

The 4th “T” in Stewardship: Developing our God-Given Talents

Here’s another candidate for that “4th T” in stewardship: honest (Luke 16:1-13 and Matthew 25:14-30). Honesty is an important part of stewardship in another way too. *“Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought,”* the Bible says (1 Corinthians....), *“but to think with sober judgment according to the measure of faith that God has assigned”* (Romans 12:3). It’s a strong message in a society that was at that time based on shame-and-honour exchanges, a way for the Apostle to recommend that everyone would be wise to choose “the lower place” so that the Lord would call them up higher. In our day when social rules are different, we need to hear this message about being socially responsible for the use of our gifts in a different way. Rather than “Knowledge is Power” perhaps our mantra needs to be “Knowledge Brings Responsibility.” That goes for knowing how the corona virus works so we can support the efforts to find vaccines, as well as knowing how masking works so we can help protect each other and reduce the spread of the disease to the vulnerable. The whole chain is linked by honesty.

One of the ways we practice stewardship is by regularly making an honest assessment before God of the ways we are using the spiritual gifts and talents with which God has blessed us. A questionnaire is included in this edition of the Messenger to assist you if this is that time for you! Its OK to keep the results completely to yourself—even knowing more clearly your interests, your gifts, your abilities, and seeing ways they can be used in the kingdom of God is helpful! But if you are ready to take the next step and let your church family know too—send in the completed questionnaire to our Admin Assistant Kaylyn Scrivens and see what the Holy Spirit might do....

You may feel its time to dig more deeply into your spiritual gifts than the questionnaire. The Stephen Ministries Team is offering an eight-session course called “Discovering God’s Vision for Your Life: You and Your Spiritual Gifts.” The outline and a sampler of the material is included with the questionnaire. Young and old alike are welcome to participate in this course. Send Kaylyn an email or give her a call to express your interest and whether you would prefer to participate on-line or in-person.

Deeper knowledge of our God-given gifts and talents as we develop them in service brings deeper knowledge of God. Our faith grows, our hope strengthens, our joy increases, and most of all, our love expands. Let us pray:

Gracious and Holy God, give us diligence to seek you, wisdom to perceive you, and patience to wait for you. Grant us, o God, a mind to meditate on you; eyes to behold you; ears to listen for your word; a heart to love you; and a life to proclaim you; through the power of the Spirit of Jesus Christ our Saviour and Lord. Amen (ELW p. 76).