



**GREAT FACTS**

**ABOUT...**

STEWARDSHIP

OWNERSHIP

SABBATH

TITHE

SELFISHNESS

SACRIFICE

OFFERING

COVENANT

## **7 Great Facts About...**

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Editor: Richardo Bacchus  
Designer: Vanesa Perla

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## FOREWORD TO COMMITMENT

Someone said: “You do not better yourself by making adjustments, you better yourself by making commitments.” This observation has been imprinted on my mind ever since, influencing my decisions more than once.

Commitments, not adjustments, take the Christian life to a more meaningful level—to contentment, happiness, and a clear self-identity. Your life will be characterized by spiritual acts driven by divine principles set forth by Jesus Christ.

Throughout the Bible you can find examples where people have made commitments and adjustments to their faith. Two well-known examples are Moses (Hebrews 11:25) and Joshua (Joshua 24:15). Some of us waiver, as Moses did, spending 40 years in the wilderness. Others are decisive as Joshua was. The Christian life calls for total dedication, born of faith and love. Christians have no room for wavering spiritually.

How can we make commitments that will last? A violin virtuoso first selects the instrument. Then they practice, practice, practice. The result is a high level of accomplishment and success.

We must commit to Christ and focus on living His principles every day. There is no slacking off, no turning back. The result will be a steady, faithful life in any situation. Fortunately, we don’t have to commit or focus on our own. Paul says, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:13).

Stewardship is about making commitments, not adjustments. We are called to represent biblical truths in our lives. If we commit to live these principles, our lives will never be the same; they will be filled with meaning and purpose. Internalize these principles and your spiritual journey will reveal victory after victory. Faithful stewards do not fail.

“If you live in obedience to Christ and His Word, you are eating the leaves of the tree of life, which are for the healing of the nations” (*You Shall Receive Power*, p. 231).

John Mathews, D.Min., Director of Stewardship Ministries  
North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists

# CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP

*“How different our standard is from Christ’s. We ask how much a man gives. Christ asks how much he keeps.”\**

—Andrew Murray

## **1. Stewardship is the management of another’s possessions.**

- a. “For every beast of the forest is Mine, And the cattle on a thousand hills. I know all the birds of the mountains, And the wild beasts of the field are Mine. ‘If I were hungry, I would not tell you; For the world is Mine, and all its fullness.’ ” (Psalms 50:10–12).
- b. “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth’ ” (Genesis 1:26).

## **2. Possessions may be abstract or concrete, spiritual or material.**

- a. “As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God” (1 Peter 4:10).
- b. “Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth’ ” (Genesis 1:28).

## **3. Angels have their stewardship responsibilities.**

- a. “To such as keep His covenant, And to those who remember His commandments to do them. The Lord has established His throne in heaven, And His kingdom rules over all. Bless the Lord, you His angels, Who excel in strength, who do His word” (Psalms 103:18–20).
- b. “Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?” (Hebrews 1:14).

## **4. Stewardship involves the totality of life expressed in four principal areas.**

- a. “ ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength’ ” (Deuteronomy 6:4, 5).
- b. (1) Body temple — “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" (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20).

- (2) Talents — “ ‘For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey’ ” (Matthew 25:14, 15).
- (3) Time — The days of our lives are seventy years; And if by reason of strength they are eighty years, Yet their boast is only labor and sorrow; For it is soon cut off, and we fly away” (Psalms 90:10).
- (4) Treasure — “Honor the Lord with your possessions, And with the firstfruits of all your increase” (Proverbs 3:9).

**5. No area of Christian stewardship may be lawfully withheld from the service of the Master.**

- a. “Jesus said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind’ ” (Matthew 22:37).
- b. “The development of all our powers is the first duty we owe to God and to our fellow men” (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 329).

**6. This principle is exemplified by the Triune God.**

- a. “He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?” (Romans 8:32).
- b. “What is the little sacrifice that we can make, in comparison with God's great gift of His only begotten Son?” (*Christian Service*, p. 217).

