



Get Started and Finish the Race

Dr. Allen R. McFarland
Sunday, January 25, 2009



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I. Stewardship is a **CELEBRATION** of the **HEART**.

To be found faithful
To have fought a good fight
To “face up” to the finish line

1 Cor 4:2

2 Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful. NKJV

2 Tim 4:7

7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: KJV

Acts 13:25

25 And as John was finishing his course, he said, 'Who do you think I am? I am not He. But behold, there comes One after me, the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to loose.' NKJV

PEOPLE ARE WATCHING YOU.

John asked, “What notions have you of me, what expectations from me?”

II. Stewardship is a **CONSECRATION** of the **HEART**.

Rom 12:1-2

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 2
And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. NKJV

The generosity of God is demonstrated in the word “Grace.” In Stephen A Macchia book *“Becoming a Healthy Church,”* he gives several quotes from Brian Kluth, President of CSA, (**The Christian Stewardship Association** is a national ministry that supports local churches and para-church ministries). Brian states, *“We as believers have experienced a great outpouring of generosity from the hand of God.”* Brian also said, *“Anything good that happens in your church is from the hand of God.”* That being the case, giving is a matter of consecration.”

There are surveys revealing the truth concerning church members making more money today and having more stuff than ever before. Yet, the majority of believers are only giving 3½ % of their income. Checkbooks are theological doctrinal statement that specifies *“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also,”* (Matt. 6:21). Jesus spoke very extensively on the matter of finances and material possessions. There are over 2,300 spiritual references that deal with stewardship.

2 Cor 8:7-15

7 But as you abound in everything — in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all diligence, and in your love for us — see that you abound in this grace also.

8 I speak not by commandment, but I am testing the sincerity of your love by the diligence of others. 9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.

10 And in this I give advice: It is to your advantage not only to be doing what you began and were desiring to do a year ago; 11 but now you also must complete the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to desire it, so there also may be a completion out of what you have. 12 For if there is first a willing mind, it is accepted according to what one has, and not according to what he does not have.

13 For I do not mean that others should be eased and you burdened; 14 but by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may supply their lack, that their abundance also may supply your lack — that there may be equality. 15 As it is written,

**"He who gathered much had nothing left over, and he who gathered little had no lack."
NKJV**

III. Stewardship is a COMMITMENT of the HEART.

2 Cor 9:6-9

6 But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7 So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. 9 As it is written:

**"He has dispersed abroad,
He has given to the poor;
His righteousness endures forever."**

Seven Reasons Why Christian Refuse to Tithe.

- 1. They do not believe the scriptures.** They have never studied scriptural passages with an understanding that giving to God is a worshipful experience.
- 2. They have never been taught. Many Christians have never been taught how to give.** Who teaches new Christians how to give to the Lord's work. People do not come into the knowledge of Salvation knowing how to give. Tithing must be taught. (Mal. 3:8-10; Matt. 23:23)
- 3. They do not believe God.** One can not truly say he loves God, yet, refuse to honor Him with his substance (Prov. 3:9-10)
- 4. They do not see God as the owner of their possessions.** Some folks think that they are directly responsibility for their accomplishments. God may have blessed them to achieve things in life, but they believe that their hard work and good luck have gotten them where they are. (Ps. 24:1)
- 5. They do not trust God with their finances.** One may say that he trust God, when it comes to finances; they trust God to get it, but not to control it.

6. **They have rationalized their giving with greed to keep for themselves.**
Ananias and Sapphira are perfect example of lying to themselves in refusing to give from the heart (Acts 5:1-10).
7. **They do not trust the leaders in the church to manage their money.**
Many people do not consider leaders as Godly appointed, nor that their money is really God's money; and that these leaders have to give an account to God for their stewardship. Look at I Chronicles 26 as an example of God using able, faithful men to oversee His treasury.
1 Chron 26:1-27:1

1. Concerning the divisions of the gatekeepers:

5 ...for God blessed him.

6 ... because they were men of great ability.

7 were able men.

8 All these were of the sons of Obed-Edom, they and their sons and their brethren, able men with strength for the work:

9 ...eighteen able men.

12 Among these were the divisions of the gatekeepers, among the chief men, having duties just like their brethren, to serve in the house of the LORD.

14 ... Then they cast lots for his son Zechariah, a wise counselor,

15 to Obed-Edom the South Gate, and to his sons the storehouse.

20 Of the Levites, Ahijah was over the treasuries of the house of God and over the treasuries of the dedicated things.

22 ...were over the treasuries of the house of the LORD.

24 the son of Moses, was overseer of the treasuries.

26 This Shelomith and his brethren were over all the treasuries of the dedicated things which King David and the heads of fathers' houses, the captains over thousands and hundreds, and the captains of the army, had dedicated.

27 Some of the spoils won in battles they dedicated to maintain the house of the LORD.

28 And all that Samuel the seer, Saul the son of Kish, Abner the son of Ner, and Joab the son of Zeruiah had dedicated, every dedicated thing, was under the hand of Shelomith and his brethren.

29 ...and his sons performed duties as officials and judges over Israel outside Jerusalem.

30 ...one thousand seven hundred able men, had the oversight of Israel on the west side of the Jordan for all the business of the LORD, and in the service of the king.

32 And his brethren were two thousand seven hundred able men, heads of fathers' houses, whom King David made officials over the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, for every matter pertaining to God and the affairs of the king. NKJV