

# St. Paul's Lutheran Church

## Fall Stewardship Campaign 2020

*"The wisdom of the prudent is to discern their way..." -Proverbs 14:8*

### Week 2: The Purpose of Stewardship \*

In Ephesians 3:1-3 Paul writes, "For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles-assuming that you have heard of the **stewardship** of God's grace that was given to me for you, how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly." There's that word again: stewardship. Notice though that Paul isn't talking about money. Rather, he's dealing with the stewardship of God's grace: the gospel of Jesus Christ.

You see, the greatest gift our Lord has given us to steward is the gospel of Jesus Christ and when we understand this, the rest of our stewardship falls into place. To say it another way, **how you are led by God to steward the resources entrusted to you is ultimately for the sake of the gospel.** How you use your stuff tells a great deal about what you think of the gospel. If your resources are used to help your family, friends, congregation, and community better understand the gospel, you are being a faithful steward. If it is about you and your comforts, or even their comforts, that isn't faithful stewardship.

Truth be told, stewardship of the gospel with our finances is something all of us need to work on. For example, a recent study done by the Barna Group and sponsored by Thrivent Financial discovered that just one in ten Christians say, to serve God with their money is their ultimate financial goal.\*\*

In light of this, we all have some repenting to do. Starting today and for the rest of the week, pray the following prayer and reflect upon the questions on page two.

#### Prayer

Heavenly Father, as you entrusted the Gospel of Jesus Christ to your servant Paul, so you have entrusted it to me. I admit that I have not always been faithful in my stewardship of the Gospel. I have been more worried about my comfort and my legacy than the extension of the Gospel. Lead me to see and use the simple gifts You have entrusted to me for the sake of the Gospel of Jesus Christ! Amen.

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- What role does your faith play in how you value and relate to your money (i.e. saving, spending, and giving)?
- Do you think you could ever get to the place where you could say, “my ultimate financial goal is to serve God with my money?” If not, why not?
- Earlier we said, “*The greatest gift our Lord has given us to steward is the gospel of Jesus Christ and when we understand this, the rest of our stewardship falls into place. To say it another way, how you are led by God to steward the resources entrusted to you is ultimately for the sake of the gospel.*” How might this truth lead you to make serving God with your money your ultimate financial goal?
- What specific action steps could you take in the next few weeks to align your financial stewardship with your stewardship of the gospel?

\* Devotional adapted from “Simple Gifts: a series of devotions on stewardship” LCMS Stewardship Ministry  
 \*\* [https://access.barna.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/The-Generosity-Gap\\_Access.pdf](https://access.barna.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/The-Generosity-Gap_Access.pdf)

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