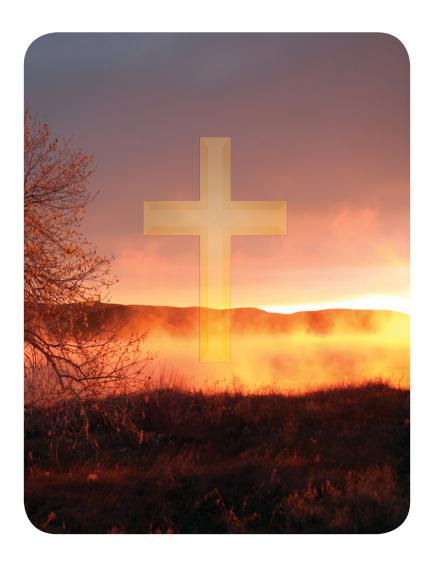




Living Each Day as a Steward!



By God's grace, we are given the high honor of being his stewards. In Genesis, God has given us a special role in his creation. God has charged us with being the caretakers of all that he has created.

Devotional Meditations

Parish Publishing, LLC
PO Box 1561 ● New Canaan, CT 06840 ● 888-320-5576
www.parishpublishing.org
Copyright © All rights reserved.

Special thanks to R. Chewning

Table of Contents

The Steward's Identity		Page
Opportunity Knocks	Sunday	3
Faithfully Using God's Gifts	Monday	4
Sowing and Reaping	Tuesday	5
Firstfruits Giving	Wednesday	6
Being Content	Thursday	7
Giving God Our Best	Friday	8
Living as Servants	Saturday	9
The Steward's Purpose		
God Owns. We Manage.	Sunday	10
We Are Accountable	Monday	11
Go and Bear Fruit	Tuesday	12
Witnesses for Jesus	Wednesday	13
Devoted to God	Thursday	14
Under New Management	Friday	15
Controlling Our Time	Saturday	16
The Steward's Lifestyle		
Living with Conviction	Sunday	17
Beware of Greed	Monday	18
Not in Vain	Tuesday	19
Good Works Honor the Lord	Wednesday	20
Store Up Treasures in Heaven	Thursday	21
Seeking God's Wisdom	Friday	22
Making an Eternal Difference	Saturday	23

The Steward's Identity

Opportunity Knocks!

Scripture Reading: "...for a wide door for effective work has opened to me..." (1 Corinthians 16:9).

Paul, like us, had things he wanted to do and people he wanted to see. He told the Corinthians he wanted to come to visit them but that he would have to stay awhile in Ephesus "because a wide door for effective work [had] opened to [him]. As a true disciple of Christ, Paul knew about self-sacrifice. He had suffered much for the sake of the Gospel and even now, instead of pleasing himself, he was not going to let this opportunity for ministry pass by.

These few words offer much food for thought. Is this the time for you, like Paul, to put your own desires aside in order to be able to give donations to missionaries, to your church colleges, and to the ministry of your own church? Everywhere you look, can't you see that "a wide door for effective work has opened..."?

Perhaps you've prepared for a career in a financially rewarding field. Then you sense the call of God, calling you into fulltime Christian ministry. Not exactly the lucrative career you had in mind. This is foolish, others say; you can serve God anywhere, they tell you, and that is true, but you know that "a wide door for effective work has opened..." To serve God faithfully requires that we be ready and willing to set aside our own wants and desires, probably temporarily, and walk through that great door of opportunity.

Application: How can I prepare myself for the opportunities of service that God will place before me?

Prayer: Lord, open my heart for opportunities to serve. Amen.



Faithfully Using God's Gifts

Scripture Reading: "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace" (1 Peter 4:10).

As a body of believers, we are given many gifts. Each of us is given at least one gift (1 Corinthians 12:7). By grace, the Body of Christ is given the gifts of serving, prophesying, giving, encouraging, and leading. Although we have different gifts, they all work toward the same purpose—that of building up the Body of Christ through works of service. We are responsible to use our gifts in service to him through the church. Our work for Christ continues until God's goal, which is to unite all people "to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13), is realized

By the working of the Holy Spirit through Word and Sacrament, we are enabled to use our gifts to bless others and to build his Church here on earth. If we choose not to use our gifts, we are spurning God's gifts, robbing the church, and forcing other members to carry our loads.

