

Stewardship

God has made us stewards over the Earth, although some say that care of the Earth isn't mentioned in the New Testament and therefore it is not a religious concern. They don't see why the church should be involved.

Love God

The New Testament is concerned with saving souls, rather than the environment. However, the authority is there, but expressed in general terms. Christ said more in his two Great Commandments than did Moses in his Ten, plus all the rules of Deuteronomy.

Still, many can't relate the two commandments to our environment.

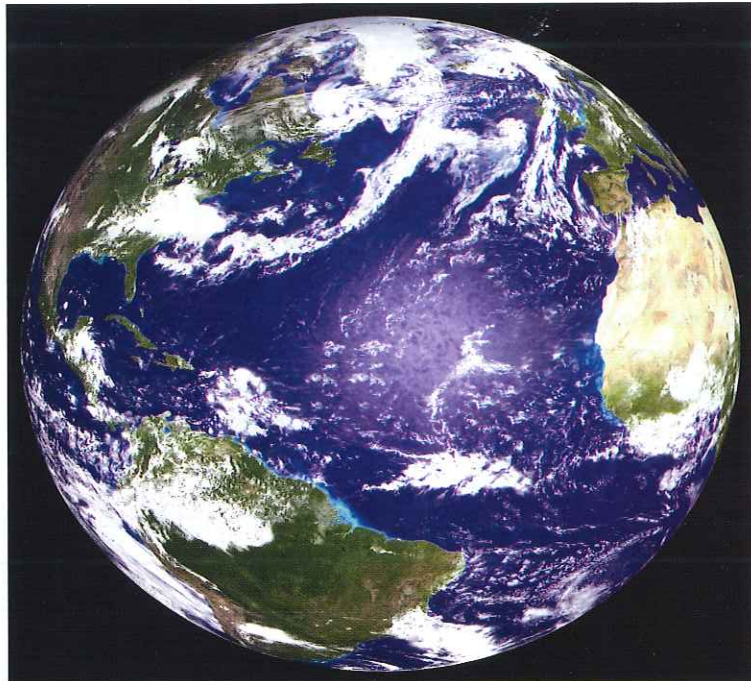
The first commandment is that we must love God with all our heart, soul and mind. Genesis tells us that God has made us stewards over God's good Earth. We can see that despoiling God's Earth is not loving God.

Love our neighbor

Individual action is important, when multiplied by millions of people. The second commandment tells us to love our neighbor; surely, we can best express that love by preserving the good environment, both as a person and a voter.

People need to be educated to the fact that preserving our environment is more than an economic problem. Christians should be conscious of the implied "Environmental Commandment." ☩

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Declaring the Real Truth

Why do we all insist on saying that we are "Giving" to the church, when at best we are only sharing what God has already given us? Why do we say we are trying to give our "Pledge," when we should be giving "God's Portion" to the church? Why do we say, "My Family," or "My Possessions" when they are blessings God permits us to enjoy, but that we never really own? Why should we say, "Thank My Lucky Stars" when we should be saying: "Thank You God"?



The decisions faced, and the changes made in old age probably exceed those of even the turbulent years of late adolescence and young adulthood. Do not senior adults also deserve Christian guidance for their stewardship of the aging process?



Opportunities for Stewardship

Under the Old Law that God gave to Moses, the Israelites were expected to tithe, that is give a tenth of their first fruits to the priests to support God's work. This was only the beginning, or minimum offering. Chapters 1 through 7 of Leviticus tells of other required and voluntary offerings. The Grain Offering was a memorial offering to God. A Fellowship, or thank offering to God was to be made with cattle, goats or sheep. An accidental sin required a young bull sacrifice under the Sin Offering. Also, there was a Penalty Offering for purification from sin. All of these offerings to God were made through a mediator ... the priests.

1 Timothy 2:5 tells us, "For there is one God, and there is one who brings God and mankind together, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself to redeem all mankind."

Today we still have the opportunity and responsibility to return to God a portion of the money God

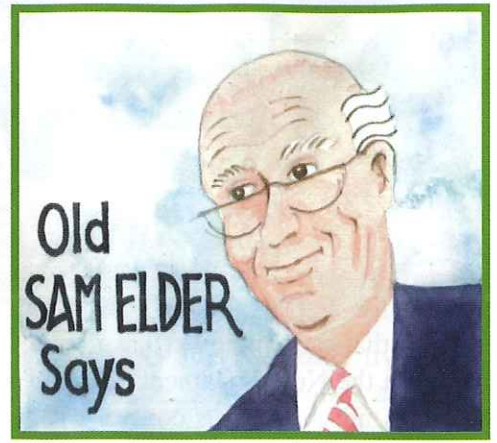
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The current situation reminds us that we have lived in a culture that worships at the shrine of the four related idols: pleasure, wealth, professional status and physical appearance. It is a culture of convenience rather than duty and of avoidance of pain rather than seeking to relieve the burdens of others.

Hopefully, the financial metamorphosis that is taking place is turning many people from consumers into stewards.



"That was just a suggestion, based upon your income! How much did you want to pledge?"



