

OFFERTORY READINGS

2011

**NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION OF
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS**

STEWARDSHIP DEPARTMENT

Dick E. Hanson, Author

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Sabbath 53

December 31, 2011

Offering: NAD Outreach Project

As we say good-bye to the year 2011 and look ahead to 2012, we still live in a world that needs a Savior. Jesus is the answer to all the increasing ailments of our world. Faithful stewards will seek to hear the words of Matthew 25:23:

"His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'"

This is the only measure of success in life. Let's be praying for the Holy Spirit to help us live God-centered lives. How we work, how we play, how we do business, how we interact with others, how we eat, how we parent, how we use our talents, how we use our money, how we use our minds, how we do anything in life must be sifted through God's principles. Stewardship is God's program to develop our characters so they can be used of Christ.

Appeal: With the times and tough economic issues that face the world, God's people must respond. Is it possible that these words are now being fulfilled?

"The work which the church has failed to do in a time of peace and prosperity she will have to do in a terrible crisis under most discouraging, forbidding circumstances." 5T463

Prayer: Heavenly Father please add your blessing to this offering that it will be used efficiently to reach the masses of North America. In Jesus' name. Amen

Sabbath 52

December 24, 2011

Offering: YES - Youth, Education, Schools & Churches

Everyone is born a steward and remains a steward until death. This means that when Christ was born He was born a steward. The human dimension of His life was characterized by His faithful stewardship. At a young age He said (Luke 2:49):

"And He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?"

Later in life He said (John 6:38-40):

"For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

Those are stewardship statements. A good summary phrase about stewardship is that it is: God-centered living. That is the way Jesus lived and the model for our lives as well.

Appeal: Our offering today is for the support of our Conference ministries. These ministries provide for larger regional impact. Let's pray.

Prayer: Father, considering the celebrations of the gift of your Son causes us to say thanks. Bless this offering and use it so that the message He brought from You to the world will be proclaimed with power. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Sabbath 1

January 1, 2011

Offering: Local Church Budget

As we begin a new year let's take a look at the most basic element of our faith. That element is commonly referred to as the sovereignty of God. That is to say, "God is God!" He is our reason for being here; he is the reason for this Church; he is the reason for our denomination. We are His stewards.

Isaiah 46:8-9(ESV) says,

"Remember this and stand firm, recall it to mind, you transgressors, remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, "

God's sovereignty is essential to our faith. Without a sovereign God there is no God. Do you believe that? We must believe and live for God each day.

Appeal: Our Sovereign God has established this church and he has called us to work for him in all things and to provide resources so that our church can carry out its work. Let's pray.

Prayer: Our Father, you are the only true God, our God. We bow before you in adoration of your greatness. Please bless our tithes and offerings today and use them to provide for your Kingdom. Thank you for the provisions you give and for the opportunity to be a part of your great work. You have given us a measure of faith. Help us in return to offer you our faithfulness through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sabbath 2

January 8, 2011

Offering: YES - Youth, Education, Schools & Churches

The sovereignty of God is the foundation of our hope and therefore the basis of our faith. Our focus is on Him and our purpose in life is to bring glory to him.

Isaiah 43:10-13 (ESV) says:

"You are my witnesses," declares the Lord, "and my servant whom I have chosen, that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor shall there be any after me. I, I am the Lord, and besides me there is no savior. I declared and saved and proclaimed, when there was no strange god among you; and you are my witnesses," declares the Lord, "and I am God. Also henceforth I am he; there is none who can deliver from my hand; I work, and who can turn it back?"

We are witnesses for Him in four ways: (1) God is God there is no other. (2) He is Sovereign, our Master. (3) He is our Savior and Redeemer, (4) He is the provider of all things.

Appeal: Our Conference provides vital services and leadership to assist in the carrying out of the work of God in our area.

Prayer: Our sovereign God, please bless our Conference and help us to accomplish your purposes. We return our tithes and give you our offerings as an acknowledgement of our total dependence on You. We seek your blessings, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Sabbath 51

December 17, 2011

Offering: Local Church Budget

We often talk of having a relationship with Jesus Christ, but what does that mean? Stewardship, in its truest Biblical sense, is the relationship that is called for between Christ and His people. Jesus was the supreme example of faithful stewardship. This stewardship relationship was the one that Jesus referred to when in Matthew 11:27 He said:

"All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father."

Then He brings us into the picture in Matthew 12:50 by saying:

"For whoever does the will of My Father who is in heaven, he is My brother and sister and mother."

This is the relationship that all should seek and it can only be obtained by living all of life in a God-centered way. The stewardship life is the model for how we will live in Heaven.

Appeal: Today's offering is for our local ministry and maintenance needs. Being a member of the church is not like being a part of a club. When you become a member you are agreeing to support the work of Christ in and through this body of believers. Let's pray.

Prayer: Gracious Lord and Savior, please bless this offering and our church. Help us to grow in your grace and become faithful stewards, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Sabbath 50

December 10, 2011

Offering: NAD/WB Inner City Emphasis

Selfishness is the strongest of all human passions. The selfish heart will seek any means which will serve its own interests. Even though the mind might acknowledge that church and mission programs, the care of the poor, and other ministries are good, the selfish heart will seek other methods to accomplish this without sacrificing its own desire. That is why we must pray for the grace of giving. The grace of giving is God's antidote for human selfishness.

Sacrificial giving always costs us something and is designed by God to develop characters that are safe to save. A constant and prayerful vigilance is needed to guard against our natural selfish tendencies.

Appeal: The inner city areas of the great metropolises of North America have huge needs. Millions of people to reach for Christ and very expensive venues in which to establish churches.

Today's offering is for the World Budget and the Inner City work is one of the recipients of this offering. Let's pray.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, you have given us a work to do and when we look at the cities of North America we are reminded of the incredible challenges. We need your help and your power. Please bless this offering and use it to impact these cities for your Kingdom. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Sabbath 3

January 15, 2011

Offering: Local Church Budget

When we give to God we do not give him OUR tithes and offerings. Psalm 50:10-12 (ESV) makes it very clear:

"For every beast of the forest is mine, the cattle on a thousand hills. I know all the birds of the hills, and all that moves in the field is mine. "If I were hungry, I would not tell you, for the world and its fullness are mine."

The whole idea of ownership is pagan. Many of our laws originated from Pagan Rome. If God owns everything then we own nothing. That makes us all stewards of His "things." Our attitude towards our possessions is an important ingredient of our faith.

So when we give offerings and return our tithes, they are all His and we are only directing their use as His faithful stewards.