Application: How can I use the gifts God has given me?

Prayer: Dear heavenly Father, I come to you as a humble servant, grateful for who you are and for all you do for me. Thank you for the opportunities I have to serve you. I pray for guidance, wisdom, and courage as I share your love with others. Lord, help me to live each day as a steward who seeks to fulfill your purpose for my life. In Jesus' precious name I pray. **Amen.**



Sowing and Reaping

Scripture Reading: "The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully" (2 Corinthians 9:6).

When we think of sowing and reaping, we think of farming. A farmer who wants a corn harvest must plant corn. If the farmer wants to harvest a big corn crop, he must plant a lot of seeds. In the spiritual sense, we also reap what we sow. If we sow kindness, we reap kindness. Practically speaking as well, if we spend time in God's Word and participate often in the Sacraments, we will grow spiritually. If we work hard and manage our money wisely, we are likely to have our needs met and have plenty to give to the Lord's work.

God promises that, as we sow generously, he will pour out his grace on us that we may "abound in every good work" (2 Corinthians 9:8). If we give generously to others and for the building of God's kingdom, he will find ways to bless us. We can never out give God. Jesus tells us to "give, and it will be given to you" (Luke 6:38). Our giving will reap blessings.

Application: What seeds will I sow today?

Prayer: Lord, thank you for your promise to me that, as I faithfully sow my gifts and resources, you will bless my efforts. Help me to remember always that you are the source of all good things. Forgive me when I fail to show my gratitude for who you are and all that you do for me. In Jesus' holy name I pray. **Amen.**



Firstfruits Giving

Scripture Reading: "Freely you have received, freely give" (Matthew 10:8).

Through faith, we acknowledge God as the source and owner of all things. As God's stewards, we should ask the question, "God, what do you want me to do with your money?" God's Word clearly directs us to give the first portion of what we receive to him. In Proverbs 3:9 we read, "Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your [income]." The first part of all that we receive belongs to the Lord. The apostle Paul tells us that everyone has a personal responsibility to give regularly according to the blessings he or she receives. "On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper..." (1 Corinthians 16:2). The first portion we give should be to our local church. Other gifts and offerings can go to other Christian causes as we see fit.

Through our giving, we demonstrate our gratitude to God for who he is and what he has done for us through his Son Jesus. Giving is an act of faith and an act of worship. Giving puts our love for the Lord into action. Through the working of the Holy Spirit, we can give to God our first and best.

Application: How can I make my giving a priority?

Prayer: Lord, I thank you for the most indescribable gift, the gift of grace through your Son, Jesus. Help me to be more generous. In Jesus' precious name I pray. **Amen.**



Being Content

Scripture Reading: "...for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content" (Philippians 4:11).

Paul had learned the secret of contentment, of being satisfied with every circumstance in which God placed him. Paul was in prison when he wrote these words. He had been at the point of death several times. If anyone could have said he was in need or want, it was Paul. He had suffered much, yet, with God's strength, he was content. Like Paul, we too, can learn contentment. The secret of contentment is gratitude for what God gives.

Because many people are infatuated with things and the desire to acquire more and more, they fall victim to discontentment. There is a correlation between "having more" and "wanting more." Even though we are surrounded by material abundance, we don't believe that we have enough so we are discontent. There are two ways you can strive to have enough. You can try to accumulate more, or you can learn to be satisfied with less. If you pursue the first way, accumulating more, you will discover more is never enough. Those who have followed that route have found that money can't buy lasting satisfaction. As hard as it is, you need to curb your desire for more by concentrating on the blessings you do have. Being satisfied with less and being willing to use what you have in God-pleasing ways are attitudes that contribute to your contentment.

Application: Have I learned the secret of contentment?

Prayer: Lord, thank you for all my blessings. In Christ I pray. Amen.



Giving God Our Best

Scripture Reading: "Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain" (1 Corinthians 15:58).

God wants our total devotion and commitment. Scripture is clear that God expects and deserves our best. We are to "walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God" (Colossians 1:10). He does not appreciate laziness, idleness, or fruitlessness. He wants our time, talents, and treasures to make an eternal difference in the lives of others. God calls us to bear fruit (John 15:16), to serve (Ephesians 6:7), to obey (John 3:36), to love (Matthew 22:37-38), to give (Matthew 10:8), and to witness (Ephesians 3:7).