That Which is God's

Sam, there is a whole area of confusion over what we give to God versus what we give to government," Newt Nitpick challenged old Sam Elder. "How can I give intelligently if the church doesn't help me define my obligations?"

"Newt, you must live under a sloppy government. I receive tax bills for property, schools and public services," old Sam objected. "Government emphatically tells me what I owe them!"

"Oh, alright! You are over-simplifying a perfectly reasonable question," protested Newt. "You know I'm talking about what to give God after taxes."

"Apply the same reasoning to both God and taxes," Sam suggested. "You pay taxes for benefits supplied by government; give to God as God has benefitted you."

"Come on, Sam! Be realistic! You agree that I have no choice on taxes; I must pay the amount specified," Newt argued. "But when I give to God, I must decide what to give, don't I?"

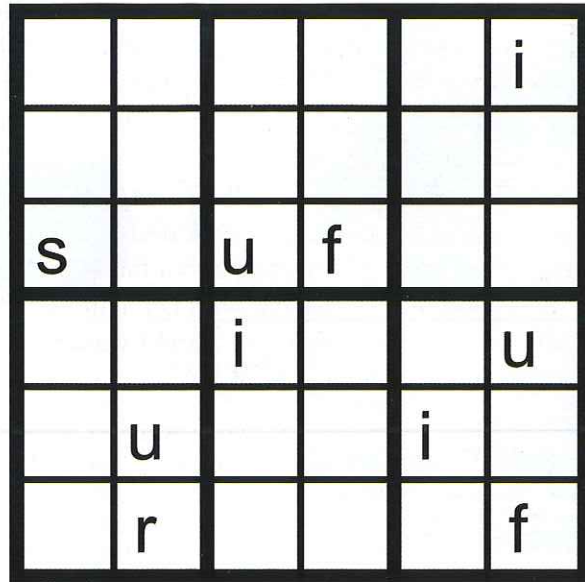
"Confusion enters when we try to figure how little can we give, and our conscience won't let us get away with it," Sam advised. "Christ told us to give Caesar that which is Caesar's and to give God that which is God's. Govern-

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Stewardship Suduko Puzzle

Word Sudoku is Sudoku with letters instead of numbers. It works the same way as the numerical version, but using letters from a word found in the clue taken from the featured article. Each row and column contains one of the 6 letters from the word; each 3 rows x 2 columns block also contains each of the 6 letters once.

Clue: Under the Old Law that God gave to Moses, the Israelites were expected to tithe, that is give a tenth of their first fruits to the priests to support God's work.



The affairs of God can be described by three words that rhyme. They are caring, sharing, and bearing.

Bearing the burden of the cost to support the work of God in the world, whether through charitable donations, raising money for a particular need, or even paying our taxes, is the third way in which we carry out the affairs of God entrusted to us.

O Lord, giver of life and source of freedom, I know that all I have received is from your hand. Gracious and loving God, you call us to be stewards of your abundance, the caretakers of all you have entrusted to us. Help us to always use your gifts wisely and teach us to share them generously. Send the Holy Spirit to work through us, bringing your message to those we serve. May our faithful stewardship bear witness to the love of Jesus Christ in our lives. We pray with grateful hearts, in Jesus' name. Amen.


Steward of the Month

My Mother ...

Submitted by: Jennifer Flagstaff, AZ

My mother is a real-life saint; a pillar in our community. She works at the high school in the office, and people of all ages remember her kindness, and gentle smile. I know from personal experience, when you get called into the office in high school, it's very scary ... I'm so proud of my mother and her smile and gentle way of comforting those kids, even when they are bad.

My mother has been there for the three of us since we lost our father five years ago ... and never once taking for herself. A pillar of strength, she called at all the right times, put her hand on my shoulder when I needed it, and helped me to my feet just when I was ready. My sisters all have the same account of things.


My grandmother has lived next door to us our entire life and my mother has taken care of her as well. She has always taught us to give back, because God has given so much to us. The importance of Christmas, not the commercial version, but the REAL Christmas has been taught to us. Easter dinners have been so special, all because of my mother. She takes time to talk about the important things, teaching us what is important, not with her words, but with her actions. I am blessed to pass her generous teachings onto my four children ... and I want to say that she is a true inspiration as a steward, and as a mother. 

"Steward of the Month" is an exciting way to recognize exemplary stewards. If you are aware of someone who has exemplified Christian stewardship, please tell us about it at stewardofthemonth.com. Once a month, one submission will be chosen to be published in *Stewardship*. In addition, if your story is chosen, \$100 will be given to the church or organization of your choice.

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Under the Old Law...

has blessed us with. As good stewards, we can give our thank offerings and our memorial offerings. We offer our gifts, works, and prayers through our Mediator, our High Priest, Christ Jesus, who freely gave his precious life so that we can have eternal life with God. 

Old Sam Elder...

ment is the Caesar of today."

"Sam, you make it sound so simple," Newt sighted.

"And you won't get any peace or prosperity until you do," Sam added.



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REMSNAO ANSWER

