



A Stewardship Story

The decisions that families and individuals make about finances and stewardship can be very personal. A member of our congregation has taken time to share their family's story about their decision to make giving back to God their top priority.

It was once again stewardship time at church. Each Sunday morning during worship someone would share with the congregation how their family was stretching their faith by increasing their financial commitment for the coming year. It was inspiring to hear! But it was also humbling as these stories were a reminder of our family's rather haphazard approach to giving. Our reality was that each year when stewardship season rolled around we would hastily complete a pledge card with a dollar amount that did not reflect prayerful consideration, much less any real stretching of our faith. Furthermore, while the mortgage, car payment, utilities, etc... were all paid each month like clockwork, we did not exhibit this same discipline with our giving. Often we would get to the last Sunday of the month, and on our way out the door to church, one of us would shout "Oh, grab the checkbook. We still need to pay the church!"

*That year the Holy Spirit used those stories told on Sunday morning to grab our attention and nudge us to rethink how we were using all that we were blessed with. We took to heart that giving is not about a dollar amount. **It is about responding to God with gratitude.** For us this resulted in an increase in our financial giving to the church. We were done giving God our leftover change. To help us meet our new financial pledge, we adopted a "first fruits" mentality towards giving that we still follow to this day. Each month when we receive our paycheck, the first thing that we pay is not the mortgage or the car payment. It is the church. This small but deliberate act is a tangible reminder to us that **all blessings flow from God and that He deserves our best, not our leftover change.***