Wherever God places us, we are called to be in ministry for him. We are the instruments through which he works. Through our hands and feet, he brings love and care to the needy; through our lips, he tells others of his life-saving Gospel; and through our minds, hearts, and checkbooks, he supports the work of the Church. As God enables us, we can give ourselves fully to the work of the Lord.

Application: How can I become a better instrument for the work of the Lord?

Prayer: Lord, help me live a life worthy of you. Amen.



Living as Servants

Scripture Reading: "...even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:28).

Jesus lived a perfect life of service to those he came to save. His ministry of service for us culminated in his death on the Cross. His death is the ultimate act of loving service.

Because we have an inborn desire to serve ourselves, serving others is not natural. Yet, as we remember our Lord's supreme act of love on the Cross, we are inspired to be servants. It is love that motivates us to be servers rather than people who want to be served. Our desire to love and serve our neighbors is our response to the Lord's love for us. We love because he loved us first (1 John 4:19). To love is to serve; service is the natural outcome of love. Love is what gives us the energy and desire to serve. When our hearts are filled with gratitude for who God is and what he's done for us, we serve with joy. Awed and grateful, we are compelled to share his love by "living as servants." As we live each day as stewards our eyes and hearts are opened so that we are made aware of the needs of others.

Application: How am I serving? What are some ways I can serve more?

Prayer: Dear Lord, help me to be humble and compassionate and to seek opportunities to serve people in your name. Help me to use my time and talents in your service. In Jesus' precious name I pray. **Amen.**





The Steward's Purpose

God Owns. We Manage.

Scripture Reading: "'The silver is mine, and the gold is mine,' declares the Lord of hosts" (Haggai 2:8).

A sthe legal owners of so many things, it is sometimes difficult for us to acknowledge that God is the real and ultimate owner of everything. He is the owner; we are merely managers or caretakers of God's property. King David wrote, "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein" (Psalm 24:1). God is the landlord. We are the tenants. We possess, we occupy, we use, we manage—but we don't own.

Scripture tells us, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). Out of nothing, God created life. The world and all who live in it are gifts from God. He gives us the ability to produce wealth in order that we may sustain our lives (Deuteronomy 8:18). He gives us strength, wisdom, knowledge, and eternal life through his only Son.

God made man to "have dominion over...all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth" (Genesis 1:26). God puts us in charge of his kingdom, making us, his stewards, responsible for all the gifts he has entrusted to us.

Application: How can I be a better steward of God's creation?

Prayer: Dear Jesus, grant me wisdom so I can be a faithful steward of your creation. In your precious name I pray. **Amen.**



We Are Accountable

Scripture Reading: "Well done, good and faithful servant!" (Matthew 25:23).

From the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30), we learn that our financial lives are important to God and that he wants us to multiply the gifts he entrusts to us. In the parable, a Master (Jesus) entrusted three servants with different amounts of talents before going on a journey. After he returned, he asked each to give an account of what he had done with what he had been given. The master commended the two servants who faithfully and wisely invested the talents given to them. Because they were faithful in their efforts to please and serve him, the master told each of them, "Well done, good and faithful servant!"

Just as Jesus held the servants in the parable accountable, he holds us accountable for what he entrusts to us. This parable leads us to the conclusion that wise management of our money, along with all our gifts, pleases the Lord, and poor management greatly displeases him. When he comes again, "... then each of us will give an account of himself to God" (Romans 14:12). We will want to hear, "Well done, good and faithful servant!"

Application: How can I be more faithful in the use of the money and gifts God gives to me?

Prayer: Dear heavenly Father, as I invest the money that you have entrusted to me, grant me your wisdom to make it grow so that I will have more to use in your service. In your precious name I pray. **Amen.**



Go and Bear Fruit

Scripture Reading: "I am the Vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in Me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5).

Just as branches of plants remain alive and bear fruit when connected to the vine, our stewardship exists because we are connected to Jesus. When we are connected to Jesus through spending time in his Word and participating in the Sacraments, we will be fruitful. When we abide in Jesus, we minister to the needs of others as Jesus, the Vine, did during his life on earth.

