

Servants & Stewards

THE GOSPEL | GOD'S WILL | TIME | WEALTH | SPIRITUAL GIFTS

An Emphasis for Stewardship and Capital Campaigns

PASTOR'S GUIDE

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Servants & Stewards is a set of materials which can be used in a capital campaign or a stewardship emphasis. These resources are free to those who wish to use them in the ministry of their church. You may copy and distribute within your church family. You may not sell the materials (except to recover cost of reproduction) or copyright them under your own name.

Resources in this set will include:

- ⇒ Devotional Guide
- ⇒ Pastor's Guide
- ⇒ Sample Sermons
- ⇒ Bible Studies for Sunday School/LifeGroups/Small Groups
- ⇒ Testimony Enlistment Fact Sheets
- ⇒ Social Media Fact Sheets
- ⇒ Sample Mailouts
- ⇒ Ideas for Promoting the Building Program
- ⇒ Sample Commitment Forms
- ⇒ Audio Overview

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under the *Strategies* Tab

PASTOR'S OVERVIEW

PURPOSE:

This stewardship emphasis is designed for small to medium-sized churches to use in building programs, debt reduction, or to emphasize stewardship in a fresh way. It could also be used for a significant missions support emphasis.

BASIC CONCEPT:

This emphasis is designed to help your members grow spiritually and to understand stewardship in the broader terms of living all of life under the Lordship of Christ, and in a way which connects each member to the Great Commission. Giving is a part of that, but it is one part of the whole.

PARTS OF THE EMPHASIS:

This is a six-week emphasis, and each week there will be a theme which will be covered from one Sunday to the next.

1. The pastor introduces the theme for the week in his Sunday morning message. He not only introduces the concept, but also sets the tone for week's theme.
2. There is a testimony for the theme of the week. If you have the people who can help you with this, use you can video the testimonies and edit for length.
3. Members will have five devotionals to read during the week developing the theme. That's seven days to complete five devotionals, so members are given some margin for the busy-ness of life.
4. During the week, on its social media accounts, the church will post quotes, verses, and principles which reinforce the week's theme.
5. The next Sunday, in small groups/Sunday School, the lesson will review and reflect on the application of the theme.
6. Also, on the next Sunday, the pastor introduces the next theme for the following week.

Why take this staggered, somewhat repetitious approach? First, because very few church members will attend six consecutive Sundays. Secondly, many of our members simply need to hear some things more than once for it to sink in. Many are busy people with a lot on their minds. And third, it communicates that the idea is important — important enough for them to act on it.

BANQUET:

Another part of the emphasis is a Banquet. This should be held between weeks four and five. By whatever standards your congregation would consider a banquet to be “nice,” this should be considered your *very nicest*. The meal, the location, the music, and the challenge should be the very best your church can do. There is usually some penny-pinching church member with no experience in raising money who will try to talk you into eliminating or to cut corners on the banquet. These banquets almost always more than pay for themselves by gifts you wouldn’t have received without having had it. Eliminating the banquet would not be good stewardship.

SET THE TONE:

Each Sunday, you will be introducing the theme for the week in your Sunday morning message, leading all the way into the Bible Study in Sunday School/Small Groups the next week. You want the tone each week to be uplifting, challenging, adventurous — and not come across as demanding and nagging. You are inviting your members to join God in what he is doing in your church and community.

INVOLVE PEOPLE:

Establish a team to involve church members. First, because you couldn’t possibly do it all yourself. Secondly, because when people have a part, you have a higher level of buy-in. You can’t involve everyone, but you can be representative in those you enlist. Enlist people who are supportive. These should include:

- ◇ Someone to help you enlist those who will give testimonies.
- ◇ Someone to organize the banquet.
- ◇ Someone to communicate with Sunday School/Small Group leaders.
- ◇ Someone to post on social media.
- ◇ Someone to help with written material. This material will explain the advantages of the new building and how the campaign works. According to how communication works best in your church, this may involve mailouts, a printed brochure, bulletin inserts, and your church email.

