



More Than
STONE SOUP

A Stewardship and Giving Emphasis Program for Congregations

STEWARDSHIP AS AN EXPRESSION OF FAITH

Many times the question comes up, “Why give so much to the church? Does God really need our money? Isn’t God the Creator? If God were to need anything, he could make it.”

It’s true, of course, God doesn’t need anything. He already owns “...the cattle on a thousand hills, the moon and the stars, and all of creation.” As Creator, God could turn the moon and the stars he already owns into gold or silver or diamonds and satisfy his every need. God is an all sufficient and self-sufficient being. There exists very little that we can give to God that he doesn’t already have.

So, if God doesn’t need it, why give it? The reality of the matter is this; it is we who need to give, not God who needs to receive. God really does have it all. It is from his bounty that he gives to us. Our financial assets and wealth, as well as our time and intellectual gifts, come to us via God’s generosity. We sometimes forget that all we have and all that we are is a gift from a loving God.

While God has no needs that we can supply, he does have expectations for us. Scripture points to God’s expectation that we should live in a relationship with him that is based on love and trust. Being fully aware of our inability to return anything of useful value, God has provided this simple but often misunderstood means for us to respond to him. Love and trust. God accepts our love and trust, our faith in him, as a fair and reasonable exchange for all that he provides.

The question for us, then, is this; how can we truly express our love and trust in God? How might we express our faith in a meaningful way? Our love and trust can best be expressed by placing all of our daily needs and cares into his keeping.

When we do this our giving becomes an expression of our faith, for a strong faith is necessary when contemplating so bold a move. To place all of life in God’s hands requires more than a mere knowledge of the Creator, it requires a strong trust in him.

Faithful stewardship and giving is a discipline with many dimensions. We are to be eager, cheerful, faithful, grateful, committed, responsible and generous in our giving to a point of self-sacrifice, putting God first, never looking back, and trusting our amazingly generous Creator for all we need. It calls us to a discipline of asset management that is almost beyond our human capacity to deliver. Paul calls it a “...test of the sincerity of our love.”

Truly we can trust in God for all things in all things. His grace is sufficient to the task. From the abundance he provides we can afford to be generous in the management of our assets, and our stewardship becomes an expression of our faith. It is a lifelong process that grows and matures as our relationship with God grows and matures. With growth and maturity comes an ever increasing capacity and desire for committing to a faithful steward lifestyle.

So, does God need anything from us? It’s not likely that he does, but we certainly have a need to give. For in our giving we advance the coming of the Kingdom “...on earth as well as in heaven” so that all may know the love of the Father and the deeds of his Son. We commit ourselves to telling the story of a generous and loving God. We give generously of our time and resources. Giving is an expression of our faith.