We cannot be fruitful stewards apart from Christ. Like the apple, which stays red and juicy for a long time after being picked, appears to be as healthy as when it hung on the tree, we, too, may look and act healthy, but, apart from a true connection with Christ, we will wrinkle up and rot as surely as an apple in a bowl on a table. Some of us may try to maintain an outward connection with him by attending church once in a while, but, even if we are regular in our church attendance and are actively involved in the work and mission of the church, without faith linking us with the Person of Christ, our busyness is fruitless. "Apart from Me," Christ said, "you can do nothing" (John 15:5), nor are our works even acceptable to God without faith in him (Hebrews 11:6; Isaiah 64:6).

Application: Is my life bearing fruit? How can I tell?

Prayer: Lord, help me to bear much fruit in your name. Amen.



Witnesses for Jesus

Scripture Reading: "Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us" (2 Corinthians 5:20).

God wants us to be devoted to telling others about his precious Son, Jesus, who suffered and died and rose again so that we could have eternal life with him. We are called to be Christ's ambassadors. The Great Commission that Jesus gave to his disciples is our commission as well.

God "desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2:4), and he gives us, his stewards, the privilege and responsibility to share that truth, the Gospel, with all people. He uses us as his hands, feet, and mouth. We are his instruments through which others hear and learn about Jesus and his love, grace, and mercy. By word and actions, we are to acquaint those around us with the wonders of God's love and redeeming power of his Son's death upon the Cross. Through our prayers and financial support, we help to spread God's Word to all parts of the world.

Let us be mindful that, as we live each day as stewards, we are "witnessing for Jesus."

Application: Are there neighbors, fellow workers, or friends with whom I can share my testimony?

Prayer: Dear Jesus, place within me confidence and boldness to proclaim the Good News to those around me. **Amen.**



Devoted to God

Scripture Reading: "No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money" (Matthew 6:24).

Jesus said that we will either serve and love the Lord or the things of this world. We can't live with the disclaimer that says, "Lord, I'll serve you spiritually, but not with my money." For with such a statement, we are making a choice not to serve and love God but money. Loving money is not dependent upon how much money we have. We can have a lot of money and not love it, or we can have little and love it to death. We determine whether we will use money in a proper and God-pleasing way or for improper desires and things.

The love of money is one of the more subtle problems. An addiction to drinking or smoking is very obvious, whereas the love of money may not be as apparent. We may foolishly think money and possessions can give us the happiness and security we seek. When money is overly important, we lose sight of what we need most (a Savior) and the lasting joy and contentment Jesus brings. True joy and security can be found only in the Lord. Through the working of the Holy Spirit, we can put money in its right perspective.

Application: How can I show the Lord that I love him through the use of my money?

Prayer: Lord, grant me freedom from the bondage and power money and possessions can exert over my life. Amen.



Under New Management

Scripture Reading: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come (2 Corinthians 5:17).

In Christ, we are new creations. What does that mean? In Christ, we discover the meaning of life, and we no longer need to search for something to fill and satisfy the emptiness of our hearts. It means that we are now "under new management." We live under new rules. Rather than obeying the dictates of the world, the devil, and the flesh, we live under God's authority. We have a new perspective and live for new purposes. Our thoughts and the desires of our hearts take on new direction. We begin to live in the light of eternity. Turning away from a life of rebellion against God, we now desire to know him and to please him. Our new purpose in life is to glorify and enjoy God.

With this new direction and purpose, we continue to grow each day. Because we are not perfect, we have a lot of growing and maturing to do. There is a race to be run and a crown to be won. We strive to live each day as stewards pleasing God as we become more like him.

Application: How can I more effectively demonstrate that I am a new creation?

Prayer: Lord, thank you for making me a new person. Help me to seek you rather than the pleasures of this world. **Amen.**



Controlling Our Time

Scripture Reading: "My times are in your hand" (Psalm 31:15).