**7. All men are stewards—saints or sinners, saved or unsaved. All receive God's blessings.**

- a. “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad” (2 Corinthians 5:10).
- b. “. . . that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust” (Matthew 5:45).

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\**Money: Thoughts for God's Stewards* (Australia: Emereo Publishing, 2013).

# GOD'S OWNERSHIP

*“What we possess owns us, and we absolutely own nothing.” \**  
—T.F. Hodge

## **1. God owns the world and all its fullness.**

- a. “The earth is the Lord’s, and all its fullness, The world and those who dwell therein. For He has founded it upon the seas, And established it upon the waters” (Psalms 24:1, 2).
- b. “Thus says the Lord: ‘Heaven is My throne, And earth is My footstool’ ” (Isaiah 66:1).

## **2. He created it.**

- a. “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1).
- b. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made” (John 1:1–3).
- c. “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14).

## **3. He sustains it.**

- a. “Lift up your eyes on high, And see who has created these things, Who brings out their host by number; He calls them all by name, By the greatness of His might And the strength of His power; Not one is missing” (Isaiah 40:26).
- b. “The power of God is manifested in the beating of the heart, in the action of the lungs, and in the living currents that circulate through the thousand different channels of the body. We are indebted to Him for every moment of existence, and for all the comforts of life. The powers and abilities that elevate man above the lower creation, are the endowment of the Creator” (*Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 17).

## **4. He redeemed it.**

- a. “. . . the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body” (Romans 8:21–23).
- b. “All things are God’s, not only by creation, but by

redemption. All the blessings of this life and of the life to come are delivered to us stamped with the cross of Calvary” (*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 362).

### **5. He will purify it.**

- a. “ ‘For behold, the day is coming, Burning like an oven, And all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble. And the day which is coming shall burn them up,’ Says the Lord of hosts, ‘That will leave them neither root nor branch. But to you who fear My name The Sun of Righteousness shall arise With healing in His wings; And you shall go out And grow fat like stall-fed calves’ ” (Malachi 4:1, 2).
- b. “Devouring flames burst from every yawning chasm. The very rocks are on fire. . . . In the cleansing flames the wicked are at last destroyed, root and branch—Satan the root, his followers the branches” (*The Great Controversy*, pp. 672, 673).

### **6. He will recreate it.**

- a. “ ‘For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former shall not be remembered or come to mind’ ” (Isaiah 65:17).
- b. “Then He who sat on the throne said, ‘Behold, I make all things new.’ And He said to me, ‘Write, for these words are true and faithful’ ” (Revelation 21:5).

### **7. He will inhabit it with His people.**

- a. “Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God’ ” (Revelation 21:1–3).
- b. “. . . Here, when He shall make all things new, the tabernacle of God shall be with men ‘and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God’ ” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 26).

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\**From Within I Rise: Spiritual Triumph Over Death and Conscious Encounters with “The Divine Presence”* (Frederick, Md.: Publish America, 2009).

# THE SABBATH AND THE TITHE

*“The Sabbath is the link between the paradise which has passed away, and the paradise which is yet to come.” \**

—Andrew Wylie

## **1. The Sabbath was given at creation. The tithing principle was given at creation.**

- a. “Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done” (Genesis 2:1–2).
- b. “Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, ‘Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die’ ” (Genesis 2:15–17).

## **2. The Sabbath is holy. The tithe is holy.**

- a. “Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made” (Genesis 2:3).
- b. “And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord’s. It is holy to the Lord” (Leviticus 27:30).

## **3. The Sabbath is inviolable. The tithe is inviolable.**

- a. “ ‘[On the seventh day] you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates’ ” (Exodus 20:10).
- b. “The portion that God has reserved for Himself is not to be diverted to any other purpose than that which He has specified. Let none feel at liberty to retain their tithe, to use according to their own judgment. They are not to use it for themselves in an emergency, nor to apply it as they see fit even in what they may regard as the Lord’s work” (*Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 101).

