

Introduction

This book is about God's stewardship and our own. We can grow in faith and stewardship by examining personal experience, hearing Scripture, and searching out the reasons why we have received what God has given us. Growing in faith and stewardship brings satisfaction, joy, and contentment into our lives as Christians. This brings us to a new place to live, a new way of living.

In this book, stewardship is something that can be experienced personally and recognized in others. Christian stewards receive, use, and offer God's gifts, according to the heart and mind of God.

The key stewardship question is this: "Why do we have what we have?" This is a question for individual leaders and congregation councils, committees, ministry teams, and task forces. How many stewardship teams does your congregation have? Every congregational team—stewardship, property, finance, worship, education, and so on—is a stewardship team.

The words gift and asset are used interchangeably in this book, although each has shades of meaning. A gift often refers to a spiritual gift, as listed in Galatians 5:22-23, Romans 12:6-8, and other biblical passages. Spiritual gifts are necessary to accomplish the work of God in the world. All congregations have these gifts.

An asset, on the other hand, can include physical resources as well as human characteristics possessed by members of your congregation. Physical assets include such things as your church building, grounds, and neighborhood. Human assets include your leaders' standing, credibility, and trustworthiness. All congregations have valuable assets.