

STEWARDSHIP PRINCIPLES

In many churches, “thank you” is not said often enough—leaders, volunteers, or one another. Yet gratitude is one of the simplest and most powerful expressions of stewardship. It costs nothing, but its impact is immeasurable.

Several principles help guide this perspective:

1. *People need to feel valued.* Expressing gratitude affirms their service and strengthens their sense of purpose.
2. *Stewardship includes more than money.* It invites us to use all that God has given—time, abilities, and resources—for His glory.
3. *Stewardship is ultimately about God.* All acts of stewardship are responses to His grace: all of me in response to all of God.

In the end, stewardship is not measured merely by what we give, but by how we live. It is the daily expression of a heart that recognizes God as the source of every blessing and responds with intentional gratitude. When we begin to see every moment, every resource, and every relationship as entrusted to us by God, our lives naturally become offerings of praise.

When gratitude becomes a way of life, stewardship is no longer something we do occasionally—it becomes who we are. Whether through a kind word, a generous gift, a visit to someone in need, or a simple “thank you,” each act reflects the character of Christ in us. May we, therefore, live with open hands and thankful hearts—faithfully managing all that He has entrusted to us—until the day we hear His words, “Well done, good and faithful servant” (Matthew 25:23).



MIKE BAUTISTA ON UNSPLASH



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Stewardship: An Attitude of Gratitude

By Dr. Erika Puni

While stewardship is often understood in terms of finances—money, tithe, and offerings—Scripture presents a much broader view (Genesis 1–2). In the creation account we read, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule...” (Genesis 1:26, NIV). This vision of stewardship includes caring for all forms and aspects of life: the world with its fauna and flora, the earth’s natural resources (including finances), the family, and even time itself (the Sabbath).

Biblically, stewardship encompasses Christ’s rule over the entire life of the disciple and our privilege as stewards to manage His resources in the world. It is, fundamentally, our loving response to God (Matthew 22:37).

At its heart, stewardship begins with gratitude—an acknowledgment that God is the Giver of “every good and perfect gift” (James 1:17). But the question that the psalmist asks needs to be answered. “What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits toward me?” (Psalm 116:12).

I want to suggest to you that the answer is in Matthew 25:40, “Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”



MARCOS PALLO PRADO ON UNSPLASH

STEWARDSHIP IS REVOLUTIONARY GENEROSITY. IT INVOLVES THE 7 T'S:
TIME, TEMPLE, TALENT, TREASURE, TRUST IN GOD, THEOLOGY, AND TESTIMONY.

One of the best ways to render our gratitude to God is when we extend grace and good will toward others. Having an attitude of gratitude means consistently looking beyond yourself and finding people around you to affirm and express thanks for the ways they benefit you.

A faithful steward is one where gratitude is not occasional, but intentional and visible.

GRATITUDE AND “THANK YOU”

The story of the woman who anointed Jesus with expensive perfume during the week before His crucifixion offers a compelling picture of biblical stewardship. “While [Jesus] was

eating, a woman came in with a beautiful alabaster jar of expensive perfume and poured it over his head. The disciples were indignant when they saw this. ... But Jesus, aware of this, replied, ‘Why criticize this woman for doing such a good thing to me?’” (Matthew 26:7-10).

Her act reflects hospitality, gratitude, and sacrificial love. If we understand this woman to be one who had experienced Christ’s healing and restoration (Luke 8:36-

50), then her offering becomes a deeply personal expression of thankfulness—stewardship in its purest form.

Gratitude, then, is not merely a feeling; it is an expressed behavior that flows out of our own relationship with God. It is seen in what we say, what we do, and what we give.

GRATITUDE IN PRACTICE: THINGS YOU CAN DO

Cultivating a spirit of gratitude does not require grand gestures. It is often expressed through simple, consistent acts that reflect a heart surrendered to God. As Matthew 25:35-36 says, “For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.” Here are some simple ways these ideas can be applied to our lives.

1. Be active in community services

If your church has a community service ministry, you can work with them to help people who are struggling. There may be people who can’t afford their rent or the expensive winter

coats and other wraps that they need. Financial donations or good-condition items right out of your own closet that you no longer need can make a big difference for people who do need them. If there is no active community service at your church, then you may be the catalyst to initiate a center of influence in your neighborhood.

2. Visit people who are sick

Look for opportunities to visit and minister to those who are sick. When people are recovering from surgery or have a disability, you can visit and offer to help with cooking or do chores that they are unable to do. You can have an active nursing home visitation ministry.

3. Be active in prison ministries

Many inmates in local prisons would appreciate a listening ear. Many of them are alone, with no relatives nearby, and no one cares about their situation. Others are seeking spiritual answers. But beyond just teaching them about the gospel according to John or Matthew, you need to open the “gospel according to YOU.”

4. Send Thank You notes

Gratitude to God is not limited to offerings. Members can express gratitude to God by sending emails, cards, or a short letter of appreciation to members in your congregation for what they do in the church. Rarely do people who volunteer in

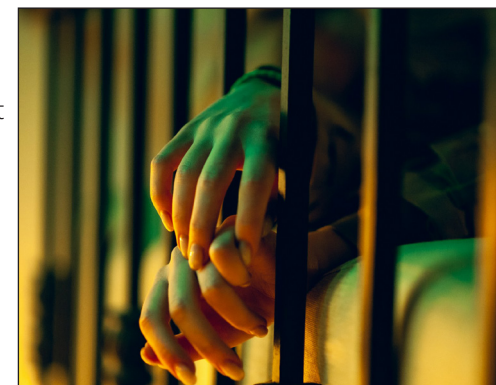
the audio-visual department or the children’s division (or many other positions) get a word of appreciation for the work they do.

5. Celebrate and honor faithfulness

Make it a habit to celebrate what God is doing through others. Participate in moments of appreciation, recognize long-term service, and support efforts that honor those who have faithfully served in your local church. Gratitude strengthens community and inspires continued commitment.



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