## **4. The Sabbath is God’s reserved portion out of the week day cycle. The tithe is God’s reserved portion out of the weekly income.**

- a. “ ‘. . . the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God’ ” (Exodus 20:10).

- b. "God reserved to Himself a specified portion of man's time and of his means, and no man could, without guilt, appropriate either for his own interests" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 525, 526).

**5. The Sabbath calls to mind the fact of God as Creator  
The tithe calls to mind the fact of God as Owner.**

- a. "For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it" (Exodus 20:11).
- b. "The system of tithes and offerings was intended to impress the minds of men with a great truth—that God is the source of every blessing to His creatures, and that to Him man's gratitude is due for the good gifts of His providence" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 525).

**6. The Sabbath was given to all mankind. The tithing system was given to all mankind.**

- a. "And He said to them, 'The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath' " (Mark 2:27, 28).
- b. "All men have been bought with this infinite price. By pouring the whole treasury of heaven into this world, by giving us in Christ all heaven, God has purchased the will, the affections, the mind, the soul, of every human being. Whether believers or unbelievers, all men are the Lord's property. All are called to do service for Him, and the manner in which they have met this claim, all will be required to render an account at the great judgment day" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 326).

**7. The Sabbath will endure throughout all eternity. The tithing principle will endure throughout all eternity.**

- a. " 'For as the new heavens and the new earth Which I will make shall remain before Me,' says the Lord, 'So shall your descendants and your name remain. And it shall come to pass That from one New Moon to another, And from one Sabbath to another, All flesh shall come to worship before Me,' says the Lord" (Isaiah 66:22, 23).
- b. "The special system of tithing was founded upon a principle which is as enduring as the law of God" (*Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 67).

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\*Quoted in Matthew Sleeth, *24/6: A Prescription for a Healthier, Happier Life* (Carol Stream, Ill.: Tyndale, 2012).

# THE OFFERING

*“I like to give willingly; when I give willingly,  
I enjoy it so much I give again.” \**

—Anonymous

## **1. The offering is a part of the redemptive process.**

- a. “ ‘If anyone of the common people sins unintentionally by doing something against any of the commandments of the Lord in anything which ought not to be done, and is guilty, or if his sin which he has committed comes to his knowledge, then he shall bring as his offering a kid of the goats, a female without blemish, for his sin which he has committed’ ” (Leviticus 4:27, 28).
- b. “Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation” (Hebrews 9:28).

## **2. The offering is associated with the acts of worship.**

- a. “Give to the Lord, O families of the peoples, Give to the Lord glory and strength. Give to the Lord the glory due His name” (Psalms 96:7, 8).
- b. “And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh” (Matthew 2:11).

## **3. The giving of an offering is the natural response from a heart of grateful love.**

- a. “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” (John 3:16).
- b. “At last an angel descended from heaven, opened the massive door, and bade the patriarch and his household go forth upon the earth and take with them every living thing. In the joy of their release Noah did not forget Him by whose gracious care they had been preserved. His first act after leaving the ark was to build an altar and offer from every kind of clean beast and fowl a sacrifice, thus manifesting his gratitude to God for deliverance and his faith in Christ, the great sacrifice” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 105, 106).

#### **4. The offering must be given cheerfully and voluntarily.**

- a. "So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7).
- b. "The Lord will not accept an offering that is made unwillingly, grudgingly" (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 285).

#### **5. The amount of offering given must compare favorably with the light and blessing received.**

- a. "But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more" (Luke 12:48).
- b. "The principle laid down by Christ is that the gifts and offerings should be in proportion to the light and blessings enjoyed" (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 392).

#### **6. The offering must be given first.**

- a. "Honor the Lord with your possessions, And with the firstfruits of all your increase" (Proverbs 3:9).
- b. "Not only does the Lord claim the tithe as His own, but He tells us how it should be reserved for Him. He says, 'Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase.' This does not teach that we are to spend our means on ourselves, and bring to the Lord the remnant, even though it should be otherwise an honest tithe. Let God's portion be first set apart" (*Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 81).

