



ST. PAUL'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

409 Sarver Rd., P.O. Box 128 ~ Sarver, Pennsylvania 16055

Rev. Shawn Smith, pastor

Phone: 724-353-2424 email: stpaulssarver@gmail.com

www.stpaulssarver.com

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

We have reached the final stretch of our Stewardship Campaign where we are seeking to discern our way of giving in light of God's Word. I hope that you have found this to be a fruitful time of reflecting on what God has to say regarding this aspect of our Christian walks.

This said, as we near Stewardship Sunday on November 15th, let me encourage you to do four things.

1. **Pray:** Over the past several weeks you've heard much from God's Word concerning your stewardship of his gifts. Now, come to God in prayer asking for the wisdom, grace, and strength to follow his Word obediently.
2. **Consider St. Paul's in light of God's Mission:** Two weeks ago, we talked about God's mission for the church and how Stewardship fits into that. With 1 Corinthians 4:1 and Matthew 28:19 as our guides, we discovered that the ultimate purpose of every gift we receive, including our financial ones, is to serve God by "making disciples of all nations." This said, reflect on how St. Paul's plays a part in this mission by *celebrating, declaring, and demonstrating the gospel to Saver and the world*. How might your giving play a role in that purpose?

3. **Examine yourself:** In September's Newsletter article I mentioned five attributes of faithful giving:

- 1) *Giving is a willing a cheerful endeavor (2 Cor 9:7)*
- 2) *We are not to give God our leftovers (Proverbs 3:9-10)*
- 3) *Giving is a regular undertaking (1 Cor 16:2)*
- 4) *Giving is proportional (1 Cor 16:2 7 Deut 16:17)*
- 5) *Giving is generous (Mark 12:41-44 & 2 Cor 8:1-4)*

In the days leading up to Stewardship Sunday, consider these attributes and examine your own giving. Ask yourself: *Is my giving a joyful endeavor? Am I giving God my firstfruits? Do I regularly (weekly) give to my congregation? Is my giving proportional to how God has blessed me? Would I describe my giving as generous?*

4. **Decide on your proportion:** Based on what you've heard from God's Word, prayed in your prayers, and examined in your heart; consider and decide what proportion of your income you will faithfully give to God's work. To help you in this task, there is a copy of the commitment cards we will be using on Stewardship Sunday enclosed in this letter. Practice filling it out to help you see where God may be leading you. **Please note, for those who are unable to make it to Stewardship Sunday, simply tear this one off and mail it in.**

Some final thoughts. First, concerning the commitment cards, remember that: 1) they are completely voluntary, 2) only the financial secretary will see them, and 3) they are simply a tool for the church to base its budgeting process on your generosity and for you to discern your way of giving in light of God's Word.

Second, don't forget that all our devotions and articles from our Stewardship Campaign are available on our website at www.stpaulssarver.com/stewardship. I encourage you to make use of these resources as you reflect on your giving in the coming week.

May God bless you as you sit under his Word and pray for his will to be done when it comes to your stewardship of his gifts.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Shawn Smith