

## HOW TO BUILD A STRONG STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

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### 1. Personal Testimony

In January 1973, I started New Testament Baptist Church in Pascagoula, Mississippi. Within eight months we had organized, purchased 2 ½ acres of land, and built our first building with 5,855 square feet. It was when the payments started coming due that I became interested in stewardship. In January 1974, I conducted my first stewardship conference and even though my motive was money, God blessed, and the offerings increased. Since then, God has taught me that stewardship is not about raising **MONEY** but it is about raising **PEOPLE**.

2. The pastor must be **COMMITTED** to teaching and preaching **STEWARDSHIP** principles at least annually.

3. The pastor cannot be **TIMID** or **SHY** away from preaching on stewardship. Remember, there is nothing in the **BIBLE**, if preached in truth and love, that will run **SAVED** people away.

4. Don't **ASSUME** your people will understand biblical **STEWARDSHIP**. We don't assume they understand **JUSTIFICATION** or sanctification, so why should we assume they will **UNDERSTAND** stewardship.

5. Do an **ANNUAL** examination of yourself, your staff, and the **TOTAL** ministry. This will enable you to determine what is **EFFECTIVE** and **PRODUCTIVE**, and what is not.

6. Annual examinations will help you determine **FUTURE FOCUS** and ministry improvements, **NEW MINISTRIES** needed, or ministries to **DISCONTINUE**. Don't be **AFRAID** of discontinuing ministries. Your people will know whether they are productive or not.

7. Develop your annual **STEWARDSHIP** emphasis with your new **FOCUS** and ministries in mind.

This way you can **BUDGET** for them.

8. Start planning the **ANNUAL** stewardship emphasis at least **SIX MONTHS** prior.

- Select a **THEME**
- Develop **ARTWORK** that communicates your **THEME**
- Write Sunday school **LESSONS** (5)
- Prepare a **FINANCIAL** commitment **CARD**
- Ask people to **TITHE** and to **INCREASE** their tithe
- Ask people to give to **DEBT** retirement or to a **BUILDING** fund
- Prepare a **MINISTRY** sheet that details off of your ministries and ask people to **COMMIT** to use their **TIME** and **TALENTS**

9. Plan how you will **COMMUNICATE** stewardship emphasis. Sermons and Sunday school

lessons should communicate: **FAITH, VISION, OBEDIENCE,** and

**COMMITMENT.**

- **DECORATE** throughout your buildings
- Emphasize theme in weekly **BULLETIN**
- Send out weekly **LETTERS** or **EMAILS** to your membership
- Compile a stewardship **BOOK** for your emphasis. Include “thank you” letter, cast your vision, review your previous budget, and present your new budget.

10. Plan how you will **RECEIVE** the **COMMITMENTS.**

- Will it be through the **SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS?** (I don’t personally **RECOMMEND** this.)

- Will it be at the **END** of the **CHURCH** service? (This is **BETTER**)
- Will you have a church **BANQUET** after the AM worship service? (This is best)
- Have all the **MATERIAL** at each place. Have place **MATS** with theme/logo printed. Be sure to provide for **NURSERY** and **CHILDREN** separately.

11. Pastor should share his **VISION** again, review **BUDGET**, and what is needed to **REACH** the goal.

12. Pastor should have already **WORKED** with his **BOARD** or **LEADERSHIP** team to sell and prepare budget.

13. After the short challenge, the pastor should **REVIEW** stewardship vision and goals for the next year.

14. Lead the people in a time of **PRAYER** and **COMMITMENT**. Have them **FILL OUT** and **TURN IN** their commitment cards and ministry talent sheets.

15. It is my personal conviction that all stewardship programs should address some part of **SPIRITUAL** growth and maturity. I have found that you can get people's **MONEY** without spiritual **GROWTH**, but you cannot **KEEP** them **GIVING** without spiritual growth.

16. People should always **BELIEVE** that you have their best **INTEREST** at heart. If they do not tithe or give, they cannot have God's **BLESSINGS**.

17. Have your people share their **TESTIMONIES** of how they have obeyed God about **GIVING** and have been blessed.

18. This process should be **REPEATED** annually.

19. Be sure to **EVALUATE** your total stewardship planning, process, and program with your staff or leadership team to determine how you can **IMPROVE**.

20. Don't be afraid to make **CHANGES**. Everything that is alive and growing is **CHANGING**.

21. Be sure to make it easy for your people to **GIVE**.

- Keep giving **ENVELOPES** in obvious places in your church
- Mail or give out your **GIVING** envelopes
- Establish **ELECTRONIC** giving. Make it easy and make sure they know it is **SAFE**.

22. When preparing to receive the **WEEKLY** offering, remind the people that giving is an act of **WORSHIP** demonstrated through **OBEDIENCE** and **LOVE**.

23. Maintain good and accurate **RECORDS** of all monies given and provide financial **ACCOUNTABILITY**. This builds people's **TRUST**.

24. Always use **DESIGNATED** money for the purpose it was given or **RETURN** it.