

# Spiritual Preparation for Stewardship\*

*Honor the gift of your time by allowing yourself enough of it to prayerfully answer these questions.*

How much money do you contribute to your congregation on a weekly or annual basis? Does this adequately reflect your commitment? Are other factors hindering you in your giving? What are they?

Evaluate your personal or family budget. Where does most of your money go? Are you pleased with the priorities that your budget reflects? Are there areas that you would like to change? Share this with someone in your congregation.

Evaluate your *church*. Are you pleased with the priorities of the church? Are there areas that you would like to change?

Do you give to secular organizations? How does this compare with your church giving, if at all? What personal satisfaction do you gain from supporting this organization? How does this reflect on your own personal ideas (your *theology*) of giving to the Creator's world?

Think of what intentional, planned giving means to you. Do you give reluctantly out of a sense of duty and obligation or out of a sense of joy?

Where are you in the minutia of our cultural worship to the God and Goddess of Visa and MasterCard? Pray for honesty and clarity here. Do you need financial training? If you are currently financially whole, would you be willing to teach others in our community how to recognize cultural values that promote commodity addiction? If you are currently financially struggling toward economic wholeness, would you be willing to come to training(s) if offered?

Now, spend a few moments in pray and in gratitude. This is not the time to mentally beat yourself up for any reason. Rather, this is the time to reflect on the many blessings in your life and ask God to guide you and hold you through your struggles. Remember, we are all *on our way* to wholeness, which means we are all traveling out of and away from our brokenness on our journey into life. Ask Spirit to lead you into financial wholeness so that you may be a better steward of the beloved church you attend – the same community that seeks to be a better steward of God's Creation. We need each other to make it so.

*May it be so. Amen.*

\*Questions 1 – 3 from Dr. Keith A. Russell, *In Search of the Church* (New York: Alban Institute, 1994), 51.