GET HELP:

It may be that you are covered up with work. Perhaps you serve bi-vocationally and, after sermon planning and ministry, you have no more time to give. Or perhaps, this type of emphasis isn’t the kind of organized emphasis with which you have much experience. Or, maybe you are younger in the ministry and have older adult leaders who are still learning to trust you with the administrative parts of leadership. Then, you may wish to consider seeking the assistance

of a respected pastor in your Association, perhaps your Associational Missionary Strategist — someone with proven experience. Have this person meet with you and your team as you prepare for the process. Your church could offer to pay them for each visit at least what you would give as an honorarium for filling the pulpit (this is unbelievably less expensive than any other approach). Before planning meetings begin, if either of you wants to modify the plan for this emphasis, there should be a clear agreement between you both, upfront.

TALKING TO YOUR CONGREGATION ABOUT MONEY:

There are several important concepts to emphasize to the congregation during this emphasis:

- ◇ *We can't all give the same amount.* Sometimes, someone will say something along the lines of, "If each member would give this amount, we could pay for it in cash." However, that amount would be more than some could afford and for others it wouldn't represent a sacrifice at all.
- ◇ *Church members are being asked to pray and to give the amount the Lord leads them to give.* The church isn't suggesting an amount for each member family to give.
- ◇ *This is an over-and-above-the-tithe offering.* You will need to explain.
- ◇ *The plan is to make a commitment to give over three years* — that's 156 Sundays or thirty-six months. Many church members will be amazed at how much they could give in this way. They couldn't give nearly as large an amount in a one-time gift, but over thirty-six months, faithful giving really adds up!
- ◇ *This is a good time to help grow the young adults who are in perpetual youth group* (you've heard of perpetual high school? It's similar.) They're married, with a house and kids, but they're still looking for the "youth sponsors" to take care of everything at church. Hey guys; tag... you're it!
- ◇ *Faith commitments are biblical.* The same members who will taken back that the church would ask them to make a three-year faith commitment will have two car payments. Why refuse to commit to the Lord when you have no trouble committing to the bank? Compare Nehemiah 9:38-10:39.

COMMITMENT SUNDAY:

On Commitment Sunday, you may choose to begin with a "kickoff offering," an amount above one's pledge amount to get the giving started. If possible, have the commitment amounts added up during the service and report the total at the conclusion of the service.

WEEK ONE

Entrusted With the Gospel

“... the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which he entrusted to me.”

— 1 Timothy 1:11, ISV

In the first week, we will be thinking about the meaning of the word, *stewardship*, and included in this theme is an emphasis on our principal stewardship, *the gospel*. As believers, we are all a part of the greatest cause. Thus, all of our lives should be lived as servants of Jesus Christ. There's nothing we have which he hasn't given us. Life, all of it, is a stewardship.

DAILY PASSAGES IN THE DEVOTIONAL GUIDE:

(These are the daily readings found in the devotional guide. You will want to avoid using any of the daily readings in your message. However, you may feel led to use one of the other passages quoted in the text of devotional.)

Matthew 25:14-30 (The parable of the Talents); Titus 1:1-3;
Acts 10; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 22:6-16

PASSAGE USED IN THE SMALL GROUP STUDY:

(Don't use this passage in your message.)

1 Corinthians 3:5-16: *Planting, Watering, Building*

TESTIMONY THEME FOR THIS SUNDAY:

How the Lord Used this Church to Bring Me to Christ

SERMON IDEAS:

- ♦ 1 Corinthians 4:1-2 Stewards of the Gospel (in Sample Sermons)
- ♦ Exodus 22:7-15: *A Stewardship is a Great Responsibility*
- ♦ Luke 12:42-47: *Faithful Servants*

PRAYER MEETING:

Below is some specific prayer guidance you can use in your prayer groups and prayer services during the week:

