

Coming This Sunday: *Living Each Day as a Steward!*

Our Christian stewardship involves more than what we do just on Sunday. Stewardship is faith in action, and it refers to all the activities that we do in Christ's name. We are God's stewards in our homes, workplaces, schools, and in our neighborhoods. We are stewards each and every day. Where God places us, we are called to be His faithful stewards.

To help us grow as stewards, we will begin a program titled *Living Each Day as a Steward!* This three-week program begins on **Sunday, October 29**. The weekly themes are:

- "The Steward's Identity"
- "The Steward's Purpose"
- "The Steward's Lifestyle"

Below you will find a quick overview of our coming weeks to acquaint you with our themes. Please use it to guide your reflection in preparation for Sunday worship.

Living Each Day as a Steward!

"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace." 1 Peter 4:10

As Christian stewards, we seek God's wisdom and strength for the purpose of doing his will. By God's grace, we acknowledge that God is the source of all things, and we live with the awareness that all things are owned by him. When we understand that what we have is on loan to us from God, we live our lives with a different perspective.

As we **live each day as stewards**, we understand that stewardship is more than a part-time activity. It consists of much more than just isolated deeds of stewardship. We are God's stewards each and every day, throughout the day. Our stewardship is incorporated into a lifestyle. It is what we are. It is our vocation, involving our total devotion. Through our Christian stewardship, we express who we are both in character and conduct.

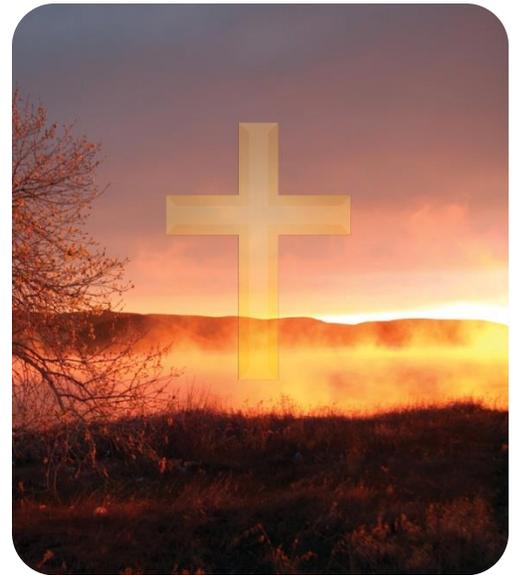
The Holy Spirit, through Word and Sacrament, transforms us through his work of sanctification so that we become like our Chief Steward, Jesus. Through his gift of faith, we live to honor the Lord and seek to follow his ways so we can **live each day as stewards**.

The Steward's Identity

Even though God has created us and and honor, he gives us the freedom to and, therefore, with whom we will be **stewards**. However, the world, Satan, and we choose to go in that direction, we reject Satan, and to the ways of this world. *Christ have put on Christ*" (Galatians 3:27). belong to him. God's Spirit, who comes to



redeemed us and deserves our obedience choose to whom we will offer our loyalty identified. God calls us to **live each day as** our flesh point us in a different direction. If God and become slaves to ourselves, to Christians, though, who "*were baptized into* We have a new identity in Christ. We live in us at our Baptism, does his work of



sanctification, empowering us to take on God's purpose and find our identity as his stewards. As our faith matures, our stewardship becomes a privilege rather than a duty.

In his ministry on earth, Jesus, our Chief Steward, became our model for stewardship. He lived the perfect life of stewardship in our place. Not only is Jesus our model for stewardship, he is the initiator of our stewardship through the Spirit and faith. In Jesus, we are delivered from the Law to the Gospel of stewardship. At great cost, Jesus has freed us from the power of the Law with his innocent and precious blood so that we may serve him in everlasting righteousness. Our motivation and strength as stewards come from the power of the Cross.

The Steward's Purpose

King David wrote, *"The Lord will fulfill his purpose for me"* (Psalm 138:8). God has a purpose for us, just as he had for David. Have you given much thought to what purpose God may have for your life? By grace through faith, we understand that we were created for God's purpose, not ours. *"For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work according to his good pleasure"* (Philippians 2:13). Through the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit, we are enabled to surrender self-dependence and self-promotion and acknowledge that God is in control and that we are made for his pleasure. Through his power, we are transformed into people who stop focusing completely on ourselves and become his stewards. Our mind-set changes from what we want to do to what God wants us to do.

As people who **live each day as stewards**, we thank God that he has given us faith and wisdom to understand that he is both our source of life and our purpose for living. We realize that we exist only because God wants us to exist. *"Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created"* (Revelation 4:11). Our purpose is to give him glory, honor, and service.

The Steward's Lifestyle

When God's Word and love fill our hearts and minds, our stewardship is not limited to specific acts but, instead, becomes a lifestyle. With transformed hearts, we express our faith in the way we live our lives. Through faith, God provides us with motivation and power to live the Christian life in a growing awareness of redeeming grace.

In a lifestyle of stewardship, we commit our lives, gifts, and resources to serving the Lord and fulfilling his will for our lives. We are not *"foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is"* (Ephesians 5:17). Being a Christian steward involves the way we view life, our whole human vocation, the ordering of our lives, and the deployment of all God's blessings. Jesus said, *"Behold, I have come to do your will, O God"* (Hebrews 10:7). The Apostle James reminds us that we, too, are to be *the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving [our] selves"* (James 1:22).

Through the working of the Holy Spirit, we are changed to givers. We are transformed into people who use our and resources in service to the Lord as Christian. When we become self-giving people, God is pleased with us, not our gifts. When God has all of us, our stewardship grow into a lifestyle of stewardship.



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