Appeal: Our church is His and we are here to support it with our time as well as our means. We have many needs but He is able to fulfill every need.

Prayer: Lord, you have given us everything. You have given us life and You have made our lives meaningful in Jesus Christ. You have given us each other and you have given us responsibility. Help us, in response to Your gifts to us, to be responsible through Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

Sabbath 4
January 22, 2011
Offering: Religious Liberty

Religious Liberty is at the very heart of the Gospel. We are truly called upon to *"proclaim liberty throughout the land,"* as Leviticus 25:10 puts it. Jesus put forward the imperative of "setting at liberty those who are oppressed" in His very first public occasion. In advancing religious freedom we are truly advancing the kingdom of God. In that regard Ellen White always emphasized that our religious liberty work is central to the Three Angels' Messages.

Today's annual Religious Liberty Offering helps ensure that churches and individuals are free to practice their faith as God has instructed. It also works to maintain our ability to preach, and teach, and witness in His name.

Your offering today will sponsor *Liberty* magazine subscriptions to high-level government officials and prominent social and religious leaders throughout the North American Division. It will also be used to support the North American Division litigation fund – resources that make it possible for us to defend and preserve your religious liberty, in court, if necessary.

Appeal: Please give generously in support of these sacred freedoms of choice, belief, and practice. Our goal of bringing souls to Christ and hastening His return cannot be fulfilled if we do not have the freedom to share His love.

Prayer: Lord, our religious liberties are so important to the work you have given us. Please bless this offering and preserve our liberties, and bless our religious liberty leaders, in Christ's name, Amen.

Sabbath 49
December 3, 2011
Offering: Local Church Budget

Dick Hanson, a stewardship educator says:
"Stewardship is the most important aspect of the Christian's life. It specifies what a relationship with Christ is like. Without it every spiritual discipline is worthless and meaningless. It is foundational to living life on this earth and will be the model for life in eternity."

The Bible says it this way:

"And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."
Colossians 3:17ESV

Do "everything" for Christ. The word everything has a pretty comprehensive meaning. It means you cannot separate your religious and business life, nor your recreating or social interactions. Your choices and the things you watch and read. What you put in your body. All these things are areas of consideration for the faithful steward.

Appeal: The Church seeks to be a place where faithful stewards can prosper and grow in the grace of Jesus Christ. Our offering today will go to support the ministries of our Church. Let's pray.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, help us to be faithful in every area of our lives. We want to honor You in all things. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

Sabbath 48

November 26, 2011

Offering: YES - Youth, Education, Schools & Churches

One definition of stewardship is simply stated as: "God-centered Living." This is a very comprehensive view that includes money and possessions but also everything else in life. Money, home, car, are included but also our bodies, minds, choices, relationships, use of talents and skills, the Earth, the Bible, the Sabbath and the list goes on!

There is no moment or dimension of our lives that does not include a stewardship component. It is the way a faithful and true Christian lives their life. Therefore, everything we do has a God focus.

Ultimately, all that we have and ever hope to be is reason to say, "thanks" to God for His goodness, blessings and the things He provides. He is indeed the Provider of all things the Giver of every blessing. Any response in resources, time, or talent will always be inadequate to His lavish and abundant gifts to us.

Appeal: Today our offering will go to support some of the ministries of our Conference. Let's pray.

Prayer: Lord in Heaven, it is with a thankful heart that we provide our Tithes and Offerings today. You are the originator of all we possess. Help us to always acknowledge You as the Giver of all things. Bless this offering to Your purposes and for Your sake, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Sabbath 5

January 29, 2011

Offering: Walla Walla University/NPUC

We have been looking at the idea of the sovereignty of God. Since God owns everything, "What is our role in His Kingdom?" The highest position that a human being can attain is that of a faithful steward. This is a position of dignity, a very high office in God's plan. The reason this is an honorable position is because He trusts us. We often say, "Trust in Jesus!" but we have not stopped to understand that He trusts us!

He has entrusted us with all things needed to accomplish His purposes on Earth. Nothing is outside of the scope of stewardship. As His stewards, we know where we came from, why we are here, and where we are going. These things give us true purpose in life. Only in the context of stewardship does life have meaning. We have a faithful Master who provides all things for us. We are His partners in the greatest enterprise on Earth.

Appeal: How can we say, "thanks" to our loving God? By responding with our tithes and offerings we show, in a tangible way, our love and trust in Him. Let's pray.

Prayer: Our Lord and Master, help us to be faithful stewards in every way. Bless this offering as we return to you, some of the resources you have entrusted to us. Bless this offering and our lives we pray, in Jesus' Name, Amen.

Sabbath 6

February 5, 2011

Offering: Local Church Budget

Stewardship is not a synonym for money. It is often presented as having everything to do with money, more directly to do with tithes and offerings. This was never the idea formed from the Bible. Stewardship was first presented in the Garden of Eden. It was Adam and Eve's first work. Stewardship was divinely ordained of God and, at that time, there was: no money; no Church; no church school; no missions; no buildings; no programs. The origins and purpose of real stewardship needs to be understood.

We know that the Devil's goal in all things is to discredit God, to distort God's character, to destroy the things of God.

Most of us understand the devil's attack on the Sabbath...an attack to erase humanity's view of God as Creator. Most have failed to understand that this attack on stewardship...is designed to erase humanity's seeing God as owner of all things.

Appeal: It is our privilege to give today to the Owner and Provider of all things. Consider that today. Let's pray.

Prayer: Our gracious Father, thanks for all you have Provided to us. Bless these gifts, we pray that they honor you and help to enlarge your Kingdom. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Sabbath 47

November 19, 2011

Offering: Local Church Budget

The Christian steward has the goal of eternal life ever in view. It may appear impossible due to an environment created by sin. But desire, preparation, and commitment will enable the faithful steward to ascend above the "fog-bound" valleys of a materialistic world, and reach the peak where heaven, the new earth, companionship with God and the holy angels await.

This is the goal of every steward who recognizes that he or she is a steward. This is the reward. No half-hearted preparation or application of time and talent will work. The very term "steward" implies service. Effective service demands wholehearted commitment to Christ.

Christ has called us to work for Him, this makes us very important, even essential to His plan. How important is this work to us?

Appeal: The work of the Church is to recruit, train and develop faithful stewards. Our offering today will provide financial support to the ministries of our Church. Let's pray.

Prayer: Our Father you are our Master, the One we desire to serve faithfully. Bless our efforts, bless this offering. We want to spend eternity with You, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Sabbath 46

November 12, 2011

**Offering: WB Annual Sacrifice Emphasis
Featuring Global Mission**

Every day we're bombarded by bad news. But we have a special hope. We know that a loving God wins in the end. We know that sadness, death, and pain will be history. But what about the millions who don't know? What about those who live in fear and despair?

