

StewardCAST

A monthly e-newsletter of LCMS Stewardship Ministry

lcms.org/stewardship



A Quiet but Clear Stewardship Lesson



A 17 year old just completed his high school basketball career. It is a bittersweet moment for a young man like him. As the final horn sounded, the tears came. The words of a chapter in his life's book came to an end. There will be, Lord willing, other chapters. But this one that started in the second grade has consumed a large portion of his life so far. When that ends, it brings tears. If you were in high school sports or other activities, you know what this young man feels.

But, in addition to the tears, an experience like this also brings retrospection. You start to look back. Sure, there are the moments of glory that cannot be relived and those crushing moments of failure that cannot be

undone. But this moment of introspection also reveals a very strong stewardship lesson. I guess this is the danger of being the "stewardship guy" and the parent of a high school athlete!

The lesson of quiet stewardship

What is that stewardship lesson? It is the lesson of quiet stewardship. This young man was not a star player. He was not a starter. In fact, in his two-year varsity career, he was only trusted with six minutes of playing time in a game that wasn't already decided. On the bench in his usual spot, he brought energy and support to his team. But there just never seemed to be any opportunity

for him. As a parent, this was hard to watch. There were moments of frustration and anger. From us, not from him. He just went about teaching his old man a huge stewardship lesson. He worked. He practiced hard. Late at night, he would get up shot after shot. Why would a young man put in so much effort that might not ever be recognized or rewarded?

He did it because that was his stewardship. God had given him abilities and opportunities for him to steward. He put in the work because that is what was given for him to do. He wasn't given the star role. He wasn't given the starter role. He was a young, healthy, gifted man who did his level best with what was given him. His teammates

StewardCAST is published monthly by:
 LCMS Stewardship Ministry
 1333 S. Kirkwood Road
 St. Louis, MO 63122
 888-THE LCMS (843-5267)
infocenter@lcms.org
lcms.org/stewardship

StewardCAST may be reprinted with acknowledgment given to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

STAFF

- Rev. Heath Curtis
*Coordinator (contracted),
LCMS Stewardship Ministry*
- Rev. Dr. Nathan Meador
*Assistant Coordinator (contracted),
LCMS Stewardship Ministry, and
Pastor, St. John Lutheran Church,
Plymouth, Wis.*
- Robbie Clasen
*Administrative Assistant,
LCMS Stewardship Ministry*

CONTRIBUTOR

- Lisa Moeller
Designer

How to Subscribe

To subscribe to *StewardCAST*, register online at lcms.org/enews. Select *StewardCAST* from among the “Stewardship and Giving” newsletters.

Support LCMS

Global Mission Fund

Your gift to the Global Mission Fund impacts people around the world and in our own backyard through acts of Christian compassion, wherever the need is greatest at the time the gift is made. Gifts are used exclusively to support Synod’s *Witness, Mercy, Life Together* work at home and abroad.

GIVE NOW

© 2021 LCMS

noticed. His parents noticed. But he didn’t do it for them. He did it because God had given him an opportunity to play a game that he loved.

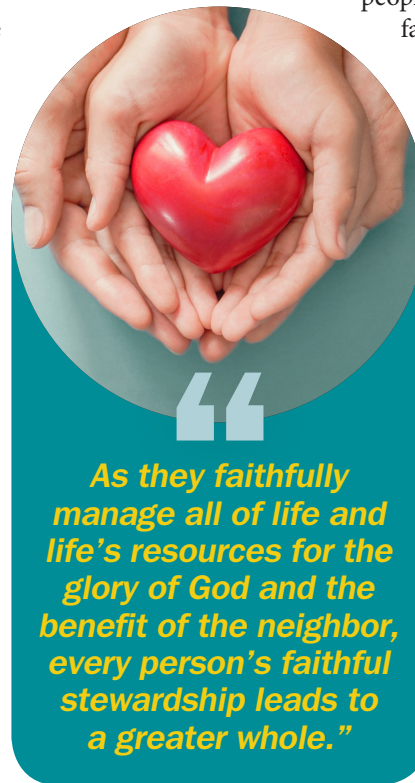
Individual stewards are like this. God has given each person a trust. This trust includes life in this world. It also includes ability and time. The Lord does not ask us to all be stars or starters. He just asks us to faithfully use what He has entrusted to us to the best of our ability, for His glory and the benefit of our neighbor. It is quite easy for the individual steward in the congregation to think that their effort is not noticed or needed. There are very few people who are in the position to give what fundraisers call “major gifts.” While those are appreciated, what the Lord calls us to is a pattern of faithful stewardship. Just as the human body was created to be so much more than just the sum of its parts, so also the body of Christ that is the church is more than just the sum of its parts. Each steward has a trust. As they faithfully manage all of life and life’s resources for the glory of God and the benefit of the neighbor, every person’s faithful stewardship leads to a greater whole.

Maximizing our stewardship

This pattern looks a bit like what that young basketball player did. He sought out opportunities to maximize the trust. This maximization of the trust was about the team and not him. As those who have been created and redeemed for the task of stewardship, maximizing our faithful stewardship as individuals is really about the Gospel and not us. The ultimate goal of the steward is faithful stewardship of the Gospel. The way that we utilize and maximize the “First Article” created things

which the Lord entrust to us has a direct bearing on the work of the Gospel. It funds it, energizes it, expands it and supports its. But all our work as stewards is not about us. It is always about Jesus and the Good News He brings.

This work is done behind the scenes. It is never about a “set it and forget it” approach. It takes effort and investment. The stewardship trust is maximized every time a husband and wife talk and pray about their offering, not just once a year for the gathering of commitments, but every week. This work is done when people step up into roles of faithful service, often well out of public view, so that ministries like Sunday school, VBS, visitation and care ministries can be carried out. It is quietly and consistently seizing the many opportunities to care for the physical and emotional needs of the community in which the congregation serves as an outpost for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This faithful work of the steward very often goes unnoticed by the masses. But it is noticed by those who are directly touched by its results!



Steward leaders are called to the task of quietly and consistently coaching those entrusted to their care, helping those stewards to see that there is great value in their quiet, prayerful and consistent stewardship. When they are encouraged to put in the work of faithful stewardship by the Spirit through the Means of Grace, good things happen. The proof is in the clear stewardship lesson taught by that grace-filled 17-year-old former high school basketball player to his “stewardship guy” dad! I pray that this lesson I learned with more than a few tears encourages you as well in your stewardship leading!