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AI-generated content may be incorrect.Daily Devotions**

**Everyday Stewards**

**Week 2: Stewardship as a Way of Life**

**Sunday**

**Living with Conviction**

Perhaps at one time we had little more than a passing interest in spiritual things. Then, as the Holy Spirit worked in us through God’s Holy Word and Sacraments, our commitment deepened. An intimate relationship with Jesus developed and was manifested by the use of our time, talents, and money for His purposes. We willingly started devoting time daily to the reading of God’s Word as well as spending time with Him in prayer. We found ourselves eager to attend weekly church services and Bible studies so we could worship the Lord and receive His nourishment. A desire to commit a generous portion of our money to the Lord through giving to our churches and to others was born in us. Our lives and blessings were turned over to God to be used in His service.

Our relationship with the Lord is God’s gift to us. God calls and chooses us, and He gives us faith to follow Him. May God bless and deepen our conviction for Him.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, thank You for loving me. Place within me passion and boldness to share Your love with others. In Jesus’ precious name I pray. Amen.

**Monday**

**Beware of Greed**

Through the Parable of the Rich Fool (Luke 12:13-21), Jesus illustrates the foolishness of living only for ourselves. Jesus tells about a wealthy and successful farmer who needed to build bigger barns to hold his abundant crops. The farmer was interested only in his own pleasure and well-being. His goal was to become wealthy so he could eat, drink, and be merry during his retirement. He did not acknowledge God as the provider of what he had. Because of his self-centered attitude, Jesus calls Him a fool. His self-centeredness and selfishness are revealed in his repeated use of the words “I” and “my.”

Excessive self-centeredness is pervasive throughout our society and the entire world, and it is a sin that plagues the Christian steward as well. St. Augustine wrote, “The beginning of all sin is the love of one’s own self.” By the power of the Holy Spirit, self-love is replaced by love for others, and we learn to focus more on the eternal than the temporal.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, help me be content in all things. Amen.

**Tuesday**

**Not in Vain**

God’s grace is poured out on us daily and abundantly. Daily we rejoice in our baptisms through which God’s grace makes us His children. Sunday after Sunday we celebrate the Easter message of God’s grace made available to us through the suffering and victory of His Son. His grace is given to our physical bodies as well as our spiritual lives as He provides “our daily bread,” including “everything that has to do with the support and needs of the body” (Martin Luther).

How is it possible that we could receive this grace in vain? When we ignore the Giver of this grace, when we use His gifts for our own good rather than in service to others, and when we attribute our gifts, our abilities, our successes to ourselves, then we receive God’s grace in vain.

The life of good stewardship cannot be accomplished on our own, for such an attempt not only is doomed to failure but demonstrates our receiving God’s grace in vain*.* Stewardship that pleases God results when we, in response to His grace in our lives, use all the gifts He has given us to serve Him by serving others.

**Prayer:**  Dear Heavenly Father, help me to receive Your gifts and to use them to do the work that You have given me to do. In Jesus’ precious name I pray. Amen.

**Wednesday**

**Good Works Honor the Lord**

As people saved by God, we show our gratitude not only by thanking and praising Him with our lips but in our actions and deeds. We demonstrate our thankfulness by doing good works which He Himself prepared in advance for us to do. Through His Word and Sacraments, God shares His will with us so that we know the good works that He calls us to do. Through the renewing of our minds (Romans 12:2), God not only tells us of His will, but He also gives us the power to perform the tasks which He has prepared in advance for us. For those who believe, God’s *“great might that He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places”* (Ephesians 1:19-20) is available to us.

Because God reveals His will and gives us His power, we can be instruments of telling others the Good News, helping the poor and the needy, and sharing God’s love with all people. By His grace, we will lead lives that follow His will and do the works that were prepared for us to do.

**Prayer:** Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for Your love and faithfulness to me. Help me to be faithful to You. Use me in Your service. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.

**Thursday**

**Store Up Treasures in Heaven**

Jesus tells us that temporal and worldly things have no lasting value. We are to be in the world but not of the world. We are warned not to store up treasures on earth. No earthly treasures will give us long-term happiness and security. When we accumulate more things on earth, we become more burdened with their upkeep and maintenance. Material things become a distraction. The things we own will either become worthless due to inflation, become obsolete, wear out, or be stolen. Earthly treasures have limited value and purpose.

In contrast, Jesus directs us to store up treasures in heaven that will last. We store up treasures in heaven by helping and serving others, extending God’s kingdom, and living as **everyday stewards**. When God opens our hearts and minds, He changes our desires and enables us to store up treasures in heaven. We store up treasures in heaven because we know, by God’s grace, that our real home is with Him.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, help me to fix my eyes on You and not on the things of this world. Amen.

**Friday**

**Seeking God’s Wisdom**

Solomon, one of the best-known Old Testament characters, taught us about the importance of wisdom. God appeared to Solomon and said, *“Ask what I shall give you”* (1 Kings 3:5). Solomon asked for wisdom. The Lord was so pleased that Solomon chose wisdom over wealth and a long life that He gave Him not only wisdom but riches and honor as well. The wisdom God gave Solomon enabled him to lead a very productive and prosperous life. His Godly wisdom was both his shield and his strength.

In contrast to Godly wisdom, the wisdom of the world pulls at us to deny the will of God. Worldly wisdom leads to a life of lust, greed, and power. The wisdom of the world causes us to seek self-gratification and the pleasures of this life. God wants us to turn our backs on the wisdom of the world. Through God’s Word, the Holy Spirit draws us closer to Him and reveals His wisdom to us. God’s wisdom will help us choose the path in life that gives us peace in this life and leads us to life eternal with Him.

**Prayer:** Lord, grant me wisdom to seek and do Your will. In Jesus’ holy name I pray. Amen.

**Saturday**

**Making an Eternal Difference**

Are you prepared with God’s help to do all that you can to help others know Jesus? Are you using your time, talents, and treasures in ways that make an eternal difference in the lives of others? To make an impact on others is not easy. Although doing the Lord’s work brings much joy, it does require sacrifice. For the sake of the Gospel, we need to commit our time and energy. In addition, the Lord’s work often requires us to give sacrificially. For example, the early Christians sold land and houses to meet the needs of others (Acts 2:45). The Macedonian churches gave beyond their ability to the needs of other believers (2 Corinthians 8:1-7). Just as God worked in the hearts of the Macedonians, He changes our hearts so we can become generous people.

When we commit our lives and gifts to the work of the Lord, we can make an eternal difference in the lives of others. God uses our efforts, our giving, our words, and our prayers to strengthen others. Of course, by ourselves we can do nothing. God is our source of strength and ability. We know that it is God Who so *“powerfully works within [us]”* (Colossians 1:29).

**Prayer:** Lord, grant me Your strength and courage as I share the Gospel with others. In Your name I pray. Amen.