

STEWARDSHIP OF LIFE

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INTRODUCTION

The stewardship of life sees the whole of life as having a primarily vertical direction. It envisions, not a consumer mentality, but a producer mentality. A person must start at the right place in order to think, feel, and act properly in this stewardship.

I. SELF

Our possessions are not ours; they belong to the creator: Psalm **24:1**.

Our privileges: 1 Corinthians **4:7**

Our selves: we do not belong to ourselves: Psalm **24:1**.

God's by creation

People's responsibility for the earth by God's appointment: Psalm **8:3-6**.

God's by redemption: 1 Corinthians **6:19b-20a**

A person plus his accouterments equals the total self.

"First They Gave of Themselves to the Lord": 2 Corinthians **8:5**

II. TIME

Adult capacity for deriving satisfaction from work (vs. entertainment or play)

III. ABILITIES

A. Natural capacities

talents

athletic ability
intelligence

A) THE INDIVIDUAL
Talents and skills
become gifts of the
Spirit we become
Christians.

B. Developed abilities

skills

B) THE BODY
2 Corinthians **8:14**

Romans **12:4-8**

1. something for everyone to do
2. interdependency
3. Often the less prestigious activities

C. <u>Supernatural endowments</u>	miracles	involve the hardest work and require the most attention.
1 Corinthians 12		
prophecy		
speaking in languages		

Practically any skill or capacity we have can be applied to the work of the kingdom. Giving of our abilities, and the like, may be more valuable and give greater satisfaction than giving resources (money, goods), but we can look at giving money too.

IV. RESOURCES

A. Motivations

1. Example

Jerusalem Christians	
Philippian church	(Philippians 4:14-19; 2 Corinthians 8)
Widow's mite	(Mark 12:42)
Christ himself	(2 Corinthians 8:9)

2. Gratitude

1 Corinthians **15:55-58** + **16:1a**: Redemption is connected with collection.
 Why didn't God give the Law after the exodus?
 Ephesians **1:6**: "*To the praise of the glory of his grace*"
 Matthew **10:6**: "*You received freely; give freely.*"

3. Love: 2 Corinthians **8:7-8**

4. Results

We help change ourselves (Ephesians **4:28**).
 Our affections are tied to the matter to which we contributed (Matthew **6:21**).
 Sense of satisfaction
 Blessing that returns to us (Acts **20:35**)
 Makes people happy (ministers' support) and God too (Philippians **4:18**)
 Good that is accomplished

God is praised by our actions.
 by the gratitude to him from those dependent on our
 liberality (2 Corinthians **9:12-13**).

As to amount, the more we put into something, the more we get out of it and the more our hearts are tied to it (Matthew **6:21**; 2 Corinthians **9:6**).

B. Amount

Not all people are alike in circumstances of life,
resources,
level of faith.

1. According to the level of faith (Romans **12:3-8**); we need to be careful pushing people to give beyond the level of their commitment.
2. According to need (Acts **4:35**; **2:45**)
3. According to ability (Acts **11:29**; 2 Corinthians **8:3**, 11-12; 1 Corinthians **16:1**)
4. According to what creates equality (2 Corinthians **8:13-15**; cp. John the Baptist in Luke **3:11**)

C. Manner

Intentionally:	Ephesians 4:28	
Voluntarily:	2 Corinthians 8:3	(newborn baby—life in itself)
Cheerfully:	2 Corinthians 9:7	(from the best) (give of self)
		(purposed/planned)
Regularly:	2 Corinthians 16:1	Do not get caught by surprise when not able to do much.

CONCLUSION

The interpersonal context removes weaknesses that come from depersonalizing stewardship like . . .

giving in order to get
quantified approach to giving

Giving of ourselves (2 Corinthians **8:5**)

to meet the needs of real people (Philippians **4:10-20**)
because Christ has done so much for us

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