

# StewardCAST

A monthly e-newsletter of LCMS Stewardship Ministry

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## HOME: *Where Stewardship Begins*



There is ample anecdotal evidence that the prime source for stewardship education and formation is the home. The most faithful stewards of all of life and life's resources for God's purposes will tell of how parents and grandparents modeled faithful stewardship for them in formative years. This stewardship influence within home and family even outpaces the influence of pastors and congregational steward leaders. The converse is also true. Those stewards who are less than faithful or even have an open aversion to faithful stewardship will recount their negative formation. Family members who grumble

when the pastor "preached about money" or pastors reluctant to bring up the topic for fear of making people upset, are often the source of the malformed stewardship of their children and parishioners. Please understand that this is not an attempt to deify the good stewardship leaders or shame the less than faithful ones, but to highlight a very key factor in the formation of stewards. It all starts at home.

### It starts at home

This is made clear in the "words of institution" of the office of steward. Genesis 1:26–28 highlights the reality that human beings

were created in the image of God for the purpose of stewardship of creation for the Creator's purposes. Adam and Eve, male and female, were created in that image to be a reflection of the Creator within creation. This highlights the incarnational nature of stewardship. But it also locates stewardship in its most fundamental place: the home!

Look closely at the way the Lord sets up stewardship within the home: "And God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth'" (GEN. 1:28). The subduing and dominion follows the injunction to be fruitful and multiply. That is the family. Husband and wife carrying out the procreative task, raising up those who will carry out stewardship of creation. This was God's plan for stewards. One dares not simply reduce this stewardship to the granting of physical life to the next generations of stewards. It also carries with it the admonition to reflect faithful stewardship of all of life and life's resources in such a way that the subsequent generations reflect the Creator and the stewards that have come before them.

### Fatherhood and stewardship

Last month, Hallmark and many others pointed us to a day called Father's Day. This is a reminder that we need more than one Sunday in June to take seriously the formation of stewards in the home. There is

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“  
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ample evidence that when fathers take their  
 vocation as spiritual head of the household  
 seriously and faithfully, the next generation  
 is more likely to exhibit a faithful response.  
 It has been said that children will often  
 confess their mother's faith, but they will  
 do it in the pattern shown by the father. A  
 father-steward that takes the “do as I say, not  
 as I do” approach often sets their children  
 up for future failure as stewards of not only  
 resources, but also the greatest treasure  
 entrusted to humanity: the Gospel! But  
 when a father models faithful stewardship  
 of the Gospel by being in worship, regular  
 study of God's Word and leading family  
 devotion and prayers, children will see  
 the reflection of God in their father. Then  
 through the Word shared, they will also  
 reflect their Heavenly Father through their  
 greater stewardship.

A Scriptural example of a failed father/  
 steward is King David. As shocking as  
 this assertion may seem, David illustrates  
 what happens when a father doesn't  
 attend primarily to the stewardship of  
 his household. While it is true that King  
 David was a great king in Israel, when we  
 evaluate his family, we see all the cracks,  
 wrinkles and warts present in the “man after  
 God's own heart.” Absalom and Adonijah  
 are examples. Absalom staged a coup that  
 had its roots in a sexual assault by Amnon  
 of his sister Tamar (2 SAMUEL 13). The  
 failed father overlooked the family crisis  
 and it gave rise to both a murder and an  
 insurrection. Adonijah followed in the  
 imperfect reflection of ambition reflected  
 in David to the point where he put himself  
 forward to claim the kingdom in the later  
 days of David's reign. Both failures led to  
 the necessity of the death of David's sons to

quell the rebellion in their hearts and lives,  
 one at the hands of Joab and the other at  
 those of Solomon. These familial tragedies  
 make one wonder about how a father's  
 quest for greatness, even greatness as one  
 after God's own heart, can take a toll on the  
 stewardship of the family.

### The servant leader

Pastors and steward leaders need to take  
 seriously the need for raising up faithful  
 stewards, especially those who will become  
 fathers. This is critical especially in the  
 modern world that often devalues the need  
 for fatherhood and masculinity. The model  
 of father/steward is not a lord of the house.  
 It is a servant leader who sacrifices for and  
 leads those entrusted to his care. Fathers  
 who have regular connection to Word and  
 Sacrament and make the necessary sacrifices  
 to ensure that their family has regular  
 connection to Word and Sacrament will  
 then be able to reflect the heart of God that  
 is revealed in Jesus Christ. Fathers who seek  
 to forgive as they have been forgiven will  
 have a greater opportunity to have children  
 who will also be faithful stewards of the  
 treasure that is the forgiveness of sins.

Steward leaders, this is not rocket science.  
 Making the investment in the formation  
 of homes that steward the Gospel of Jesus  
 Christ faithfully and daily will have the  
 greatest stewardship results. This will also  
 lead to generations seeing the need for  
 regular support for the local congregation  
 both financially and in service. Take time  
 every month to plan how the pastor and  
 steward leaders can invest in their fathers.  
 It will most certainly bring an increase in  
 return in the near term and generationally.