Did you know that there are more than two-dozen countries or regions of the world where there isn't a single Adventist church for people to hear God's end-time message? Did you know that there are still millions who have never even heard of His love?

The challenge is huge. But God's power and grace are bigger! His commission to reach every kindred, tongue, and people is a promise that if we let Him, He will use us to do more than we could ever imagine.

Appeal: Today's offering will help Global Mission carry the gospel to the unreached people and areas of the world. Every penny will be used to help start new groups of believers. Your offering today will bring hope to someone in need. It will share the best news ever with those living in a bad-news world.

Prayer: Oh Lord, add your blessing to these tithes and offerings that they might impact lives for your Kingdom. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Sabbath 7

February 12, 2011

Offering: NAD/WB Adventist Television Ministries Emphasis

If we were giving this appeal a hundred years ago, the only media we'd have to talk about would be the print media. Of course, the work of our publishing houses is pretty impressive today, but now we've gone far beyond books and magazines to broadcast media. Many weekly programs on commercial television and radio plus our Adventist Channel on the Internet, 24 hours a day, along with the Hope Channel now on *Direct TV's* satellite in North America. The possibilities are greater than ever!

Our television ministries in North America continue to proclaim the gospel clearly. *Faith for Today's Lifestyle Magazine* for the secular audience, *Breath of Life* targeting the urban audience, and *It Is Written's* full-message telecast will benefit from today's offering. These three ministries reach out in ways that could never have been imagined not many years ago. Adventist programming is now even available for cellular phones and other mobile devices.

Appeal: By giving liberally today, you help share the gospel at a time of unprecedented opportunities in communication and broadcast media.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You have imparted knowledge that has given us the opportunity to proclaim the truth about you. Bless these monetary gifts for the growth of your Kingdom. Amen.

Sabbath 8

February 19, 2011

Offering: Local Church Budget

Stewardship is not some divine fund-raising scheme. We often seem to associate any call for funds as being the focus of stewardship. The Bible says, "God is love" (1 John 4:8) so since stewardship is God's idea, it must have love, for us, at its heart.

Stewardship is more about faith-raising than fund-raising. The focus of stewardship is on the Master. His provisions and His abundant grace to us. We respond as His partners in this great undertaking of proclaiming the truth about Him to the world. Realizing, as we do, that we are dependent on Him for all of our needs.

The reason money is part of the equation is because money is said, by Scripture, to be a master. By freely giving Him our Tithes and Offerings we acknowledge Him as our only Master.

Appeal: As you participate in giving today with your Tithes and Offerings remember the blessings He has given. Let's pray.

Prayer: Father, we have nothing to give except what we have been given by You. Thank you for the privilege of being a part of your work and for giving us Jesus. In His name we pray, Amen.

Sabbath 45

November 5, 2011

Offering: Local Church Budget

A congregation cannot dishonor God more than to allow His house to be in a run-down condition. The appearance of a Church building says a lot about the congregational attitude towards the Sovereign God. It is like a beacon or a sign as to how the people value God's presence. We need to remember that the church building and how it is maintained is a silent witness to every visitor, as well as the casual passerby. Every church should be maintained in accordance with His character and majesty.

How can this be done? It takes four things: (1) A congregational desire to honor God; (2) The resources to accomplish it, and a belief that He will provide; (3) Talents to provide what is needed, He will provide that as well; (4) Time given by church members to do the work!

We must return to the idea that the Church is God's house. Too often it is seen as a place of social activity and we forget that it is first of all a place to meet with God.

Appeal: Our offering today will go to help meet the needs of our Church and its ministries and maintenance. Let's pray.

Prayer: Our gracious Heavenly Father, forgive us when we do not honor You as we should. Bless this offering and show us how we might make our Church pleasing to Your eyes. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Sabbath 44
October 29, 2011
Offering: NAD Evangelism

The large cities of North America have unique challenges. In many of these cities the inner city has become the home to violence, drugs, and hopelessness. It is into these areas that the North American Division desires to bring hope in Jesus Christ. The Lord has said, in Isaiah 42:6-7(NASB95):

*"I am the LORD, I have called You in righteousness,
I will also hold You by the hand and watch over You,
And I will appoint You as a covenant to the people,
As a light to the nations, To open blind eyes,
To bring out prisoners from the dungeon
And those who dwell in darkness from the prison."*

There are many honestly seeking individuals being prepared, by the Holy Spirit, to find the Truth. The Church enters into Satan's stronghold with a message of hope and deliverance.

Appeal: Our offering today will go to the North American Division to support these evangelistic efforts in large cities. Please support this offering with your resources and your prayers. Let's pray.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, we don't have to look far to see the moral devastation of many cities in North America. Please bless this offering and its intended purpose, to win souls away from the Evil One into the light of Your truth. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Sabbath 9
February 26, 2011
Offering: YES - Youth, Education, Schools & Churches

In our giving motive is everything. Why do you give? Why are you a faithful tither? There is one word that should be a part of the answer, that word is: acknowledgement. We acknowledge Him when we return our tithes as the Lord of our life. This is strictly an act of obedience. We acknowledge Him as our Provider when we give Him our offerings. This is a measure of our motives.

Stewardship was given as a means to train His people for Heaven and has three parts: (1) Upward – in relation to God; (2) Inward – in relation to us; (3) Outward – in relation to the world around us. You see stewardship has God at its center as the Provider; Humanity as the "conduit" through which the provisions are distributed; and the world as the recipient of the "gifts" for providing a better life or even eternal life as the end result. And in the process His children find characters prepared for Heaven.

Appeal: The offering today is for our special Conference programs. These rely on your gifts to accomplish their purposes.

Prayer: Oh Father, our gifts to You seem so small compared to the abundance you Provide. Take them and add your blessings that they might multiply in good works in your Kingdom. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Sabbath 10

March 5, 2011

Offering: Local Church Budget

Stewardship began in the mind of God. We were brought into the picture at Eden, when God said in Genesis 1:26-28...

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."

God's desire for His people all through the Bible is that they might never forget their relationship to him. Stewardship's purpose is to instill this relationship and its resulting dependence on God.

Appeal: Our offering today is to support the needs of our Church. We invite you to prayerfully consider what your part will be in support of the work of the Church.

