

St. Paul's Lutheran Church

Fall Stewardship Campaign 2020

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

Week 1: Decerning Our Way

This fall at St. Paul's we are undertaking a Stewardship Campaign. Proverbs 14:8 declares, *"The wisdom of the prudent is to discern his way..."* Ultimately, that's what we're going to be about! We are intentionally discerning our way of stewardship in light of God's Word. Let's begin by looking at some basics.

In a nutshell, ***Christian stewardship is the faithful management of all we have.*** It begins with the understanding that everything we possess is God's (see Haggai 2:8, 1 Chronicles 29:14, Psalm 24:1, & Deut. 8:17-18) and therefore it is our calling to use it for his purposes. These purposes are expressed in our various vocations or callings such as parenting, work, being a good neighbor, taking care of others, etc.

Beside our various vocations in family and society, as Christians we have the vocation of being a part of a local assembly of believers. Part of what stewardship entails in this area is the giving of our financial resources (exp. Galatians 6:6-10). This is what we're going to focusing on in our Stewardship Campaign.

This said, to help you discern your way, spend this week meditating on what God's Word says regarding faithful Christian stewardship in your local body of believers. Alone or with your spouse, reflect on the words and questions below .

1) ***Giving is a willing and cheerful endeavor***

2 Corinthians 9:7 "Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

Is giving for you a joyful endeavor? If not why not? What would need to change for that to be the case?

2) ***We are to give God our firstfruits, not our leftovers***

Proverbs 3:9-10 "Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine."

Are you intentional about giving God your firstfruits? If not, why not? What would have to change for that to be true of you?

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3) Giving is a regular undertaking

1 Corinthians 16:2 *“On the first day of every week (i.e. Sunday), each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper...”*

Do you regularly give? If not, why not? What would have to change in your life for this to be a reality?

4) Giving is proportional

1 Corinthians 16:2 *“On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper...”*

Deuteronomy 16:17 *“Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord your God that he has given you.”*

Is your giving in proportion to how God has blessed you? If not, why not?

For guidance on this, look at your giving in comparison to the Old Testament law of tithing (giving 10% of what you receive). Though no longer a *requirement* for Christians, the principle remains.

Does your giving even begin to measure up to what God commanded his people of old? If not, why not? What would have to change for that to be the case?

5) We are called to be generous in our giving

Mark 12:43-44 *“this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box. 44 For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.”*

Would you describe your financial stewardship toward the church as “generous?” If not, why not? What would need to change for that to be true of you?

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