

Four Important Ways to Strengthen Your Congregation's Stewardship Ministry

Pastor Chick Lane

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1. Celebrate God's Word
2. Tell how the congregation is making a difference in Jesus' name in the world
3. Ask for growth in giving
4. Thank people for their gifts (all their gifts)

Celebrate God's Word

What does it say about
stewardship?

What does "stewardship" mean?

For most people, "stewardship" is a code word.

- For most congregation members, it is code for "What the congregation does to get some of my money out of my pocket and into the offering plate." (and my job is to give just enough to not feel guilty)
- For most congregation leaders, it is code for "Those things we have to do to get enough money to pay the bills." (and we know how well we have done at year end when we know if we have enough money to pay all the bills)

What does "stewardship" mean?

"Stewardship is a wonderful word that describes how a follower of Jesus Christ faithfully travels through this life."

- Stewardship is about discipleship
- Stewardship is not about a congregation's bills and budgets



Celebrate God's Word

What does it say about
stewardship?

It all belongs to God.



God is the creator and owner of all
that is.

Psalm 24:1-2

The earth is the LORD's and all that is in it,
the world, and those who live in it;
for he has founded it on the seas,
and established it on the rivers.

Psalm 89:11

The heavens are yours, the earth also is yours;
the world and all that is in it--you have founded
them.



Morning Prayer

“Into your hands we commend ourselves: our bodies, our souls, and all that is ours.”

“Into your hands we commend ourselves: our bodies, our souls, and all that is yours.”

It all belongs to God.

We are stewards.

We are stewards.

I Corinthians 4:1-2

Think of us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of God’s mysteries. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy.

We are stewards.

I Peter 4:10

Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.

Two key words for stewards

- Accountability
 - to God the owner
- Responsibility
 - to all creation

Sty warden – the keeper of the sty.



Steward – a most important and prestigious role

God thinks so highly of you that God has chosen to entrust some of what God owns into

- your care
- your management
- your stewardship

It all belongs to God.

We are stewards.

The duty and delight of generous living

I Timothy 6:17-19

As for those who in the present age are rich, command them not to be haughty, or to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but rather on God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. They are to do good, to be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share, thus storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of the life that really is life.

The duty and delight of generous living

II Corinthians 9:6-7

The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

The threat of money

Matthew 6:24

No one can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.

The more you have, the bigger the threat.

Matthew 19:22

When the young man heard this word, he went away grieving, for he had many possessions.

The promise/threat of money is the power it exerts in our lives.

“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” -- Luke 12:34

Where your money goes will cause your heart to go there as well.

What does “stewardship” mean?

When the bible talks about financial stewardship,

- It never talks about getting enough money to pay the bills.
- It always talks about how important it is for a child of God to align her/his financial life with her/his life in Christ.

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The most important thing you can do in stewardship ministry is to move the money conversation...

From “Paying the Bills”



To helping people connect faith and finances in their lives.

A Few Suggestions

- Sermons
 - Lectionary
 - A sermon series
- Watch your language
 - Make sure when you talk about money in worship you are talking Bible, not bills
- Group Bible/book studies

Tell how the congregation is making a difference in Jesus' name in the world

People need and deserve to know how their giving is making a difference in the world.

(...and you can bet that if they don't know how their giving to your congregation is making a difference, they will be tempted to move their giving to someplace where they know how their giving is making a difference)

Tell

- The need to tell something many times using different media before the message is heard
- The knowledge gap between leaders and others
- Tell as you thank
- Tie your telling to your mission
- "Because of you..."
- "Look what you've done now..."

Four Stories to Tell

1. Your internal story
2. The local story
3. The story of designated giving
4. The story of giving to the larger church

A Few Suggestions

- Thanksgiving Moment
- Regular feature in your newsletter
- Weekly email blast
- Stewardship bulletin board
- Beg, invite, encourage people to take photos

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