

Stewardship

Inspiring a deeper understanding of true giving

October 2020

There is a story about a clock that decided to take a serious look at things. The old clock said, “Why, I have to tick two ticks per second, 120 ticks per minute, 7200 ticks per hour, 172,800 ticks per day, and 63,072,000 ticks per year. I just can’t stand it any longer. I think that I’ll just sit down and quit. That’s too much for me.”

He quit trying to be a clock. Someone carried him to the doctor and he explained his problem like this. “I have to tick two ticks per second, 120 ticks per minute, 7200 ticks per hour, 172,800 ticks per day, and 63,072,000 ticks per year. I just can’t do it any longer. It’s too much for me.

The old doctor analyzed the clock’s problem and then gave him this advice: “How many ticks do you have to tick at one time?” The clock answered that he only had to tick one tick at the time. The doctor then asked, “Well, how were you doing, ticking one tick at the time?” The clock answered that he was doing all right as long as he was just ticking one tick at the time. The doctor replied, “Well, can you continue to tick just one tick at the time.” The clock answered that he could. The doctor commented, “Well, that solves your problem ... just go home and tick one tick at the time. If you will do that, you will be able to make it right on.” The clock did that and as far as we know, he is doing fine. He’s still ticking two ticks per second, 120 ticks per minute, 7200 ticks per hour, 172,800 ticks per day, and 63,072,000 ticks per year ... ticking one tick at the time.

It seems that there is so much to do; so many debts to pay; so many loose ends to get caught up on. Don’t let this get you down! You can’t do it all at once, but you can do each of these one at the time.

You are encouraged to find room for God and God’s work. Your decision to make God a part of your life will be the best decision that you will make this year. The clock almost didn’t make it. Life was too much for him. It will be too much for you if you leave God out of your life.

Offering \$1,500 or \$1,000 or \$500 ... that’s an awful lot of money. Will you be able to give that much? Do like the clock! Don’t think about it from the largest amount, but from the smallest. If you will give a significant portion of your income each week, a sacrificial commitment, it will amaze you how much you have been able to invest in God’s work.

A beautiful creed to live by was expressed by Etienne De Grellet: “I expect to pass this way but once; any good therefore that I can show to any fellow creature, let me do it now. Let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.”



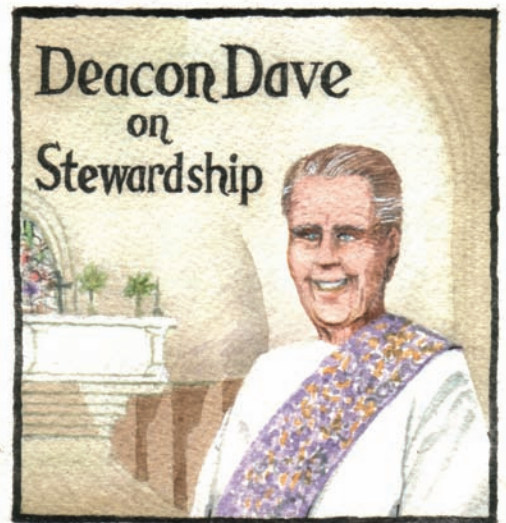
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Utilizing Time


What will give our life more meaning? We are blessed with many gifts, not the least of which is time. God has put us in this environment, among these people and these opportunities. We will be accountable to God for the way in which we use our time to relate to these people, respect the environment, and avail ourselves of the opportunities, and the manner in which we carry out our responsibilities.

Lost possessions may be replaced, a broken friendship can be mended, but one cannot regain time squandered in selfish pursuits.

Many of us are preoccupied with pursuing the age-old question, “What is the meaning of Life?,” when we should be asking, “What will give our lives more meaning?” The utilization of time can be used in answer to this question.



Since our existence must be filled with an aim in order to make it a life, it is necessary to use our time and energy in pursuit of this aim. Wanting to do something does not bring it about.

Willing ourselves to do something means that we plan to make the effort to bring it about. That means setting priorities which answer this question as we awaken each morning, “What can I do to serve the Lord today?” 

If God could get his voice through to us God probably would say: “Grant me a minute, please! With the light which I shall give you, make an honest examination of your daily schedule. Do you have talents unused or wasted on petty goals? By eliminating some non-essentials, could you not give more time and energy to really meaningful enterprises? Are you sure that you are fulfilling, reasonably well, your part in my plan?”

A “Brownie” Lesson

You boys can have the corner pieces, but the rest of the pan is given to church.”

It’s been fifty years, but I can still hear my mother saying these words. They were often offered in reference to a batch of brownies that had just been removed from the oven.

Chocolate brownies were my mother’s dessert of choice. She would frequently offer this treat for a variety of church events. But there was a “house rule” concerning them. Whereas my brother and I were allowed to snack on the four corner pieces (viewed as less desirable), the best pieces were reserved for church.

Little did I know it then, but my mother was offering her two sons a wonderful lesson in stewardship. She was re-enforcing the biblical concept of the “first fruits,” where the first and best of our time, talent and treasure – or in this case, a pan of brownies – is to be offered to God.

On several occasions over the years I have been reminded that whenever I have held on to the first of my income, time and talent, I seldom seemed satisfied. Yet when I have offered God the first and best of these resources, not only has a greater sense of satisfaction arisen, but there has always been enough left over to meet my needs.



You are the Church!

As a Christian, you are the church. Realizing this, the questions you must ask yourself are:

- † What am I doing to demonstrate my love of God and to fulfill my obligation as a member of God's family?
- † Am I as generous toward God's family as I am to my own?
- † Do I make excuses, pretending I don't have time to devote to my church family?
- † Or, do I sacrifice a portion of personal pleasures or social life to use my time in expression of love of God to help in the work of my church family?

Steward of the Month

Why did you put it ALL in?

Submitted by: Julie, Rockford, IL

We recently had a wedding at our church and there were going to be several children who were participating in the wedding service. The grandmother asked my two teenage daughters if they would like to babysit and help clean up after the wedding. The kids were great and it was a beautiful service. The grandmother generously gave the girls an envelope with two ten dollar bills in it. The next church service I saw the younger girl put \$10 into the collection plate. I wanted to reach out and take it back and say no, you don't have to put it all in! You worked hard! Use it for something you need! I said nothing as the plate passed.

After the service I said, Why did you put it all in? She said, We decided to share the other \$10 and give that one to the church.

We should all give like the little children, not trying to keep what we think we deserve because we worked hard for it, but to give and share what God has blessed us with. ☩

"Steward of the Month" is an exciting way to recognize exemplary stewards. If you are aware of someone who has exemplified Christian stewardship, please tell us about it at stewardofthemonth.com. Once a month, one submission will be chosen to be published in *Stewardship*. In addition, if your story is chosen, \$100 will be given to the church or organization of your choice.


We were created to use all that we have in fellowship with God. When that is not done, our lives are unfulfilled and incomplete. It is not a matter of earning our salvation, but of putting God in the center where God belongs. When we do that, everything else can fall into place. And when we do that, we want to express our thanks by giving and by sharing our time and talents to help others.



...the best pieces were reserved for church.

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There is a story...

Don't say that you can't! Look at it from the standpoint of 5% or 10% of what God blesses you with this year. Give on that amount. It will bless your life to sacrifice during the upcoming year. Start this week ... just one week at the time! 



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