Prayer: Creator God, we are Yours and our place in this world has been defined by You. Help us to always maintain a right relationship with You. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Sabbath 43

October 22, 2011

Offering: YES - Youth, Education, Schools & Churches

Today we are reminded of the date: October 22, 1844. This is a key prophetic date in the history of God's Kingdom. One-hundred Sixty-seven years ago events were put in place that would lead to the founding of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. We are stewards of our Church and its message to the World.

The Church, through the blessing of the Holy Spirit, is the dispensary of God's message for these last days. While the Church is not perfect, it is the organizational means by which the gospel of truth is to be proclaimed around the Earth. Paul prayed for the Church at Thessalonica (1 Ths. 3:11-13 NASB95) saying:

"Now may our God and Father Himself and Jesus our Lord direct our way to you; and may the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another, and for all people, just as we also do for you; so that He may establish your hearts without blame in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints."

Appeal: Our Conference is a part of God's structure to take His message to our area. The offering today supports vital ministries of our Conference. Let's pray.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for this church and the message You have given to us. Bless this offering, that it might win many to Your kingdom. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Sabbath 42
October 15, 2011
Offering: Local Church Budget

Another essential tool for the Christian is prayer. We are stewards of this gift from God.

E.M. Bounds in *The Necessity of Prayer* said this: "Faith is the foundation of Christian character and the security of the soul. When Jesus was looking forward to Peter's denial, and cautioning him against it, He said unto His disciple (Luke 22:31-32 NASB95):

"...Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you; that your faith should not fail;...."

Our Lord was declaring a central truth; it was Peter's faith He was seeking to guard; for well He knew that when faith is broken down, the foundations of spiritual life give way, and the entire structure of religious experience falls. It was Peter's faith which needed guarding. Hence Christ's solicitude for the welfare of His disciple's soul and His determination to fortify Peter's faith by His own all-prevailing prayer."

Appeal: Prayer is essential to our walk with Christ and our Church provides an environment for Prayer and Bible study. Our offering will help support the ministries of our church. Let's pray.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank You for the gift of prayer, please pray for us and strengthen our faith. Bless this offering for Your purposes, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Sabbath 11
March 12, 2011
Offering: WB Adventist World Radio Emphasis

Historically, Adventist World Radio has focused its broadcasts on the hardest-to-reach places of the world, carrying the gospel to people who would not have the opportunity to hear God's message through any other means. But as people become ever-more mobile and move far from their home countries, they welcome the chance to hear programming in their native languages.

AWR has added a new delivery system that enables ALL of its radio programs to be automatically repurposed as Internet podcasts. Now listeners can access AWR's programs in any corner of the world where there is Internet service.

Appeal: God is using AWR's broadcasts to transform lives in the most varied locations imaginable. From shortwave broadcasts picked up in secret by villagers in Vietnam and FM radio broadcasts inspiring listeners in Rwanda, to Internet podcasts being downloaded by Nepalese workers in Saudi Arabia, the message of salvation is being heard in 80 languages around the world through AWR. We invite you today to partner with AWR in this vital ministry.

Prayer: Lord, please bless these technologies as they are used to proclaim your goodness and to draw people to you. Add your blessings to our tithes and offerings, we pray in Jesus' name, Amen.

Sabbath 12

March 19, 2011

Offering: Local Church Budget

All people are born stewards. They may be faithful or unfaithful. They may be aware of the fact or totally oblivious to it. It is a part of the gospel process of becoming a Christian that a person realizes their role as steward and responds to that in obedience. Jesus is our example in stewardship. In 2 Corinthians 8:9 we read:

"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich."

There is no hint of self-centeredness here. Jesus possessed the whole universe. He spoke and the universe was created. . "For by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together" (Colossians 1:16, 17). And yet He came to earth for you and me to demonstrate His stewardship and love of humanity. This love is what we respond to as we live our lives for Him.

Appeal: Today, we give for the needs of our church. Consider this in your giving.

Prayer: Father, bless this offering and our church, in Jesus' name, Amen.

Sabbath 41

October 8, 2011

Offering: NAD/WB Voice of Prophecy Emphasis

God placed the idea for the Voice of Prophecy in the mind of H. M. S. Richards one night when a crystal radio brought him the words of a man who was speaking hundreds of miles away. "Imagine the potential for spreading the gospel," he thought! Years later, a newspaper that had advertised Pastor Richards' evangelistic meetings offered him airtime on a Los Angeles radio station, and his dream of proclaiming the gospel on the airwaves began to be fulfilled.

The Voice of Prophecy, the Adventist Church's oldest media ministry, continues seeking new ways to reach the world with the appeal to "Lift up the Trumpet . . . Jesus is coming again!" Now, in addition to radio, people listen to the message on their computers and cell phones. Thousands graduate from the Discover Bible School every year.

Appeal: The Voice of Prophecy has become even more than what H.M.S. Richards dreamed of, and with your gifts today it can continue to be what one church leader called it: "the most potent force for evangelism in the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church."

Prayer: Lord, bless these gifts and bless the Voice of Prophecy, that together they will add believers to your Kingdom. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Sabbath 40
October 1, 2011
Offering: Local Church Budget

There are two “tools” that provide the foundations for our faith: The Bible and Prayer. We are stewards of both of these. The Bible is our tool for sharing our faith. Without the Bible there would be no faith, no basis for our beliefs. The Bible was written as men were moved by the Holy Spirit and we depend on the same Spirit to reveal truth to us. 2 Peter 1:20-21(NASB95) says:

“But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.”

And then this in 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NASB95):

“All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”

Appeal: God has given us the tools to train and equip us for service. Our church exists to proclaim the truth as it is in Jesus. Today our offering will help support the ministries of our church. Let’s pray.

Prayer: Our Father, thank you for the gift of Scripture. Help us to use our Bibles, to know truth for ourselves and to be able to articulate it effectively through the blessing of Your Holy Spirit. We give you this offering and only ask for you to bless it in a way that will lead us to a closer relationship with you. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

Sabbath 13
March 26, 2011
Offering: YES - Youth, Education, Schools & Churches

Think about Jesus’ stewardship. He was rich in honor, glory, adoration and praise. The angels bowed down and worshiped Him.

In His priestly prayer to the Father the night before His death He said,

“I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do. Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.” John 17:4-5

He was rich in His love for us. Jesus was praying to the Father,

“I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.” John 17:26

The "grace of the Lord Jesus Christ" is demonstrated in "that though He was exceedingly rich, yet for your sake He became extremely poor." This was stewardship in action, an action that impacted all of us.

