

StewardLife LESSON 21



STORY:

Mother was busy getting ready to make another trip to the mall to shop for Christmas presents. "Where's my shopping list?" she asked.

"Haven't seen it," Billy shouted from the family room.

"Not on the table," dad said from the kitchen.

Reaching into her pocket for her gloves, mom discovered the list. She took it out and looked at what had been crossed off the list so far. "This list is much too long," she thought to herself. "Finishing the shopping will take hours and much more money that we have in the Christmas account."

As she poured herself a take-along mug of coffee she saw Kathy sitting at the kitchen table writing. "What are you writing?" mom asked her.

"I'm just making another list," Kathy replied.

Mom became furious. "You kids think you can have everything in the world! Don't you ever stop adding to your lists?" mom said loudly as she grabbed the long list from Kathy. She began reading the new list: Our family...Tiger the cat...my stuffed dolphin...a cozy bed....

"This isn't a gift list!" mom said.

"Yes it is," Kathy replied, "it's my list of gifts God has given me."

EXERCISE:

Make two lists. On one list, like Kathy's, place those things we find in Scripture that God has provided—not only physically, but spiritually. On the other list, place all the things you can think of listed in Scripture that God has saved you from. Which list is most precious?

INSIGHT OUT:

One of the ways to look at God's gifts to you is to see them as “personal assets.” Working with Hispanics on this concept it was discovered that the term “assets” in Spanish was limited to accounting. In searching for an equivalent to the English concept, the Spanish word *emplear* (“put to work”) surfaced. Using this verb as the basis for a phrase to describe gifts as assets communicated gifts as “potential energy” that needed to be “put to work.” Consider this new concept drawn from Spanish as you consider the gifts God gives you to use in your StewardLife. What God gives you can “go to work” for the Lord not only in the church but in the community as well.

EXERCISE:

Evaluate how your congregation use the potential in its people. Is planning followed by action? There's risk in working a plan. Nearly every great congregation plan seems that it does not have the resources in people to bring it to fruition—but is that actually true? If people were actually turned loose to use their gifts, things might happen, and that requires management. That's the challenge! If a plan is not big enough to demand faith and work, then it does not need God's divine power to accomplish it. It is not a plan in which God will be seen through people. How could your congregation's use of people's assets be improved?

This site is maintained through The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Foundation, Stewardship Ministry.
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