
Think of us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of God’s mysteries. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy.

We are stewards.

I Peter 4:10
Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.

Sty warden – the keeper of the sty.



Steward – a most important and prestigious role

Genesis 39:1-6a
Now Joseph was taken down to Egypt, and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh...bought him. The Lord was with Joseph.... His master saw that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord caused all that he did to prosper in his hands. ... He made him overseer in his house and over all that he had.

Steward – a most important and prestigious role

God thinks so highly of you that God has chosen to entrust some of what God owns into

- your care
- your management
- your stewardship

It all belongs to God.

We are stewards.

The duty and delight of generous living

I Timothy 6:17-19

As for those who in the present age are rich, command them not to be haughty, or to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but rather on God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. They are to do good, to be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share, thus storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of the life that really is life.

The duty and delight of generous living

II Corinthians 9:6-8

The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work.

The threat of money

Matthew 6:24

No one can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.

The more you have, the bigger the threat.

Matthew 19:22

When the young man heard this word, he went away grieving, for he had many possessions.

The promise/threat of money is the power it exerts in our lives.

“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” -- Luke 12:34

Where your money goes will cause your heart to go there as well.

What does “stewardship” mean?

When the bible talks about financial stewardship,

- It never talks about getting enough money to pay the bills.
- It always talks about how important it is for a child of God to align her/his financial life with her/his life in Christ.

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The most important thing you can do in stewardship ministry is to move the money conversation...

From “Paying the Bills” → To helping people connect faith and finances in their lives.

What are you doing in your congregation to help people improve the intersection of faith and finances in their lives?



What thoughts have this Biblical material prompted for you?

Why is this so stinking difficult?

Why is this so difficult?

- Societal taboos
 - Money ranks right up there with sex and politics as topics to be avoided in public conversation



Why is this so difficult?

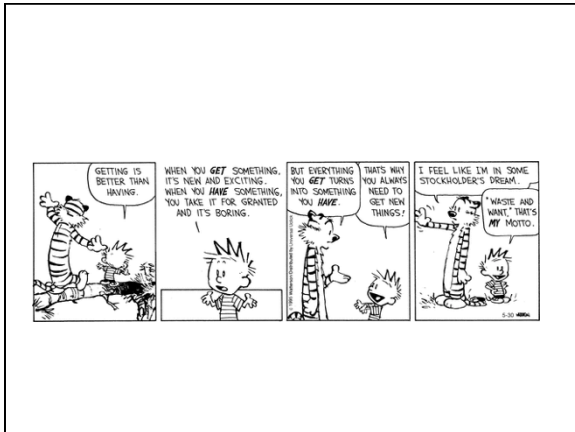
- Old (and not so old) tapes
 - “Here is what we say through our stewardship practices: 10% belongs to God; the rest belongs to you. Give that 10% to the church, which will use it for God’s purposes. The other 90%? Do whatever you want with it.” - Rolf Jacobson
 - For so long in the church we have talked about money only when we have wanted some. Therefore, people will hear us asking, whether this is what we are doing or not.

Why is this so difficult?

- In the church we imagine that there is a spiritual/financial split.
 - “The church is a business after all.”
 - We want the pastor to focus on “spiritual” matters. Financial issues in the congregation are left to business and finance leaders.
 - When we have talked about money, it has usually been as a “business” issue, not a “spiritual” matter.

Why is this so difficult?

- Consumerism
 - is about having something else; that’s why it is not simply buying but shopping that is at the heart of consumerism.” – William Cavanaugh, *Consumed*, p. 35
 - “Consumerism is not simply people rejecting spirituality for materialism. For many people, consumerism is a type of spirituality.” – p. 36
 - “Consumer culture is one of the most powerful systems of formation in the contemporary world, arguably more powerful than Christianity.” – p. 47



Consumerism

"Our whole life is to give you something you didn't know you wanted. And then once you get it, you can't imagine your life without it."

-Tim Cook, Apple CEO

How much is enough?

Just a little more than I have now.

Why is this so difficult?

- What is your experience?
- What are your success stories?