

StewardLife LESSON 22



STORY:

Darryl had agreed to rent a boat with three other men. They would be sailing off shore near Seattle. The agreement was that they would share the catch of crab the boat hauled in. The captain had told the men they would have good success, but they never imagined the result.

When Darryl returned home, he brought with him a half-barrel containing over 150 Dungeness crab (worth \$4.00 each at current market prices). It certainly seemed like a successful trip until Darryl realized that the great catch had to be cooked. He also realized that he would have to give much of it away. Darryl spent most of the next two days processing and delivering his abundant catch. By the time it was all over, what Darryl had expected would be an exciting boating adventure, because of overabundant success, had turned into two stressful days.

EXERCISE:

Think of a time in your life or in the life of someone you know when you experienced too much of a good thing. Today, what seems to be overabundant in your life and what seems to be lacking?

INSIGHT OUT:

Read Luke 5:4-9. What happened to Peter and friends is almost like what happened to Darryl. There's no doubt about God's ability to give us more than we can use. But that's the story of the StewardLife. The more we manage well, the more God will give. He promises it in many places in Scripture. (Jeremiah 33:8-9; Malachi 3:10b-12; Luke 6: 38) Why would He do that? He wants us to be the distributors of His grace and blessings to the whole world in His name.

Read Philippians 4:11-13. Paul learned to be content because of his overwhelming spiritual riches. His physical life had huge ups and downs. Yet he lived the StewardLife in serving as a conduit of God's provision. His satisfaction and contentment were in being the pipeline that carried immeasurable blessings from God to those around him.

EXERCISE:

Our dinner table seats eight. Last Christmas as we all sat down to dinner, there was so much food that we had to bring up a card table from downstairs to hold all the serving dishes.

As you take your place this weekend for worship, say your quiet entrance prayer, but then lift your eyes and notice how full this congregation's table is. See the baptismal font, the crosses, the Lord's Table set on the altar, the hymnals, the Bibles, the people—all blessings that come from God's grace.

Now glance out the window and picture some of the people outside the church who know little or nothing about the blessings of salvation. To whom in your neighborhood, community or world can you bring a taste of the feast spread before you? And how can you deliver it?

STORY:

One congregation has quarterly meetings of voters. More often than not, the meetings feature spirited debates about a variety of issues before the membership. Once, in the middle of a particularly difficult discussion, a new member stood to inquire, "Has anyone ever looked at all these divergent opinions as God providing for us a wealth of new ideas?"

INSIGHT OUT:

The person living the StewardLife looks for God's gifts in unusual places. Even in the midst of a heated debate, God can be providing new direction. Perhaps everyone is right, and all the ideas need to be put into operation to extend ministry. Looking at the world with a steward's eyes can change dramatically the perception of what is wealth—what is abundance!

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