#### **7. The offering must be given systematically.**

- a. "On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come" (1 Corinthians 16:2).
- b. "They are not to bring a yearly gift merely, but should also freely present a weekly and monthly offering before the Lord. This work is left to the people, for it is to be to them a weekly, monthly, living test" (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 237).

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\*"Christian Quotes on Tithing, Finances, Money and Stewardship," <http://dailychristianquote.com/dcqmoney.html> (accessed September 25, 2013).

# SACRIFICE

*“Without sacrifice, true love is incomprehensible.” \**

*—Toba Beta*

**1. To sacrifice is to be disadvantaged that others might be advantaged. It is to suffer loss, that others might experience gain.**

- a. “For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Corinthians 5:21).
- b. “Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ” (Philippians 3:8).

**2. A sacrifice does not increase, but decreases.**

- a. “Then Aaron lifted his hand toward the people, blessed them, and came down from offering the sin offering, the burnt offering, and peace offerings. . . . And fire came out from before the Lord and consumed the burnt offering and the fat on the altar. When all the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces” (Leviticus 9:22, 24).
- b. “I saw that a sacrifice did not increase, but it decreased and was consumed” (*Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 60).

**3. In the original sacrificial ceremony, the sacrifice was slain.**

- a. “ ‘If anyone of the common people sins unintentionally by doing something against any of the commandments of the Lord in anything which ought not to be done, and is guilty, or if his sin which he has committed comes to his knowledge, then he shall bring as his offering a kid of the goats, a female without blemish, for his sin which he has committed’ ” (Leviticus 4:27, 28).
- b. “And he shall lay his hand on the head of the sin offering, and kill the sin offering at the place of the burnt offering” (Leviticus 4:29).

**4. Christ’s sacrifice is the only true sacrifice on record.**

- a. “And they sang a new song, saying: ‘You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation. . . .’ ” (Revelation 5:9).

- b. "Jesus does not require of man any real sacrifice, for whatever we are asked to surrender is only that which we are better off without. We are only letting go the lesser, the more worthless, for the greater, the more valuable" (*Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 300).

**5. What we term sacrifice is only light affliction. We lose only to gain.**

- a. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. . . ." (2 Corinthians 4:17).
- b. "How little is required of us! How small the sacrifice that we can make in comparison with that which our divine Lord made for us!" (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 544).

**6. It is through sacrifice that love is revealed.**

- a. "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" (John 3:16).
- b. "Love is the underlying principle of God's government in heaven and earth, and it must be the foundation of the Christian's character. This alone can make and keep him steadfast. This alone can enable him to withstand trial and temptation. And love will be revealed in sacrifice" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 49).

**7. It is through sacrifice which causes suffering that we learn obedience and are qualified to reign with Christ.**

- a. ". . . though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered" (Hebrews 5:8).
- b. "If we endure, We shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us" (2 Timothy 2:12).
- c. "I saw that some hardly know as yet what self-denial or sacrifice is, or what it is to suffer for the truth's sake. But none will enter heaven without making a sacrifice" (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 126).

# SELFISHNESS

*“We all should rise, above the clouds of ignorance, narrowness, and selfishness.” \**

—Booker T. Washington

## **1. Selfishness is the mother of all sin.**

- a. “Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like” (Galatians 5:19–21).
- b. “Another book was opened, wherein were recorded the sins of those who profess the truth. Under the general heading of selfishness came every other sin” (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 4, p. 384).

## **2. Selfishness corrodes every godly virtue.**

- a. “Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth” (1 Corinthians 5:8).
- b. “But just as long as the church suffer selfishness to dry up kindly sympathy, and tender, thoughtful love and interest for their brethren, every virtue will be corroded” (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 519).

## **3. Selfishness corrupts faith and weakens moral power.**

- a. “For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith” (1 John 5:4).
- b. “It is the selfish love of the world which corrupts the faith of the professed followers of Christ, and makes them weak in moral power” (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 478).