Appeal: Our Conference has many needs. We assist those needs with our offering today. Let’s pray.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, Bless our Conference and bless this offering that it will help to provide for the needs in our area. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

Sabbath 14
April 2, 2011
Offering: Local Church Budget

Jesus is the model steward. He became a servant. He was born in a humble home. He knew poverty. He could say, "I have nowhere to lay My head." He was always borrowing. He borrowed a coin to pay His taxes. He borrowed a donkey to ride into Jerusalem as the anointed of the Lord. He borrowed a tomb in which to be buried. As a humble servant He was stripped naked and placed on a cross and died for other people's crimes. He became a curse for you and me, and He died as our substitute on the cross.

So with that in mind how can we say, Thanks? Our tithes and offerings seem very small compared to His sacrifice for us. Very inadequate, but then that thought reveals the grace and generosity of Divine love. Our God has demonstrated his love to us through Christ. Now we have a chance to respond.

Appeal: Our offering today will assist in the upkeep and operation of our local ministries. We are God's light in this area and funds are needed to keep these ministries working for Him.

Prayer: Father, bless our church and its many ministries. Help this offering to be used to glorify your name in the lives of all who respond to our work. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Sabbath 39
September 24, 2011
Offering: YES - Youth, Education, Schools & Churches

We are stewards of the work He has given us. All His assignments come with the power and help to accomplish them. Today, we focus on the Great Commission. In Matthew 28:18-20 we read:

"All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Just as Adam and Eve were given an assignment in the Garden, this is our assignment for our time. There is also the promise of His presence until the end of time.

The Great Commission is the purpose for our lives and all have a role to play in its completion.

Appeal: Our Conference spends considerable means to carry out the Great Commission. As we give today let's be praying for our work in this area and our Conference and their work in the larger region.

Prayer: Our Heavenly Father, help us to be successful in carrying out the Great Commission. Bless this offering that it might contribute to the saving of many souls and in the making of disciples. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Sabbath 38
September 17, 2011
Offering: Local Church Budget

God's Law of Ten Commandments has been given to us so that we might be His stewards of them. God's law is often said to be: "a transcript of His character." But what is meant by this. Well, it means that the Law is God's idea and comes from His mind. Therefore, it reflects who He is, the God of Love. It is literally God's love spelled out. The Law of God is not a negative thing, but a positive. It is God describing what is best for His children.

Our attitude about God's Law will reveal our attitude about Him. Jesus said in Matthew 5:17-18:

"Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. "For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished."

This is very clear that we must stand with Christ in upholding his Law until all is accomplished. Faithful stewards will proclaim the goodness of the Law because it reflects the goodness of God.

Appeal: The offering today is for our Church and its ongoing ministry expenses. Let's pray.

Prayer: Oh God, let us exalt your Name in our lives and actions. Bless this offering and help us to always lift up You and Your righteous Law. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Sabbath 15
April 9, 2011
Offering: WB Christian Record Services Emphasis

Christian Record Services provides free Christian publications and programs for people with visual impairments. In Isaiah 42:16 we read:

"I will bring the blind by a way they did not know; I will lead them in paths they have not known. I will make darkness light before them, And crooked places straight. These things I will do for them, And not forsake them."

In many ways this scripture explains the work of Christian Record Services Their stated goal is to reach every blind or visually impaired person in North America with Christian publications and services.

Each year approximately 100,000 blind people's lives are changed by the free services. Some of the services offered are: Subscription Magazines in braille, large print, and audio cassette; Full-Vision Books combine braille and print; A Lending Library that lends more than 2,000 volumes in braille and audio cassette; Gift Bibles and Study Guides; and National Camps for Blind Children.

Christian Record Services is an international organization serving blind and visually impaired individuals in approximately 80 countries worldwide and employs about 160 people throughout the United States and Canada.

Appeal: We support this important work with our offerings today.

Prayer: Our Father, bless the work of Christian Record and this offering for their use and growth. Amen.

Sabbath 16
April 16, 2011
Offering: Local Church Budget

Traditionally the topic of money and possessions is a very sensitive subject. When the subject of a preacher's sermon is the matter of money or possessions, he is often accused of leaving spiritual matters and beginning to meddle.

A story is told of a preacher in the old South building up steam in his sermon, moving to a great crescendo. He said, "This church, like the crippled man, has got to get up and walk." The congregation responded, "That's right, pastor, let it walk." And he added, "This church, like Elijah on Mount Carmel, has got to run." "Run, let it run, pastor. Let it run." the congregation added. "This church has got to mount up on wings like wings of eagles and fly." The people said, "Let it fly, pastor. Let it fly." Then the preacher added, "Now if this church is gonna fly, it 's gonna take money." The church members all spoke up in unison, "Let it walk, preacher. Let it walk. Let it walk." (Adapted from Clyde Murdock, *A Treasury of Humor*).

Appeal: I appreciate the generosity of our church and it is time for it to "fly." I am glad that many are willing to help. The needs are great but we know that He can provide for all of our needs.

Prayer: Our Father, please help our ministries to flourish so that we might win many to Your kingdom. Bless this offering, we pray, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Sabbath 37
September 10, 2011
Offering: WB / Fall Mission Appeal Emphasis

Surprises happen every day all around the world. God opens doors, minds, and hearts. And suddenly, exciting opportunities exist for missions that were impossible before!

Today's World Mission Offering for Unusual Opportunities will give us the ability to respond quickly when God leads. Your gift may be used to send missionaries to a just opened area where no one knows about God. Perhaps it will build a school to train young people to be Bible workers where such schools were not allowed before. Or it may print Bibles or literature for people who have never before studied the Scriptures in their own language.

However the offering is used, it will bring hope to millions who may have never heard about the Carpenter of Galilee who died because He loves them and is coming soon to take them home.

Appeal: We have an opportunity today to provide resources for this important work. Thank you for your generous support.

Prayer: Our Heavenly Father, we are dependent on You for the resources we now give back to You. We are just as dependent on your blessing to give them the eternal impact on the human lives they will touch. Thank you for calling us to partner with You for this important work. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Sabbath 36
September 3, 2011
Offering: Local Church Budget

The final area of our stewardship focus is simply called: The Kingdom. We are stewards of the things of Christ's Kingdom. Here we consider: The Earth; The Bible; God's Law; The Great Commission; The Truth about God; The Three Angels' Messages; The Church...anything to do with Christ's Kingdom.

Today we will look at: The Earth. When Adam and Eve were created their first assignment was clarified in Genesis 2:15:

"Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it."

It only makes sense that we have the same assignment, to tend and keep the earth. In Revelation 11:18 we have this warning:

"The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, And the time of the dead, that they should be judged, And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, And those who fear Your name, small and great, And should destroy those who destroy the earth."

