

Stewardship Question #3 – What’s in it for me?

This doesn’t sound like a very Christian question. Surely, followers of Jesus, we are taught to give with no expectation of return. That isn’t the whole story, however. We are also taught relationship. And so, as we enter into Jesus’ life, we discover it is just as St. Paul articulated numerous times in his letters: our lives are woven into a communal body; when one rejoices, all rejoice; when one suffers, all suffer. I simply cannot give without also receiving. I also can’t give without knowing what I have already gotten. You have heard me say it before, and you will hear me again: Christians are taught to NOTICE. It is when I see my life as having received blessing that I become a source of blessing to others. It is when I become a blessing to others, that my own sense of blessedness deepens and grows.

When you give financial resources to the church, when you give your time and your energy and talent to ministry in the service of others, here are a few things that you can expect to get in return:

Abundance – there is no better way to experience ourselves as having all that we need than to give some of what we have away. Those who cling to what they have will always feel as if they are lacking, as if they don’t have enough. Those who prayerfully give out of a sense of blessing repeatedly discover that they have enough, and in fact have more than enough.

Freedom – Money can very easily become a false idol. We can get tricked into thinking that money will save our lives, that if we just have enough of it, then we will be free. The Old Testament warns repeatedly against setting material objects or material wealth as idols over and above our worship and allegiance to the Living God. Jesus warns against becoming a slave to our riches. Generosity with our money, not to mention generosity with our many other gifts, liberates us to be in right relationship with the material world around us and right relationship with the One who created us.

Faith – Stewardship is a core Christian practice. You can expect that, as you pay attention to what you have, and as you choose to give some of what you have away, your relationship with God will deepen as you become more in tune with where you see God’s blessings at work in your life and in the life of the world.

A Tax Receipt – okay, so this is more of a practical consideration☺ But it is worth noting that there is a very measurable benefit to sharing your financial resources for the sake of our shared ministry.

Whether you have given to the church your whole life (some of you tell of those pennies that you were asked to bring to your Sunday School classes for collection!) or whether you are new to the idea of stewardship, we invite you to make choices that you can feel good about, then to notice how those choices are connected to how you feel good in other aspects of your life too.