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| ● Ask God to make us as individual believers more alert to our spheres of influence. | ● Ask the Father to work in our community to call new people to himself. |
| ● Pray for the Holy Spirit to make us more evangelistic in our thinking as believers. | ● Pray for the Holy Spirit to guide us in our evangelistic planning for the church. |
| ● Pray for those who are the most afraid to get started, that the Lord will give them boldness. | ● Ask God to send a harvest of people coming to Christ, not just more people attending church. |

WEEK TWO

Hearing God

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.”
— John 10:27

Since we will be asking people to give an amount as led by the Spirit, during this week, we will explain how to recognize the voice of God. For many church members, this will be a new experience. This is why this theme appears so early in the emphasis. It will take longer for some to get their minds around this subject than for others. Of course, this is more than a money management skill, it's a life skill!

DAILY PASSAGES IN THE DEVOTIONAL GUIDE:

John 10:1-27; Proverbs 3:1-8; James 1:5-8;
Joshua 9:1-27; Galatians 5:13-26

PASSAGE USED IN THE SMALL GROUP STUDY:

(Avoid using this passage in your message.)

Acts 16

TESTIMONY THEME FOR THIS SUNDAY:

How the Lord Got Me Started in Sharing the Gospel

SERMON IDEAS:

- ◇ Romans 8:1-17: *Stewards of God's Will (in sample sermons)*
- ◇ John 14:16-26: *The Promise of the Holy Spirit*
- ◇ Acts 13:1-12: *The Church: Led and Empowered by the Spirit*

PRAYER MEETING:

Below is some specific prayer guidance you can use in your prayer groups and prayer services during the week:

- Ask God to give each member in our congregation ears to hear as He leads us.
- Ask the Father to help us all to grow in walking in the Spirit and keeping in step.
- Pray for those who are struggling with the idea of God speaking to them, to whom this may sound weird, ask the Lord to give them understanding.
- As it isn't so much a matter of how much of the Holy Spirit we have as how much of ourselves we've yielded to Spirit, pray that we will all grow in yielding to Him.
- Pray that we will each have a deeper understanding and a deeper relationship with the Holy Spirit.
- Ask God to lead us in submitting to His leading with clear understanding, and not allow any of us to get carried away with

WEEK THREE

Stewards of Our Time

“David, after serving God’s purpose in his own generation, fell asleep”

— Acts 13:36

This week, we will reflect on the brevity of life and the desirability of making them our lives in the Kingdom of God. We are each given varying amounts of time on this earth. We each fill a unique niche, but we all have purpose.

DAILY PASSAGES IN THE DEVOTIONAL GUIDE:

James 4:13-17; Ephesians 5:15-17; Ecclesiastes 1:12-2:25;
Acts 17:16-33; Micah 6:6-8

PASSAGE USED IN THE SMALL GROUP STUDY:

(avoid using this passage in your message.)

Ecclesiastes 2:24-3:11: *A Season for Everything and Priorities for Every Day*

TESTIMONY THEME FOR THIS SUNDAY:

How the Lord Made Clear His Leading for Our Gift to this Campaign

SERMON IDEAS:

- ◇ Acts 13:36: *Stewards of Our Time (in sample sermons)*
- ◇ Esther 4: *You Can Be Replaced, But the Opportunity Cannot*
- ◇ Jeremiah 29:1-14: *How to Live When God Puts You in Time-Out (or Jeremiah 29:11 In Context)*

PRAYER MEETING:

Below is some specific prayer guidance you can use in your prayer groups and prayer services during the week:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Pray for those who think the Christian life is living our lives in any way we would choose, the only difference being we attend church.● Ask God to help each member in the church to understand the niche He has given them.● Pray for those who feel resistant to living every part of life under the Lordship of Christ. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Pray for the Holy Spirit to impress upon us the short time we have and the urgency to act.● Ask God to help us all to understand our personal priorities before Him.● Ask the Father to call each member, who doesn’t yet have a consistent devotional life, to one that is meaningful and powerful. |
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WEEK FOUR

Stewards of Our Wealth

“Since you excel in so many ways—in your faith, your gifted speakers, your knowledge, your enthusiasm, and your love from us—I want you to excel also in this gracious act of giving.” — 1 Corinthians 8:7, NLT

Paul tells us that giving is a Christian grace we should excel in, and until we excel in it, we can grow in it. Jesus talked about money more than anyone else in the Bible. He discusses money in ways both literal and metaphorical. It’s found in his parables and in his warnings as he discusses our heart’s truest values.

