

STEWARDSHIP

By

Linda L. Hall

According to the Wikipedia, stewardship is personal responsibility for taking care of another's property or financial affairs. Theologically, it is the belief that humans are responsible for the world and should take care of it.

Matthew 25:14-30 tells us about the man, who when starting to go on a journey, entrusted his property to three servants. To one, he gave five talents; the next received two talents, and the third, one talent, each according to his ability .When he returned, he found out that the five talents had become ten, the two talents had become four, but the one talent had not increased. Why? Because the third servant had not managed his talent but had buried it so he would not lose it. He was a poor steward.

There are many examples of stewardship: living and telling the world of salvation; using your God-given talents; sharing your wealth; providing for future generations; and supporting the Church's congregation and pastor .

Can you name some remarkable stewards and their cause? Here are two famous people that I can think of immediately. Al Gore. ..stewardship of the earth and its environment; and Mother Theresa. ..stewardship of the poor and forgotten. But their names are familiar to most people. What about the widow in church who tithes ten percent of her social security monthly income? What about the choir director who does not receive a salary for directing the choir? What about the couple who watch the nursery one Sunday each month? What about the grandmother who is teaching a children's Sunday School class?

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Tithing not only consists of giving money to the church but also giving of your abilities and time. Sometimes time is a lot harder to give than money. Sometimes time is all that can be given because there is no money.

To be a true advocate of stewardship, it must be freely given. I remember reading the minutes of a monthly meeting held in the 1800's. At that time, members pledged the amount of money they would give as their tithe. If they had not paid that amount by the end of the period, there were consequences. It seems to me that whatever figure had been pledged became a burden and was not "freely" given. Now, it is left up to each individual member to give as they feel they are called. Some give a tenth of their money; some give a portion of money, abilities, and time.

Stewardship is really about one thing. ...taking care of the blessings that God has bestowed upon us as individuals, as a family, as a Church, as a nation, and in the world. 2 Corinthians 9:6-15 tells us about sowing generously and what God has in store for those that give generously. "You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God." (2 Cor 9:11)

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