

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

I Corinthians 12.4-7

Stewardship is an all-encompassing word that covers not just financial stewardship, but stewardship of time, the environment, and a balanced life. Part of living a balanced life means giving to others as well as taking care of one's self in the understanding that we are all made in the image of God. The offerings of time, talent and treasures, we believe, grow out of thankfulness for all that has been given to us. With this in mind, it is especially compelling to give towards the relief of pain, suffering and injustices in the world, both at home and abroad.

The giving of time and talent is best offered by choosing to use one's main God-given talents as a way of saying "thank you". Sometimes that offering will lead you out of your "comfort zone." (The message of the angels always begins with "Fear not!") More often, the offering of talent and self turn into unexpected blessings for our own lives. In closing, the inventory for spiritual growth is helpful in contemplating what our role might be in stewardship.

A Personal Inventory for Spiritual Growth

Awareness of the Holy

What, if anything, is sacred to me?

Is anything untouchable, should never be changed?

For what would I make a sacrifice, create time for etc.?

Providence

What do I feel is the divine purpose towards me personally?

What is the ratio of good will/ill will toward me?

Do I trust God and others?

Faith

Do I have an affirming or negative stance on life?

Am I engaged in life? How do I escape from life or deny life?

Grace

Can I accept my own gifts/limits?

Can I accept forgiveness? Am I living as if I need to pay God back?

Repentance

What is my awareness of myself as an agent in problems I face?

Am I willing/ready to change?

Communion

Do I have a sense of belonging (work, friends, family etc.)?

Is there any continuity between "my world" and the community of faith?

Sense of Vocation

Am I willing to be a participant in the scheme of creation and providence?

What is the meaning behind my work?

Thanksgiving

For what am I thankful?

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