



# Stewardship

is the grateful response of a Christian disciple who recognizes, receives and cultivates God's gifts and generously shares these gifts in love of God and neighbor.

## Live Each Day as a Steward!

By God's grace, we are given the high honor of being his stewards. In Genesis, God has given us a special role in his creation. God has charged us with being the caretakers of all that he has created.



### Steward's Identity

### FAITHFULLY USING GOD'S GIFTS!

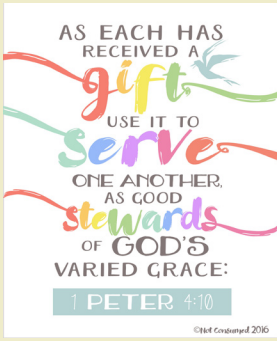
**Scripture Reading:** "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace." (1 PETER 4:10)

"As a body of believers, we are given many gifts. Each of us is given at least one gift." - (1 Corinthians 12:7). By grace, the Body of Christ is given the gifts of serving, prophesying, giving, encouraging, and leading. Although we have different gifts, they all work toward the same purpose—that of building up the Body of Christ through works of service. We are responsible to use our gifts in service to him through the church. Our work for Christ continues until God's goal, which is to unite all people "to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13), is realized.

By the working of the Holy Spirit through Word and Sacrament, we are enabled to use our gifts to bless others and to build his Church here on earth. If we choose not to use our gifts, we are spurning God's gifts, robbing the church, and forcing other members to carry our loads.

**Question for reflection:** How can I use the gifts God has given me?

**Prayer:** Dear heavenly Father, I come to you as a humble servant, grateful for who you are and for all you do for me. Thank you for the opportunities I have to serve you. I pray for guidance, wisdom, and courage as I share your love with others. Lord, help me to live each day as a steward who seeks to fulfill your purpose for my life. In Jesus' precious name I pray. Amen.



## Steward's Purpose

### WE ARE ACCOUNTABLE

**Scripture Reading:** “Well done, good and faithful servant!” (MATTHEW 25:23)

From the Parable of the Talents (*Matthew 25:14-30*), we learn that our financial lives are important to God and that he wants us to multiply the gifts he entrusts to us. In the parable, a Master (Jesus) entrusted three servants with different amounts of talents before going on a journey. After he returned, he asked each to give an account of what he had done with what he had been given. The master commended the two servants who faithfully and wisely invested the talents given to them. Because they were faithful in their efforts to please and serve him, the master told each of them, “Well done, good and faithful servant!”

Just as Jesus held the servants in the parable accountable, he holds us accountable for what he entrusts to us. This parable leads us to the conclusion that wise management of our money, along with all our gifts, pleases the Lord, and poor management greatly displeases him. When he comes again, “... *then each of us will give an account of himself to God*” (Romans 14:12). We will want to hear, “**Well done, good and faithful servant!**”

**Question for reflection:** How can I be more faithful in the use of the money and gifts God gives to me?

**Prayer:** *Dear heavenly Father, as I invest the money that you have entrusted to me, grant me your wisdom to make it grow so that I will have more to use in your service. In your precious name I pray. Amen.*



## Steward's Lifestyle

### BEWARE OF GREED

**Scripture Reading:** “Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions” (LUKE 12:15)

Through the Parable of the Rich Fool (*Luke 12:13-21*), Jesus illustrates the foolishness of living only for ourselves. Jesus tells about a wealthy and successful farmer who needed to build bigger barns to hold his abundant crops. The farmer was interested only in his own pleasure and well-being. His goal was to become wealthy so he could eat, drink, and be merry during his retirement. He didn’t acknowledge God as the provider of what he had. Because of his self-centered attitude, Jesus calls him a fool. His self-centeredness and selfishness are revealed in his repeated use of the words “I” and “my.”

Excessive self-centeredness is pervasive throughout our society and the whole world, and it is a sin that plagues the Christian steward as well. St. Augustine wrote, “The beginning of all sin is the love of one’s own self.” By the power of the Holy Spirit, self-love is replaced by love for others, and we learn to focus more on the eternal than the temporal.

**Question for reflection:** Today, I will show my interest and compassion for someone else by \_\_\_\_\_?

**Prayer:** *Dear Lord, help me be content in all things. Amen.*