



Exploring Christian Giving



This study material provides opportunity for groups within churches or deaneries to explore both some theory and practice in relation to Christian Giving.

There are four sessions:

Session 1: Some Theology

Aim: To help course participants to understand the centrality of 'stewardship' in the life of Christians through a theology of stewardship.

There is a common perception that Christian stewardship is about balancing the books, keeping the show on the road and paying for the building and the parish share. However, in reality, stewardship is a fundamental aspect of Christian discipleship and needs to be seen in the light of God's mission in creation. It is not the Church's euphemism for fund raising.

Input ideas: Salvation and Stewardship
Use and abuse of scripture

Study questions:

1. Is there a key passage that has, over the years, affected your own personal attitude to money and giving?
2. Look at one of these passages:
 - ◇ Mark 12:41-44 – the widow's mite
 - ◇ Malachi 3:6-12 – robbing God
 - ◇ 1 Corinthians 16:1-4 – each of you should set aside a sum ...How might this be **properly** used in preaching/teaching about stewardship?
How might it be **abused** in preaching/teaching about stewardship?
3. The model of inter-dependence, sharing and bearing one another's burdens is critical to the Church of England's parish share system. Where would you look for its biblical roots?

Session 2: Stewardship: Vision & Discipleship

Aim: To enable course participants to see stewardship as central to ongoing discipleship, including Mission and Vision for church development.

'Where there is no vision, the people perish' (Proverbs 29:18) is a well-known quotation; it may seem a little exaggerated – but it isn't. Research has shown that one of the principle reasons why people leave the Church is that they feel it's going nowhere. Many local churches seem to have little or no sense of vision or direction. And this not only results in declining numbers; it also affects levels of giving. Why should I give to an organisation without a perceived sense of vision and direction?

Input ideas: Christian stewardship and vision
What is Christian stewardship
The Steward as Manager
Stewardship is for Mission
Some observations – direction and motivation
Generosity and discipleship

Study questions:

1. How do the 'four observations' (mentioned in this session) relate to your congregation?
2. How can we express liturgically that giving money is part of our worship?
3. What elements require to be incorporated into a Stewardship programme?