

# Stewardship

Inspiring a deeper understanding of true giving

April 2021

**N**o living creature can match the physical strength and stamina of the common ant. One observer who watched an ant dragging a dead grasshopper, weighed the bodies of both. The ant was pulling 60 times its own weight. To equal such a feat, a 150 pound man would have to drag a load of four and a half tons! What great gifts God has given to all creatures. We can only admire the remarkable powers of the tiny ant!

But human beings were made to do more than haul tons around. God has given you the power to help change the world for the better. You have no idea how much you can do to use your abilities to help mankind. Criticizing or complaining accomplishes little. But as soon as you start “doing” even one little thing for Christ you will begin to realize your tremendous power.

Our abilities should be dedicated to God. The abilities of the successful Christian business person are needed in God’s church. The trained, efficient teacher should be using his or her talent in the church, as well as in the school-room. The person gifted in music should contribute to an effective music program in the church. The doctor and nurse will find many ways of using their abilities for furthering the Christian church.

Young people in choosing their life vocation should ask how this profession can contribute to the work of the kingdom of Christ. What a blessing it would be if people were willing to tithe their abilities as well as their money! The secretary, the carpenter, the plumber, the painter, the teacher, the artist, the musician, as well as others could make vital contributions to the church by using their particular tal-

ent for the work of the church. If one’s work is legitimate, there is some way that that talent can be used for God.

The story is told of a young Christian artist by the name of Joseph Peterson. As he rode the streetcars he noticed the many advertisements in the cars, yet no advertisements for Christ and the church. He decided to use his gift in preparing

*Ministry is an integral part of the Christian life that flows from our being baptized and confirmed into a life dedicated to discipleship. Our sacramental initiation into ministry establishes our lifelong task as one of discernment - learning where and how our talents and abilities can best be used to build up God’s people.*



Gospel cards to be displayed in the cars. Twelve years later he was giving full time, managing an office force, and was sending 8,000 cards monthly to 120 cities of the United States, Canada, South Africa, Australia, India, British West Indies, and Hawaii. 





### Givers Have More Fun than Takers

**G**od has given us the sun to light the world and keep us warm. He has given us darkness so we'll be able to sleep at night. He has given us trees to climb and build forts in and sit under to rest. He has given us water to swim in and drink when we're thirsty and to wash with when we have to.

God has given us parents so we'll have clothes and a home and somebody to help us with our homework. God has given us the whole world. Free. God doesn't ask for much in return. He asks only that we love him.

But how can we show God we love him if we can't even see him? Jesus has given us the answer to that. He said that we show our love for God by doing what he wants us to do. Also, by giving and by doing things for other people.

By giving some of your time to help with the dishes ... or make beds ... or clean the basement without complaining. Or by always paying attention in school and not talking. Or by always being nice to others, even when they aren't nice to you. These are all ways to give to God by giving to others.

Another good way to give to God is by giving to God's church: by giving to the missions and by giving something on Sunday in church when we offer ourselves to God. Don't ask your mother or father for the money. That way they would be doing the giving. You would only be putting the money in the basket for them. The thing to do is give part of your allowance, or give something out of money you earn.

What many people do is give God 10% of what they earn. Ten cents out of every dollar. This would mean that if you get five dollars each week, you would give 50 cents of it to God on Sunday. If you get 10 dollars a week, you would give \$1 of it to God. Giving 10% of what you have is called tithing. If 10% sounds like a lot, stop and think again about all God has given you!

Just think. If everybody would begin giving, then everybody would soon be getting as well as giving and everybody would be happy. That's God's plan. He wants us all to be givers. He wants us all to be happy too.

So God's fixed it so that givers have more fun than takers! 

*Throughout his teachings, Jesus simply asked that we change the way we think ... change the way we look at ourselves and our neighbors ... learn to use our life, our talents, our gifts, to serve others ... and through service to others, find that we have served and loved God.*

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## Building Rafts

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**S**ome birds build nests right beside the water, sometimes only inches away. If there is a flood, and the lake rises too high, the eggs will be chilled and won't hatch. This problem can be especially devastating in the case of endangered birds, such as loons, leading to dangerously low numbers of chicks being raised each year.

So scientists designed and built special rafts, covered them with cattails and other weeds, and then anchored them loosely in sheltered areas. Often, birds will use them for nesting sites. If the lake floods, these rafts will float, keeping the nests and their eggs safe

from the water. In a way, raft-building is something all stewards do. Of course, they are usually not actual rafts. However, they do help others to stay out of harm's way.

Starting, running, and donating to a food pantry all help keep away the dangers of malnutrition. This is especially important for children, the sick, and the elderly.

Providing school supplies and tutoring helps keep the dangers of ignorance away. In many cases, adults need help with learning just as much as children do.

Building and repairing homes helps keep the dangers of homelessness - crime, cold, lack of sanitation, to name just a few - away from people who

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## Steward of the Month

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### And Two Shall be as One **Submitted by: Carol Fancy Farm, KY**

**I**n a small rural town in western Kentucky, population approximately 500, there lives a married couple of 62 years. Ross and Elizabeth Curtsinger, quietly and graciously through the years have embodied the meaning of Christian stewardship. Without fanfare, both have served on parish committees, performed various ministries, chaired church picnics; fed the hungry by dedicated work with the local food pantry, clothed the naked through their support and participation in the St. Vincent DePaul Society, and shown compassion for the widowed, the poor and the sick through gifts of food, visits, cards, letters and prayers.

They do not leave their spirit of giving behind when they spend their winters in the south of Texas. There they join with other winter Texans in charity fundraisers, deliver food and clothing to families in Mexico and continue to keep tabs on the folks back home with Elizabeth's ministry of cards, letters and prayers. Together they have been as one in their life of ministry, sharing their time, talent and treasures with all ... in all ways. Their stewardship is as God intended, a constant lived out each day not just at Christmas or Thanksgiving. These special people are my parents. They never had a lot of earthly treasures, but were gifted with a rich and generous spirit and have worked hard to pay it forward. 

*When we give to God, who gives everything to us that we are and have, our gift says in our name, "God we love you ... God we thank you." There is always joy in loving and thanking God.*

*The more we love God, the more we will give as God has given to us. The more we give for God's works, the more the Holy Spirit will fill our hearts with joy and happiness.*



**In a way, raft-building is something all stewards do.**

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### **Building Rafts...**

because of illness, disability, or unemployment, are vulnerable to being on the street. Most importantly of all, maintaining a house of worship helps people keep the dangers of sin away from themselves. Comforting prayers, inspirational sermons, and joyous hymns can and do change lives.

The water birds never thank the scientists for the rafts. Stewards may not hear thanks as often as they should, either. But the world is a better, more beautiful place for the birds in it, and likewise for the people who benefit from Christian stewardship. 



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