

SUMMER STEWARDSHIP

by Rev. Thomas Soltis, Stewardship Director

Summer Worship

Summer is vacation time. Christian stewardship, however, never takes a vacation. It is an ongoing, joyous activity of managing all things for God, God's way, every day. Vacations, however, have a tendency to rob God of the worship due Him. Worshiping in another congregation while on vacation can be refreshing. Beneficial ideas can be acquired for your home church. Daily devotions should not be forgotten either. In fact, personal devotions could be an effective personal evangelism tool. Inviting newly found vacation friends to participate in devotions offers an opportunity to share the Gospel.

Summer Church Support

Some congregations experience a financial summer slump. While members vacation, Sunday attendance and contributions drop. One congregation actually established a "Summer Reserve Fund" to cover monthly bills and commitments. Such measures would be unnecessary if members engaged in Biblical giving which involves:

Proportionate (percentage of income)

Regular (every Sunday)

First-fruit (funding God first)

Biblical giving ensures congregational cash flow stability throughout the year. Some first-fruit, every Sunday, gives mail a monthly contribution at the beginning of each month to cover the Sundays following. A growing number of Biblical givers are engaging in "electronic giving" where offerings are transferred automatically from bank, credit union, or savings accounts. This can be arranged on a weekly, bimonthly or monthly basis. When worshiping in church, "advance" or "electronic" givers, nevertheless, place a dollar or more into the offering plate to participate in the worship act of contributing.

Summer Teenage Jobs

During the summer months, teens who obtain jobs have an excellent opportunity to practice Christian financial stewardship. Earnings provide opportunities to learn how to wisely



spend, save and contribute. Church support should not be overlooked. The principles of proportionate, regular, first-fruit giving should be put into practice. Tithing (10% of income) should be embraced. Once it becomes a lifestyle, it will never be abandoned. The satisfaction of loving God by giving and His response with bountiful blessings are too compelling. Summer jobs also present great opportunities for exercising the Christian stewardship of talents. Wise teenagers seek jobs that in some way will connect with a future profession or occupation. And, as Christian stewards, when they work, they do so willingly, cheerfully, honestly, to the best of their ability.

Summer Relaxation

God never intended anyone to "burn the candle at both ends". God has no pleasure in "workaholic burnouts". He commanded one day in seven to be a day of rest in order to protect people from overwork. Vacations are supposed to be extended times for rest and relaxation. However, a vacation could become a source of stress. Some return from a vacation more worn out than if they stayed at home. Good stewardship involves properly managing a vacation so it ends up a source of relaxation instead of vexation.

Financing a Vacation

Proper personal money management should determine the extent and style of a vacation. To abuse credit cards and overspend is a big mistake! A line item in the family budget at the beginning of the year should cover anticipated vacation expenses. Sensible planning helps remove the stress and hassle of unpaid bills.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

www.selc.lcms.org - Personal Stewardship

"Electronic Giving" - "Church Attendance"

"Evangelistic Stewardship"