

Stewardship 101

ONE



If you had been rescued from drowning, some of the first words you'd say would be "Thank you" to the lifeguard. Although those words would seem inadequate payment, what else could you do? How much would you have paid the lifeguard? How much is your life worth?

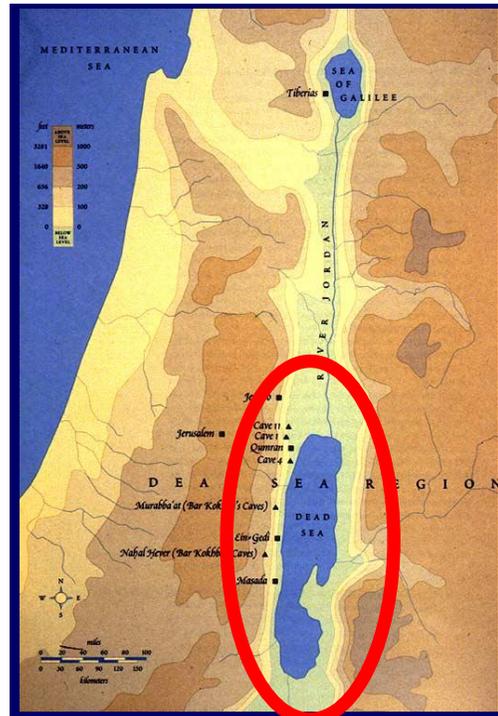
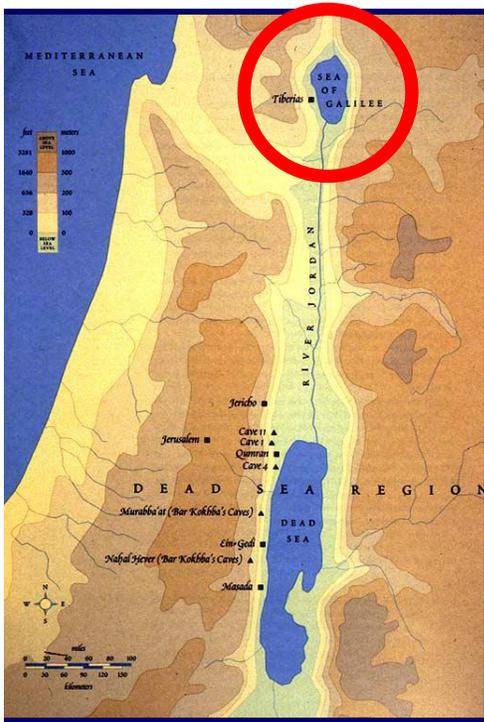


In Holy Baptism, we understand ourselves to have been rescued from Death (capital D) by the Lifeguard (capital L). In that moment, with water, we are welded to the death and resurrection of Jesus, with the promise that as he was raised, so shall we. And how can we repay Jesus for what he did for us on the cross? All we can do is say thanks.

Stewardship = A life filled with saying thanks to God every way we can, with all we have and all we are.



I like to challenge people to discover their need to give.



I find it interesting that in the land Jesus walked, there are two significant bodies of water: The Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea. As most everyone knows, the Dead Sea is dead because it has an inlet but no outlet. The Jordan River flows in from the north, but has no outlet. And all the minerals the river brings makes the lake increasingly salty - and dead. It receives but never gives - it's dead.

The Sea of Galilee, on the other hand, receives fresh water from the Jordan River entering from the north and sends as much as it receives on its way south. As a result it is a body of water, teeming with fish and surrounded by fishing villages - it is alive. It receives and it gives - it is alive.

Do you want to be like the Dead Sea and receive but not give, or the Sea of Galilee, one who receives and gives?

Discover your need to give.



Stewardship has *nothing* to do with the church's budget.



Stewardship has *everything* to do with your need to give
(see #2 above).

A just and equitable way of meeting the church's budget would be to divide the total budget by the number of members. The resulting number would be each one's "fair share." That might work for a club or other organization, but not the body of Christ. If we divided up the budget in this way, for some it would be a true financial hardship. But on the other side, the fact is there are many households that could start giving less than they are now, sometimes far less.

**If everyone discovered their need to give
(of time, talent and treasure), and responded accordingly,
the church budget would be quite healthy.**

4



I generally stay away from the word ***tithing*** and instead focus on the phrase ***first fruits giving***. Too often, I believe, a tithe is rigidly thought to be 10%. And right away that seems too steep a mountain for someone to climb that has never had a disciplined practice of giving before.

I emphasize the importance of giving what is **right**, and not what is **left**. Speaking from my own experience, I used to give what was left, after paying all the bills. And often, there was nothing **left**. But when I started using *Simply Giving* (electronic funds transfer), this meant the first portion was taken each month. That is the **right** way to give.

By the way, information about *Simply Giving* is available on the church website (**GIVE / ONLINE GIVING**).



A lot of stewardship education is available on the church's website (<http://www.mountcross.com/give.html>), in the document called Stewardship FAQ (Faithfully Asked Questions)

This and other topics are explored in the document called Stewardship FAQ (Faithfully Asked Questions). Download it below.

 [stewardshipfaq.pdf](#)
[Download File](#)

See also the Stewardship Committee section in the Church Council Handbook: www.mountcross.com/uploads/1/5/9/5/15953620/council_handbook.pdf



OTHER MATTERS

Stewardship Dinner

Stewardship Program (as in: a special event in the sanctuary)

Pledge Campaign (fall), including follow up with those who did not respond.

Time & Talent Reports (spring), including making sure everyone who offered time and talent is contacted and (hopefully) employed in at least one area of service or ministry.

Temple Talks (in church, in newsletter, on video (for showing in church, Facebook, website), etc.

Articles in newsletter

Back page of the quarterly reports sent to all who have given.