

Stewardship — My Money: God's Business

Over the past three weeks we've looked at three components of Spiritual health. The prescriptions were our MEDS; Mission, Evangelism and Discipleship. Today we will talk about Stewardship. The definition of stewardship in the church, is the responsible oversight of church funds which include all operating expenses, and the mission of God's work in the world.

Jesus spent more time talking about money than he did talking about prayer. Sixteen of the 38 parables (42%) are about money and possessions. The Bible has 500 verses on prayer, and 310 verses on love somewhat less than 500 verses on faith, and over 2000 on money and possessions. So, it must be important!

Getting people to talk honestly about money is very challenging. It has been proven that people are far more willing to talk about their marriage and relationships than they are about their finances. Yet, money and possessions are often the primary source of conflict in our relationships with each other. Money and possessions are also a very likely hindrance in our service to God.

Money is one of the many resources God entrusts to us to use. We are often tempted to think it is "our money" to do with what we please; to buy what we want. But the fact is that it is not "our" money, but God's and we have been trusted to use it wisely according to God's purposes. With the blessing of wealth comes responsibility.

Along with this week's handout you will be given your 2022 pledge letter. Before you fill out your pledge for next year, take some time to prayerfully think about your Spiritual Health and the prescriptions we have talked about over the past weeks. Are you using your MEDS in a way that is pleasing to God?

For those of you watching today, you can go to our website firstbaptistracine.org and go to the link found there with the stewardship resources that are handed out each Sunday.

MY MONEY: GOD'S BUSINESS

Reflect on how you used your money this past month. Look at your spending and estimate the percentages spent for the following:

- Giving
- Savings
- Food
- Housing
- Entertainment
- Clothing
- Transportation
- Debt
- Utilities (TV is entertainment)
- Other

Were you surprised about how you used your money?

- Did you use your money the way you really wanted to?
- Do you think your use of money pleased God?
- What must you change to be a better steward of God's money entrusted to you?

Jesus knew that money and possessions would always be a challenge for people in their relationship with God. It is too easy to let these things replace God and become idols in our lives. In our consumer culture, we are driven to acquiring possessions instead of honoring God. Our use of money is a clear reflection on our spiritual health and the condition of our hearts.

10-10-80 A Christian Spending Plan —
Give God 10%; Save 10%; and live on 80%. Try it! It works!

Money and possessions are gifts from God. They are resources we must value and use for God's business.

"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Matthew 6: 19 — 21