The last line that says, "destroy those who destroy the earth." Should cause us to take note.

Appeal: Our church benefits from the offering today. Let's pray.

Prayer: Lord, You have given us a message of good health that includes sunlight, air, and water. Help us to do what we can to maintain the earth for Your glory. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Sabbath 17
April 23, 2011
Offering: YES - Youth, Education, Schools & Churches

The cardinal principle which should guide every Christian action and attitude is found in:

1 Cor. 10:31 "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

HERE IS THE STEWARDSHIP PRINCIPLE THAT LIES AT THE FOUNDATION of every act, thought, and motive. It is the consecration of the entire being: physical, mental, spiritual, and social **TO THE CONTROL OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD.**

IN OUR DEALINGS WITH PEOPLE we often judge them by their acts because we cannot know their motives. But rather than judging people, Christian love demands that we look on every human being as an object of ministry. Whether a brother or sister in the church, a spouse, a child, or a co-worker who does not know Christ. Every person that we encounter in our lives is to be seen as an object of ministry. As those who need to see Jesus lived out in the life of a faithful steward. This is what can make a difference in the lives of real people.

Appeal: Our Conference has many programs that are designed to assist us in our outreach to others. Our offering today will lend support to these efforts.

Prayer: Father, bless our Conference and the work we attempt for You. We know that it is only with your blessing that our offerings and service will be effective. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Sabbath 18

April 30, 2011

Offering: NAD Outreach Project - NAD Evangelism

It is probably accurate to say that the Seventh-day Adventist Church began in North America with a "Great Disappointment." But we know that it is not going to end with one when Jesus returns to the earth in glory and: *"every eye shall see Him."*

While the ending of earth's present history is determined already, the final chapter for each individual living on this earth has not yet been determined. People still have a choice and the Seventh-day Adventist Church exists to encourage them to choose Jesus and be saved so that they might spend eternity with Him.

The offering today is to help make that possible through evangelistic outreach in the North American Division, which includes: Bermuda, Canada, and the United States of America. This vast territory has many millions of people who need to have the Blessed Hope of knowing their Savior.

Appeal: Your financial contribution today provides many with the chance to hear the message as only the Adventist Church can present it.

Prayer: Our gracious Heavenly Father, we are dependent on You to enable us to accomplish the work You have given to us. Please bless these resources we give to you today. Save souls for Your Kingdom we pray, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Sabbath 35

August 27, 2011

Offering: YES - Youth, Education, Schools & Churches

Another area of stewardship, often overlooked, are the "Ties" in our lives, the relationships. Every person in our life is an object of ministry. It is no accident that they are part of our life. This could be a spouse, child, brother, sister, mother, father, church member, co-worker, neighbor, grocery store clerk...just any person we come in contact with in our daily interactions. John 3:16 is a familiar verse but we often overlook verse 17:

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved."

Our work is to work with Christ to save "the world" our world. We cannot overlook anyone, but always praying that God will lead us to find those who are earnestly seeking to know God.

Appeal: Our Conference leads out in many programs to reach the world for Christ. Our offering today will go to support those programs and attempt to develop new programs that will win people over to Jesus.

Prayer: Help us Lord, in our work to save the world, our world, here in this area. We need your help by blessing us and our resources that we give to You today. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Sabbath 34
August 20, 2011
Offering: Local Church Budget

Another element of stewardship is our: Testimony.
Paul says:

"Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful." 1 Cor. 4:1-2

As stewards of "the mysteries of God" we are responsible for the insights God has shown us about Himself. Each person has been given an experience, or testimony, in their walk with Christ. That becomes a sacred piece of our life, to be shared as often as possible so others will know of His goodness. As a community of believers, in this Church, we have a collective testimony to tell to the world. That is why it is good to have testimony services where we can express His leading in our lives and reveal our new discoveries about God.

Appeal: Our offering today is for the maintenance and ongoing expenses of our church. This building and the ministries it houses is our collective responsibility. We need to care for it and keep it in good repair so as to represent the One we proclaim as Savior and Lord. Let's pray.

Prayer: Our Father in Heaven, thank You for things we know about You. We are grateful for the gift of Jesus and Your Holy Spirit. Help us to be able to express those things we know about You whenever the opportunity presents itself. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Sabbath 19
May 7, 2010
Offering: Local Church Budget

Genesis 14:18-20

"Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High. And he blessed him and said: "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." And he gave him a tithe of all."

Tithing did not begin with the Mosaic Law, but as a part of Abraham's faithfulness to God. Abraham was well before the law. Abraham was the picture of justification by faith that points directly to our faith in Christ. Abraham was not justified by the law, but by trusting God. It is through Abraham's faith that the first tithe was given. The principle of giving was not the tithe. Giving to God's work was the tithe, but the principle of giving is stewardship – all things belong to God and entrusted to our care. Abraham testified to this in Genesis 14:22-23. After giving a tenth to the Priest of God, Abraham then declared that God was the Possessor of all things and Abraham took an oath that He would not take anything so that he would not become rich outside of God.

Appeal: Our Tithes and Offerings reveal our view of God. Today, we respond for the benefit of our local ministries. These are the ministries of the Church, but they are dependent on God's blessings and our support with resources and time.

Prayer: God of all, bless our church and these gifts, we desire to serve you and win many to your Kingdom, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Sabbath 20

May 14, 2011

Offering: World Budget Disaster & Famine Relief

Jesus said in Matthew 24,

“and ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: See that ye be not troubled: for all must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For ... there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.”

As daily stories of disasters are told, Adventist Community Services compassionately responds throughout North America by collecting, sorting and distributing items such as personal care kits, clothing, and food through collection centers, warehouses, distribution centers and mobile distribution units. Additionally, individuals are trained and deployed to provide emotional and spiritual care.

In the *Great Controversy* we read: *“Satan ... is at work. In accidents and calamities..., in great conflagrations, in fierce tornadoes and terrific hailstorms, in tempests, floods, cyclones, tidal waves, and earthquakes, in every place and in a thousand forms... These visitations are to become more and more frequent and disastrous.”*

Appeal: 10 percent of today's offering helps ACS respond to disaster needs here in North America and 90 percent helps ADRA respond internationally. Please give generously to help our church respond to the increasing needs of those affected by disasters.

Prayer: Our gracious Father, thank you for Your blessing on the work of disaster relief. Please add your blessing to our tithes and offerings that they might accomplish your will and purposes. Amen

Sabbath 33

August 13, 2011

**Offering: WB - Oakwood U/Andrews U/
Loma Linda U Emphasis**

One of the blessings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is its educational emphasis. We have the largest Protestant school system in the world. It is because we believe that to educate the mind is a part of our stewardship. Education is used to develop our talents to make better use of our time.

