

STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY 2009

Theme: "God's Faithfulness"

Scripture: Lamentations 3:22-23

Hymn: "Great Is Thy Faithfulness"

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CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: We have been blessed by the Eternal God, who has been faithful to us.

People: **As thankful stewards, we will remain faithful to God.**

Leader: The mystery that has been hidden through the ages...is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

People: **As redeemed stewards, we will remain faithful to Christ.**

Leader: God has empowered us with the Holy Spirit to be our Comforter and Guide, our unfailing source of strength.

People: **As Spirit-filled stewards, we will remain faithful to Christ.**

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A STEWARDSHIP PRAYER

Eternal God, we bow before you today in thanksgiving for the many blessings you have given us. Help us to remember your generosity, and to thank you for every good gift and every perfect gift that we enjoy and for your faithfulness in times of adversity. Help us to remember your sustaining presence at every moment of discouragement. Just as you are always faithful to us, help us to remember our responsibility to be faithful to you.



As we make decisions about how to use the many gifts we have received from you, guide us by your Holy Spirit to be good stewards so that we will make the best use of those gifts for the sake of your kingdom. In strong and holy name of Jesus, our Example, we pray. **Amen.**

FAITHFUL GIVING

by Cliff Stout

"Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each one should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." (2 Corinthians 9:6-7)

In these challenging economic times, it is not uncommon for us to exercise more care with how we spend "our" money. Satan tempts us to look inwardly so that we'll hoard it, worrying about ourselves. But God's children should have a different, brighter outlook.

We need to recognize that what we consider to be "our" resources are what God has already given to us. It is not ours—it is God's. We are merely the managers, the stewards.

Paul reminds us in 2 Corinthians that if we choose to sow sparingly, we should not expect to reap a fantastic return; quite the opposite. It is the true believer, the good manager, the faithful steward, who sows generously even in tough times, who will be rewarded with a bountiful harvest.

Maybe it's time for us to slow down, step back from the world's enticements and re-focus our efforts on doing what God would have us do with only part of what God has so graciously given us.

As you make a decision about how to support the work of your church and your denomination in the coming year, please take time, examine your heart, pray about it, and ask for the Holy Spirit's guidance. Then remember what God has already done for you and make the choice to honor God with a cheerful financial pledge to the work of God's Kingdom through God's church.

It doesn't take faith to give out of one's abundance; it takes faith to stand up after you have been knocked down by the world and to continue to trust in the promises of God. Therefore, let us choose to sow bountifully and cheerfully, knowing that the funds we give will be used to do the work of the Lord in each local community and around the world.

If you believe you already have a bright, eternal life from God, what would you be willing to give to make that same life possible for a person who is lost in darkness?