DAILY PASSAGES IN THE DEVOTIONAL GUIDE:

Psalm 24; Genesis 39:1-6; Malachi 3:8-12;
2 Samuel 24:1-25; Psalm 78:1-8

PASSAGE USED IN THE SMALL GROUP STUDY:

2 Corinthians 8:1-15: *Stewards of Our Wealth*

TESTIMONY THEME FOR THIS SUNDAY:

How the Lord Led Us to Make Our Retirement Years Count in the Kingdom

SERMON IDEAS:

- ◇ *Proverbs 3:5-10: Stewards of Our Wealth (in sample sermons)*
- ◇ *1 Corinthians 9:6-15: The Cheerful Giver*
- ◇ *Galatians 6:6-10: The Laws of the Harvest*

PRAYER MEETING:

Below is some specific prayer guidance you can use in your prayer groups and prayer services during the week:

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| ● Pray for those for whom giving represents a significant growth point. | ● Pray for the Holy Spirit to guide each member in strategic giving — to give with purposeful Kingdom goals. |
| ● Ask the Holy Spirit to work in the hearts of those who bristle when giving is discussed and to help them understand that Jesus is also Lord of their money. | ● Ask God to encourage those with limited means, reminding them that He holds in great honor “the widows mite.” |
| ● Ask God to guide those who have been givers, but who need to take their next step of growth in giving. | ● Ask the Father to guide each member in knowing how to complete their commitment form. |

BETWEEN SUNDAYS FOUR AND FIVE

The Banquet

PURPOSES OF THE BANQUET:

The banquet is a time to provide information and inspiration. It is a time to call people to action. It is a time to persuade, not in the sense of pressuring people, but in the sense of providing them good reasons to do the right thing. It is also a time for the congregation to gather and experience together the great sense of being part of a great cause!

INFORMATION:

Depending on whether your stewardship emphasis is associated with a building program or is related to a general promotion of stewardship or a specific plan for missions support, the banquet is where you clarify the *ask* and challenge them to make a commitment. Your members need to be clear about that which they're being asked to give.

You will be communicating this information through mailouts and on the screen in your morning services. Remember, not everyone reads such mailouts and some aren't paying enough attention to understand to the first time you make an announcement.

SHOW HOW THE NEW BUILDING PROMOTES THE MISSION:

Here is where you highlight how this offering will help our church fulfill its mission. If your emphasis relates to a building program, be sure to explain how the new space will enable your congregation to make room for new people and serve as a tool to better fulfill your ministry.

COMMITMENT FORM:

It is very important that you explain the *Commitment Form*, briefly walking your members through what they are being asked to do. Looking at the form, this would seem obvious. However, people often react emotionally and they need a reassuring word. For example, part of the commitment is to contact the financial secretary and revise their commitment should their financial circumstances change. They won't be turned over to a bill collection agency.

INSPIRATION:

Inspiration can come from multiple sources: testimonies, music, and a short message. For example, one church prepared video of their town and its various places and institutions. They played the video while the praise team sang *God of this City*.

The inspiration in testimonies isn't the amount the person felt led to give, but *how they came to know* what God was leading them to give.