Today is a very important day to make our lives meaningful. Yesterday is history, and tomorrow may never come. At some point in life, we start asking, "Where did the months and the years go?" Time is an irreplaceable commodity that God grants us, a precious period of opportunity for fulfilling the purposes for which we exist. Living each day as stewards, we realize the importance of time and use it properly. Wise use of time starts by living a life for Christ. If our time, energy, and focus are only on material wealth or other worldly successes, our time has been wasted.

While we must spend time providing for our needs, our life's purpose must be to do the Lord's work. We were born to serve our Creator. Jesus, who "did not come to be served, but to serve" (Matthew 20:28), is our model. We are called to bring people to Christ and serve others based on gifts given to us by God. Ignoring God's plan for our lives will result in anguish and despair.

As God's stewards, we are called to be good managers of God's gifts, especially time since it is irreplaceable. God, who has given us time, will also guide us in using it wisely.

Application: Identify and change my time-wasting activities.

Prayer: Lord, forgive my sin of procrastination. Amen.





The Steward's Lifestyle

Living with Conviction

Scripture Reading: "Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving" (Colossians 2:6).

Perhaps at one time we had little more than passing interest in spiritual things. Then, as the Holy Spirit worked in us through God's Holy Word and Sacraments, our commitment deepened. An intimate relationship with Jesus developed and was manifested by the use of our time, talents, and money for his purposes. We willingly started devoting time daily to the reading of God's Word as well as spending time with him in prayer. We found ourselves eager to attend weekly church services and Bible studies so we could worship the Lord and receive his nourishment. A desire to commit a generous portion of our money to the Lord through giving to our churches and to others was born in us. Our lives and blessings were turned over to God to be used in his service.

Our relationship with the Lord is God's gift to us. God calls and chooses us, and he gives us faith to follow him. May God bless and deepen our conviction for him.

Application: How can I show my conviction for the Lord?

Prayer: Dear Lord, thank you for loving me. Place within me passion and boldness to share your love with others. In Jesus' precious name I pray. **Amen.**



Beware of Greed

Scripture Reading: "Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions" (Luke 12:15).

Through the Parable of the Rich Fool (Luke 12:13-21), Jesus illustrates the foolishness of living only for ourselves. Jesus tells about a wealthy and successful farmer who needed to build bigger barns to hold his abundant crops. The farmer was interested only in his own pleasure and well-being. His goal was to become wealthy so he could eat, drink, and be merry during his retirement. He didn't acknowledge God as the provider of what he had. Because of his self-centered attitude, Jesus calls him a fool. His self-centeredness and selfishness are revealed in his repeated use of the words "I" and "my."

Excessive self-centeredness is pervasive throughout our society and the whole world, and it is a sin that plagues the Christian steward as well. St. Augustine wrote, "The beginning of all sin is the love of one's own self." By the power of the Holy Spirit, self-love is replaced by love for others, and we learn to focus more on the eternal than the temporal.

Application: Today, I will show my interest and compassion for someone else by ______.

Prayer: Dear Lord, help me be content in all things. Amen.



Not in Vain

Scripture Reading: "Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain" (2 Corinthians 6:1).

God's grace is poured out on us daily and abundantly. Daily we rejoice in our baptisms through which God's grace makes us his children. Sunday after Sunday we celebrate the Easter message of God's grace made available to us through the suffering and victory of his Son. His grace is given to our physical bodies as well as our spiritual lives as he provides "our daily bread," including "everything that has to do with the support and needs of the body" (Martin Luther).

How is it possible that we could receive this grace in vain? When we ignore the Giver of this grace, when we use his gifts for our own good rather than in service to others, and when we attribute our gifts, our abilities, our successes to ourselves, then we receive God's grace in vain.

The life of good stewardship cannot be accomplished on our own, for such an attempt not only is doomed to failure, but demonstrates our receiving "God's grace in vain." Stewardship that pleases God results when we, in response to his grace in our lives, use all the gifts he has given us to serve him by serving others.

Application: How can my life reflect that Christ's sacrifice was not in vain?

Prayer: Dear heavenly Father, help me to receive your gifts and use them in my work. In Jesus' precious name I pray. **Amen.**



Good Works Honor the Lord

Scripture Reading: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10).