## **4. Selfishness gives rise to covetousness which is idolatry.**

- a. “Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry” (Colossians 3:5).
- b. “The tenth commandment strikes at the very root of all sins, prohibiting the selfish desire, from which springs the sinful act. He who in obedience to God’s law refrains from

indulging even a sinful desire for that which belongs to another will not be guilty of an act of wrong toward his fellow creatures” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 309).

## **5. Selfishness is the spirit of Satan.**

- a. “ ‘How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: “I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High” ’” (*Isaiah 14:12–14*).
- b. “The spirit of liberality is the spirit of heaven. The spirit of selfishness is the spirit of Satan” (*Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 19).

## **6. Selfishness is an abomination to God, and a disqualifier from eternal life.**

- a. “These six things the Lord hates, Yes, seven are an abomination to Him: A proud look, A lying tongue, Hands that shed innocent blood, A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that are swift in running to evil, A false witness who speaks lies, And one who sows discord among brethren” (*Proverbs 6:16–19*).
- b. “Selfishness is abomination in the sight of God and holy angels” (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 2, p. 551).
- c. “None can enter heaven whose characters are defiled by the foul blot of selfishness” (*Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 22).

## **7. Selfishness is the prevailing sin in the church.**

- a. “But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God. . . .” (2 Timothy 3:1–4).
- b. “Selfishness, the sin of the world, has become the prevailing sin of the church” (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 204).

# COVENANT RELATION WITH GOD

*“A covenant made with God should be regarded not as restrictive but as protective.” \**

—Russell M Nelson

- 1. A covenant relation is a requisite for Christian fellowship.**
  - a. “Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?” (Amos 3:3).
  - b. “But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him” (Hebrews 11:6).
  
- 2. It is walking with God in covenant relation that brings us into fellowship with Christ and with one another.**
  - a. “But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin” (1 John 1:7).
  - b. “Enoch became a preacher of righteousness, making known to the people what God had revealed to him. Those who feared the Lord sought out this holy man, to share his instruction and his prayers” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 86).
  
- 3. It is through the body of Christ that all the blessings of heaven flow.**
  - a. “Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. . . . Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common. . . .” (Acts 2:41, 44).
  - b. “And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Galatians 3:29).
  
- 4. People who love each other cannot be prevented from a covenant relation.**
  - a. “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” (John 3:16).
  - b. “In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins” (1 John 4:10).

**5. God entered a covenant relation with man before the foundation of the world.**

- a. “. . . knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you. . . .” (1 Peter 1:18–20).
- b. “God did not ordain that sin should exist, but He foresaw its existence and made provision to meet the terrible emergency. So great was His love for the world that He covenanted to give His only-begotten Son, ‘that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’ John 3:16.” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 22).

**6. He ratified His covenant with us by the blood of His Son.**

- a. “In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins” (Colossians 1:14).
- b. “How tender, how true God is with us! He has given us in Christ the richest blessings. Through Him He has put His signature upon the contract He has made with us” (*Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 91).

**7. The faith that saves, leads into covenant relation with God.**

- a. “. . . your faith has made you well” (Luke 18:42).
- b. “Many hold faith as an opinion. Saving faith is a transaction by which those who receive Christ join themselves in covenant relation with God. Genuine faith is life” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 347).

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\*“Prepare for the Blessings of the Temple,” <http://www.lds.org/liahona/2010/10/prepare-for-the-blessings-of-the-temple?lang=eng> (accessed September 25, 2013).

# STEWARDSHIP PRAYER

BY JOHN MATHEWS

Dear God,

You created me and I worshiped You.

You asked me to care for the work of Your hands.

Then I took a wrong turn.

Your plan was to rescue me from myself and the prince of this world.

At times I did not know I was lost. You gave your life to buy me back so I could again worship You.

Now, You have entrusted to me again responsibility managing Your grace.

To do this, I have nowhere to go but Jesus. This place is not my home.

To do this, I have no help but the power of my Lord. This world is empty.

To do this, I have no guidance but the Holy Spirit, unseen. I go by faith.

Trusting You, I manage, I serve, I worship.

I possess a stewardship to live for my Lord.

Amen

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NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION

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