Possible Banquet Themes:

For Capital Campaigns:

- ◇ *Make Room for More (in sample sermons)*
- ◇ *Set the Table*
- ◇ *Rise Up and Build*

For a General Stewardship or a Missions Emphasis:

- ◇ *Fellow Workers for the Truth (in sample sermons)*
- ◇ *Come Help Change the World*
- ◇ *Celebrating Our Great Co-Mission*

TESTIMONY THEME FOR THE BANQUET

How the Lord Made Clear His Leading for Our Gift to this Campaign

IDEAS FOR THEME INTERPRETATION OR SERMON:

- ◇ Isaiah 54:2-3: *Enlarge the Tent*
- ◇ 2 Timothy 2:3-4: *An Army, Not an Audience*
The Bible compares the church to an army in that it is trained, under command, and organized to fulfill a mission, regardless of cost.

GUEST SPEAKER?

Guest speakers can be good if you know an especially good speaker *who will take the time to understand what you're asking him to do*. We have all had the experience of that talented, but busy person, who was asked to speak on one thing and spoke on another. Such people often fall back on something they have done before. So, guest speakers are great if you can come to a clear meeting of the minds. Otherwise, do it yourself.

LOOK THEM IN THE EYE AND ASK FOR IT!

WEEK FIVE

Stewards of Our Spiritual Gifts

“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another,
as good stewards of God’s varied grace” — 1 Peter 4:10

Spiritual gifts are supernaturally empowered specialties in Christian service, given to build up the church and to glorify God. These abilities represent a stewardship. As we want to help our members understand themselves as being part of an army and not merely as part of an audience. The goal is to help them identify their spiritual gifts and to deploy them in every member ministry.

DAILY PASSAGES IN THE DEVOTIONAL GUIDE:

1 Corinthians 12:1-7; Romans 12:3-8; 1 Peter 4:10-11;
Ephesians 4:7-16; 1 Corinthians 12:12-31

PASSAGE USED IN THE SMALL GROUP STUDY:

Romans 12:3-13: *Let the Gifted Serve!*

TESTIMONY THEME FOR THIS SUNDAY:

How the Lord Led Us to Start Tithing, or to Grow in Giving

SERMON IDEAS:

- ◇ Colossians 4:7-18: *The Roll Call of the Army (In sample sermons)*
- ◇ 2 Timothy 1:6-7: *Poke the Fire!*

PRAYER MEETING:

Below is some specific prayer guidance you can use in your prayer groups or prayer services during the week:

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|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Pray for those who love the Lord, but who are still learning how to serve Him.● Ask God to guide those who are beginning to have a clear understanding of their spiritual gifts, to learn how to use their gifts wisely.● Pray for the Holy Spirit to impart a desire within each member of our church family to serve the Lord as He has gifted them. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Pray for spiritual gifts to be used in a way that honors Jesus Christ and not to draw attention to ourselves.● Ask God to impart the gifts we lack in our church family right now.● Ask the Father to enable us to value the gifts of others, even though they may be different than our own. |
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WEEK SIX

Commitment Sunday

“Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men,
knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward.

You are serving the Lord Christ.” — Colossians 3:23-24

This Sunday is *Commitment Sunday*, the day members turn in their commitment forms. Next Sunday, regular giving begins. This Sunday, you will want to strike a tone that is uplifting and joyful and, yet, one which reinforces the solemnity of the commitments being made. You want to reassure your members that the sacrifices they make for the sake of the Kingdom will be noticed and rewarded by God.

DAILY PASSAGES IN THE DEVOTIONAL GUIDE:

1 Corinthians 3:10-14

PASSAGE USED IN THE SMALL GROUP STUDY:

(Passage being used in Sunday School/Life Groups on Commitment Sunday.)

Romans 12:1-13: *Let the Gifted Serve!*

TESTIMONY THEME FOR THIS SUNDAY:

Why This is a Great and Meaningful Day for Our Family

SERMON IDEAS:

- ◇ Philippians 4:18, *An Acceptable Sacrifice* (in sample sermons)
- ◇ 1 Corinthians 15:58: *It's Not in Vain!*
- ◇ Hebrews 6:10-12: *God Will Remember*
- ◇ Colossians 3:23-24: *Christ Rewards Those Who Serve Him*