Our members have numerous choices for pursuing their educational goals. Whether engineering, architecture, theology, medicine, teaching, business, social work, nursing, and so many other possibilities, a student can choose to go to a College or University where not only are their talents increased and perfected but their spirituality is inspired as well.

Appeal: Our offering today is for the World Budget and part of that offering goes to support three educational institutions: Oakwood College in Alabama, Andrews University in Michigan and Loma Linda University in California. Each one has an important role to play in the Adventist educational spectrum.

Prayer: Our Father in Heaven, thank you for dedicated schools and teachers. Bless this offering today and I pray that all of our schools will seek to teach all subjects through the blessing and guidance of the Holy Spirit. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Sabbath 32
August 6, 2011
Offering: Local Church Budget

The next topic of our stewardship journey is our: Temple. Our body, mind, character, social, and personality given to us by God are all part of our stewardship responsibility. Paul sets the stage for us in 1 Corinthians 6:19-20:

"Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."

To keep our bodies in the best shape possible is essential to a productive life. To live long for the sake of being able to provide more resources and service to the Kingdom is a worthy aspiration. The topic of retirement, where a person steps away and simply believes they have done enough and now it is time to live for themselves, is an erroneous practice. It is not found in the Bible. It is true as a person ages they may not be able to work the same schedule as a younger person, but they still have a lot to give.

What church has not benefited from "retired" persons serving in the ministries of the church?

Appeal: Our offering is for the ministry of our church. We have a message to our area to provide on living and keeping our bodies and minds healthy. Let's pray.

Prayer: Father in heaven, all that we have and are we owe to you. Help us to use our whole bodies for Your purposes, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Sabbath 21
May 21, 2011
Offering: Local Church Budget

When we think of stewardship, we often consider it merely as a matter of our giving of money to God through the church. While the giving of tithes and offerings is an important aspect of stewardship, it is secondary. Stewardship is a reflection of my relationship to my God and my Savior. It is the way I relate to what God has given me. It is the management of my God-given resources for His glory & for the good of others. Proverbs 3:5-10 contains a pattern for stewardship that asserts loudly and clearly "Stewardship is Lordship!" Listen:

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths. Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and depart from evil. It will be health to your flesh, And strength to your bones. Honor the LORD with your possessions, And with the firstfruits of all your increase; So your barns will be filled with plenty, And your vats will overflow with new wine."

Appeal: This Scripture calls us to examine our view of possessions and gives a great "recipe" for living as a faithful steward. Let's pray.

Prayer: Father, help us to trust you totally, in all things and all ways. Use us and these offerings for your honor and glory and for our church's needs, we pray in Jesus' name, Amen.

Sabbath 22

May 28, 2011

Offering: YES - Youth, Education, Schools & Churches

All life is a stewardship. Vital energy in whatever form: physical, mental, moral, or spiritual; are all a trust from God. The earth, likewise, with its immeasurable store of materials, things like: air; water; soil; gold; silver; minerals; plants; animals all working in harmony to sustain life. All of these things are for humanity's use and care. But our use and care is not a sign of ownership but rather possession. Since we do not own these things, then we are to care for them in accordance with the Owner's instructions. Unfortunately, some of the greatest human caused disasters occurred because this view was not embraced.

Sooner or later we will all be called to account for our stewardship. We should always be aware of God's ownership of the things we possess. He has given us the Bible to help us to know how to deal with the material things in our lives.

Appeal: Today, we respond to the needs of our Conference. Many of our Conference programs benefit our church directly. Let's pray.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, please provide Your blessing to the work and ministries of our Conference. Use this offering to Your honor and glory and for the sake of Your kingdom. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Sabbath 31

July 30, 2011

Offering: Alaska Conference/NPUC

Wasting money is the same as wasting life through some harmful practice. The life can be wasted in many ways. Alcohol, drugs, overwork, gluttony, worry, and et cetera, are all injurious to health. Likewise, money not wisely used, is the same as wasting life—for it is life. When a person gambles his money, he is really gambling a portion of his life.

Money should never be considered as an end in itself. It is only a convenient medium of exchange by which a person can hold a portion of his time and talent in suspension for storage, use, and distribution at another time. A Christian steward will regard it as God regards it—a medium by which he can more efficiently serve God. Jesus said in Matthew 6:19-21:

“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Appeal: We can store our earthly life in heaven through our gifts of money, which is our stored time and talent. Today, we give to the needs of the Alaska Conference Arctic Mission Adventure volunteer program which places lay workers in outlying Alaskan village to spread the Advent message. Let's pray.

Prayer: Lord, we want to do what is right for You and Your kingdom. Bless our gifts and help us to use our time and talent for Your glory. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Sabbath 30

July 23, 2011

Offering: YES - Youth, Education, Schools & Churches

Time and Talent, in spite of their otherwise excellent qualities, have one restriction. They cannot be stored nor transferred easily. Time past is gone forever, and talents cannot be easily stored for future use. This brings us to our next stewardship responsibility: Treasure, or money and possessions.

When we go to work for someone, they agree to pay us an amount in exchange for our time and talent. So our time and talent (our life) becomes money. This is the only way they can be stored. But money has no intrinsic value. I can't use money to build a house; I use it to buy materials that will build a house.

Money is a medium of exchange and the only way it has value is to re-convert it into time and talent. If I go and buy some lumber to build my house, my money has been converted into the time and talent of those that made the lumber.

Appeal: So, if I do not wish to give money to the Lord's work I am saying I do not want to give my life for the work of Christ. Today, as we give our offerings for the Conference needs, we are giving our lives in the form of money. The Conference will then convert the money into time and talent for its various needs.

Prayer: Lord, our lives belong to you. Bless this offering of our time and talents that you have given to us, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Sabbath 23

June 4, 2011

Offering: Local Church Budget

There are some that would like to change the word stewardship to something more contemporary like: manager or partner. The problem with these words is they don't convey the real impact of Biblical stewardship. They convey a partial truth, because there is a partnership and management element.

The Greek word for steward is: "oikonomos" from which we get the word "economist." In the culture in which it was given it glows with great importance. In the New Testament stewardship is not a menial position of servanthood, but rather a confidence built on trust. To be a steward of the interests of the Master, in His absence, is a very high honor. It is a position of dignity.

Appeal: As we enter the Summer months I am reminded that our local church giving often suffers because of traveling, vacations and other summertime activities. Please plan your giving so that the church can continue to provide the ministries needed to our area. Let's pray.

