

# Stewardship Forum

An evangelical alliance Partnership for Change

## Stewardship Tools for Leaders : Features

**Title: Stewardship is a way of life**

**Author: Scott Saienga**

Stewardship is a way of life; it is Jesus' call for us to imitate Him. The decision to give of yourself is really a matter of putting your life in perspective and putting God first in your life. A steward is one who has been entrusted with the care of someone/something in the name of another.

How is giving of our talents considered stewardship? What is meant by utilising our God-given talents? A God-given talent is any ability we have, and the use of that talent gives the person who uses it a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction. Each of us has our own talents that we can and should use for the good of the church, community and self. Any of our talents are given to us so we can enjoy their use and have the ability to share them with others.

**We need to take time to reflect on how our personal and business talents can be put to God's use in our daily life and the life of the church. What talents can you bring to the church family and what value can be placed on them?**

Our sharing of various talents helps the budget by either generating income or reducing the need for a capital outlay because we can do it ourselves. That talent contribution then allows your financial pledge to work for more missions throughout the church.

What is it you can offer your church to participate in sharing of God's message? Is it working on committees or participating in some form of lay ministry? Lend business or computer skills? Working on clean-up days? Mentoring and/or helping teach our youth about the word of God? Ushering or greeters? Visiting parishioners? Help during the coffee mornings or during church related outreach events? Or just sharing your story of faith and how God has worked in your life?

For many of us today, there is an overwhelming urge to manage our time. Thus, time must be the medium in which money is made and distributed; and in which our talents are discovered and used. Consequently, the use of our time is probably one of the main issues in Christian stewardship. We must develop our own personal and/or family "time budgets" for a healthy commitment to God's ministries.

In any church, there is a wide range of time contributions by parishioners. Time commitments range from one who could be called exemplary involved in everything, to the other end of the spectrum of one giving a monetary pledge only. Each method of contributing is equally as important in the life of a church. That is why stewardship of time is an exciting challenge because it is linked with many issues in the church life.

# Stewardship Forum

## An evangelical alliance Partnership for Change

The main question that needs clarification is what stewardship of time is. What is a tithe of time? What is the ideal time commitment? From a scriptural definition, tithing is a 10% commitment to God's work. The original biblical concept of tithing is how much time it took to prepare, plant, cultivate and harvest the fields. Think if our whole congregation from young to old would tithe 10% of their week to work for the good of the church. That could be 5 or 6 hours per person per week committed to God's message. If we multiply those hours by the number of people in our church, all of a sudden we have established a "wealth" of talented people committing time to the glory of Christ. Think about what could be accomplished with that amount of time and talent. The following scriptures deal with the importance of who has given us our time and talent: Genesis 1: 26-31; Micah 6: 6-8; Matthew 6: 19-21 and 23-54; again Matthew 23: 23-24; and Mark 12: 32-34 and 41-44.

When we involve ourselves in stewardship, with tithing as a real gauge of our gifts, we experience an exciting view of dealing with our ministry responsibilities. This is why your contribution to the church needs to focus on your set of values of time, talents and money. By looking at stewardship as your way of life, it then personalises the way you give back to God His share.

Published in December 2002 edition of ***Stewardship Matters***, a monthly stewardship magazine for church leaders and treasurers of the Diocese of St Asaph's, North Wales. Used here with permission.