As people saved by God, we show our gratitude not only by thanking and praising him with our lips but in our actions and deeds. We demonstrate our thankfulness by doing good works which he himself prepared in advance for us to do. Through his Word and Sacraments, God shares his will with us so that we know the good works that he calls us to do. Through the renewing of our minds (Romans 12:2), God not only tells us of his will, he also gives us the power to perform the tasks which he has prepared in advance for us. For those who believe, God's "great might that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 1:19-20) is available to us.

Because God reveals his will and gives us his power, we can be instruments of telling others the Good News, helping the poor and the needy, and sharing God's love with all people. By his grace, we will lead lives that follow his will and do the works that were prepared for us to do.

Application: What work has the Lord prepared for me to do today?

Prayer: Dear heavenly Father, thank you for your love and faithfulness to me. Help me to be faithful to you. Use me in your service. In Jesus' name I pray. **Amen.**



Store Up Treasures in Heaven

Scripture Reading: "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven" (Matthew 6:19-20).

Jesus tells us that temporal and worldly things have no lasting value. Because we are to be in the world but not of the world, we are warned not to store up treasures on earth. No earthly treasures will give us long-term happiness. When we accumulate more things on earth, we become more burdened with their upkeep and maintenance. Material things become a distraction. The things we own will either become worthless due to inflation, become obsolete, wear out, or be stolen. Earthly treasures have limited value and purpose.

In contrast, Jesus directs us to store up treasures in heaven that will last. We store up treasures in heaven by helping and serving others, extending God's kingdom, and living each day as a steward. When God opens our hearts and minds, he changes our desires and enables us to store up treasures in heaven. We store up treasures in heaven because we know, by God's grace, that our real home is with him.

Application: What is my special treasure to share?

Prayer: Dear Lord, help me to fix my eyes on you and not on the things of this world. Keep material things from becoming overly important to me. In Jesus' holy name I pray. **Amen.**



Seeking God's Wisdom

Scripture Reading: "Take my instruction instead of silver, and knowledge rather than choice gold, for wisdom is better than jewels, and all that you desire cannot compare with her" (Proverbs 8:10-11).

Solomon, one of the best-known Old Testament characters, taught us about the importance of wisdom. God appeared to Solomon and said, "Ask what I shall give you" (1 Kings 3:5). Solomon asked for wisdom. The Lord was so pleased that Solomon chose wisdom over wealth and a long life that he gave him not only wisdom but riches and honor. The wisdom God gave Solomon enabled him to lead a very productive and prosperous life. His Godly wisdom was both his shield and his strength.

In contrast to Godly wisdom, the wisdom of the world pulls at us to deny the will of God. Worldly wisdom leads to a life of lust, greed, and power. The wisdom of the world causes us to seek self-gratification and the pleasures of this life. God wants us to turn our backs on the wisdom of the world. Through God's Word, the Holy Spirit draws us closer to him and reveals his wisdom to us. God's wisdom will help us choose the path in life that gives us peace in this life and leads us to life eternal with him.

Application: What does God's wisdom want me to do today?

Prayer: Lord, grant me wisdom to seek and do your will. In Jesus' holy name I pray. Amen.



Making an Eternal Difference

Scripture Reading: "Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Psalm 119:105).

A re you prepared with God's help to do all that you can to help others know Jesus? Are you using your time, talents, and treasures in ways that make an eternal difference in the lives of others? To make an impact on others is not easy. Although doing the Lord's work brings much joy, it does require sacrifice. For the sake of the Gospel, we need to commit our time and energy. In addition, the Lord's work often requires us to give sacrificially. For example, the early Christians sold land and houses to meet the needs of others (Acts 2:45). The Macedonian churches gave beyond their ability to the needs of other believers (2 Corinthians 8:1-7). Just as God worked in the hearts of the Macedonians, he changes our hearts so we can become generous people.

When we commit our lives and gifts to the work of the Lord, we can make an eternal difference in the lives of others. God uses our efforts, our giving, our words, and our prayers to strengthen others. Of course, by ourselves we can do nothing. God is our source of strength and ability. We know that it is God who so "powerfully works within [us]" (Colossians 1:29).

Application: What can help me to see the needs and hurts of those around me so I can share the Gospel with them?

Prayer: Lord, grant me your strength and courage as I share the Gospel with others. In your name I pray. Amen.



Notes

 · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
 · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
 · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·