Prayer: Thank you Lord, for trusting us with the things of your Kingdom. You have placed us in this Church for a reason. Bless our financial gifts to you and help us to use our spiritual gifts to minister to the people of this area. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Sabbath 24

June 11, 2011

Offering: NAD/WB Multilingual /Chaplaincy Min.

Emphasis

Possessions will become our god if we do not take care to place our hope in God. We have learned how fragile world economies are. Tomorrow the economy could collapse and every penny would be worthless. Proverbs 23:5 says,

"Will you set your eyes on that which is not? For riches certainly make themselves wings; They fly away like an eagle toward heaven."

The Bible also tells us that in the last days, people will throw their silver in the streets and gold will be cast away like abhorrent trash, listen to this:

"They will throw their silver into the streets, And their gold will be like refuse; Their silver and their gold will not be able to deliver them; In the day of the wrath of the Lord..."
Ezekiel 7:19

Those whose trust is in God will still have their strength during hard times, but whoever trusts in wealth will not have a foundation.

Appeal: The North American Church has special ministries for various ethnic groups and also an outreach to our Armed Forces through the Chaplain's Ministries. Our World Budget offering today helps fund these and other important activities. Let's pray.

Prayer: Lord in Heaven, bless these funds given to provide for your Church. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Sabbath 29

July 16, 2011

Offering: Local Church Budget

Our focus today is the use of our talents. While each person is given the same amount of time, this is not the case with talents. This is the variable in our stewardship. Talents can be natural or acquired. A person is responsible for whatever talent or talents they possess.

Rarely is a person given a perfect talent. Generally, talents require perfection through long hours of education, practice and experience. Consider the work of a musician, carpenter, machinist, physician, builders, etc. Talents are increased by use and decreased by disuse.

Talent like time is useless without the other. To have time without talent would make the time useless. To have a talent without time would make the talent useless. In fact, time plus talent equals life. When we were born God gave us a measure of time and a measure of talent. But no money!

Appeal: The money you are about to give for the support of our church was produced by your life, that is, your time and talent. In a sense as you give to God's work, you are giving your life. Let's pray.

Prayer: Our Father, help us to use our time and talents for You in more efficient ways. Bless this offering and our church as it does Your work, In Jesus' name. Amen

Sabbath 28

July 9, 2011

Offering: NAD Women's Ministries

Since its inception, the Women's Ministries Department has been engaged in carrying out the mission of the Church, which is *"to proclaim to all peoples the everlasting gospel. . ."* Last year over 6,300 people were baptized as a direct result of evangelistic efforts by the women of North America.

When Jesus explained what separates the sheep from the goats in Matt. 25:31-46, He made it clear that ministry to others is a primary characteristic of Christian believers. With the theme: *"A Ministry for Every Woman,"* the NAD Women's Ministries Department actively encourages every woman in the Church to be involved in some kind of ministry or service. In the home, in the church, and in the community, there is work that can best be carried out by women. According to Ellen G. White, *"They [women] can come close to the hearts of those whom men cannot reach. Their labor is needed."* (*Evangelism*, p. 465)

A new resource for reaching women in the community was recently introduced: *Journey of Joy—Healthy Emotions and Holy Hearts*, is an 11-week series that is geared for small group studies and is valuable tool for studying with neighbors and coworkers. It is also an excellent resource for local church women's ministries meetings.

Appeal: With your gift, you will affirm the work of women in the Church.

Prayer: Lord, bless the ladies of our church that provide such a blessing to our lives. Help them to fulfill the ministries You have given them. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Sabbath 25

June 18, 2011

Offering: Local Church Budget

God's blessings are not about us, but about Him. Everything about the Christian life should be focused on a relationship with God or glorifying God so others will be drawn into a relationship with Him. God blesses us so that we can be instruments of God's grace to others. God does not pour into a person so they can be self-focused and stagnate.

Many people become like the Dead Sea. The Dead Sea is replenished by the Jordan River and countless other streams and rivers coming from the mountains that surround it. The rivers flowing into are filled with life, but the sea is lifeless. It is one of the richest mineral beds on earth. It is filled with a treasure of minerals that have been deposited from centuries of deposits, yet because it has no natural outlet, it can't support life. It has no fish or plant life and land animals avoid it. It is lifeless.

Appeal: Giving is part of the natural flow of the faithful steward. Without giving our lives become self-centered and, in a sense, lifeless. Today, we have an opportunity to support the ministries and maintenance needs of our church. Let's pray.

Prayer: Gracious Father, keep our faith alive and bless us with the abundant life that comes from a life of service and giving, just like Jesus. Bless our church and its ministries. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Sabbath 26

June 25, 2011

Offering: YES - Youth, Education, Schools & Churches

Dr. Herbert Farmer said: *"If God is love, then the lovelessness of men must bring dire results. Men cannot go against the grain of the universe and not get splinters. The state of the world today does not prove that God is not love; rather it helps to prove that He is."* Stewardship involves allowing God to work in us. A.W. Tozer said, *"To do his gracious work God must have the intelligent cooperation of his people. If we would think God's thoughts, we must learn to think continually of God."*

I Corinthians 2:16 gives this instruction:

"For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ."

Philippians 2:5 adds:

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:"

In other words: Your attitude, your thinking, should be the same as that of Jesus.

Appeal: Dear friends, we need to be people who pray and read the Bible each and every day; who seek to think Christ's thoughts. This is how our lives will be effective for the Kingdom. Our offering is a part of God's plan to provide for the work of our Conference in this area.

Prayer: Loving Father, thank you for the care and guidance you provide us. Bless our gifts of love today and help us in our service for you, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Sabbath 27

July 2, 2011

Offering: Local Church Budget

What is the scope of stewardship? For what are we responsible? The short answer is everything! A more detailed answer will be the focus of these readings over the next couple of months.

The first area of our stewardship is our time. This is the great equalizer of all people. It doesn't matter where you live, what your education or social status, you still just get 24 hours each day. This does not mean that each person lives the same amount of time, but that they have an allotment of seconds, minutes, hours, days to use for His Kingdom. Time is our most precious gift. Time is the essence of life, and in a very real sense, time is life.

We have all wasted time and wish we could do things differently. Paul says in Ephesians 5:16-17:

"See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is."

This means that we can become faithful and "redeem" our time by knowing and doing the will of God.

Appeal: Today our offering is for our church. Please know that this is the time of year when we are trying to get budgets balanced and in order. Let's pray.

Prayer: Father God, bless our gifts to You and help us to use our time for Your kingdom. In Jesus' name. Amen.