



the Parent LINK

Children's Ministry Edition



March 2012



Christus Victor Lutheran Church



POWERSOURCE

ASK GOD:

1. To guide you as you set examples of Christian stewardship in your home and community.
2. To help your children be faithful and trustworthy with the resources God provides.
3. To enable you to give willingly and cheerfully.

Instill Lessons About Stewardship

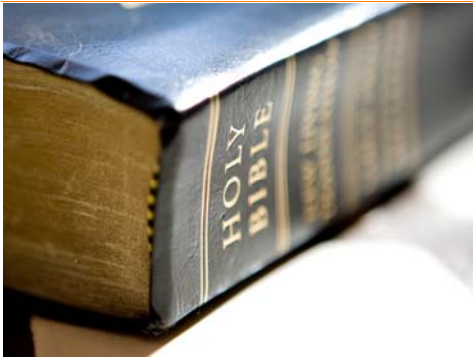
Christian stewardship is about more than just pledging donations or placing money in an offering plate. A steward manages resources, including time, talent, and money. Because God has given us so many blessings, we respond by using them wisely and also sharing them with others.

Children observe their parents' financial habits and learn about the role of money at a young age. So it's important to model appropriate attitudes about saving, spending, and giving. When we're honest about everything from our daily transactions to our yearly taxes, we demonstrate how to be trustworthy. And when we contribute to church, charities, and neighbors in need, we teach the joy of being generous while assisting other people.

Experts recommend using an allowance system that works for your family so children can save for the future, spend money on desired items, and donate a portion of their earnings. Such habits can set the foundation for a lifetime of financial stability as well as God-honoring stewardship.

INSIGHTS

- 16% of parents of children under age 18 report never talking to their kids about using money wisely. (Visa)
- 54% of parents say they haven't discussed with their children the difference between "needs" and "wants." (Capital One)
- More than 2,000 Bible verses address the topic of money, and about 30% of Jesus' parables are about money or stewardship. (ChristianPost.com)



“If you are untrustworthy about worldly wealth, who will trust you with the true riches of heaven? ... You cannot serve both God and money.”
(Luke 16:11, 13)

Handling money wisely is one way to worship God, the giver of all good things.

TEACHABLE MOMENTS

1. Little Givers—Discuss with children how you set aside a portion of your family’s earnings to give back to God. Then show them how to earmark a portion of their allowance or financial gifts to church or Sunday school.

2. Learn on the Go—Turn shopping excursions into lessons on money management. Give children shopping lists and show them how to hunt for bargains and use coupons. Let them interact with cashiers and count change.



3. Be the Change— Together, choose a charity to support through money and prayer. Encourage family members to collect spare change or to go without gourmet coffee or special treats for a period of time. Collect change in a jar. When the jar is full, convert the change into a money order made out to your charity. If possible, hand-deliver the donation.

Begin a conversation about stewardship by asking these questions:

1. Why does God give us money and talents? What does he want us to do with these things, and why?
2. How do you decide how much of your money to spend, save, or give away?
3. How can you handle money wisely without honoring it too much?

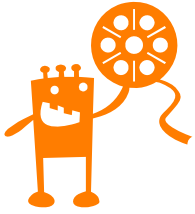
FAMILY EXPERIENCE

Use these activities to nurture Christian stewardship:

• **Stay Focused**—In her book *With All Their Heart* (Moody), Christine Yount Jones shares an active example of the difficulty of serving both God and money. Have two people stand side by side in the center of a large room (or outside). Tell your children to look at both people at the same time. Then have the two people walk in opposite directions until they’re far apart. Afterward, read Matthew 6:24. Ask: “What was it like to try to keep your eyes on both people at the same time? How can we stay focused on God as we handle the money he has trusted us with?”



• **Give Yourself to God**—Read aloud Luke 21:1-4, about the poor widow who donated two “mites,” or small coins, to the temple. Jesus praised her for giving “everything she has.” Gather some pennies, tape, index cards, and crayons to make a reminder to follow the widow’s example. Have each family member tape two pennies to an index card. Then rub a crayon or pencil on the other side of the card, over the coins, to make a texture rubbing. Remove the pennies and write “Give Yourself to God” on the card (help young children). Decorate the cards and tape them throughout the house, possibly by piggy banks, wallets, or the checkbook. Ask: “What are some ways we can give ourselves to God? How can we share the blessings God gives us? What type of attitude should we have about sharing and giving?” Close in prayer, thanking God for being generous to us and asking him to help us be generous to others.



MEDIA MADNESS



MOVIES

Movie: *The Secret World of Arrietty*

Genre: Animation, Adventure

Rating: G

Cast: Amy Poehler, Will Arnett, Carol Burnett

Synopsis: This film is based on Mary Norton's classic children's book *The Borrowers*. A 12-year-old boy becomes friends with little people living beneath his house's floorboards.

Our Take: This family-friendly anime film from the makers of *Ponyo* contains mild peril.



MUSIC

Artist: Jaci Velasquez

Album: *Diamond*

Artist Info: Velasquez, 32, returns to Christian music after a four-year hiatus. She topped the charts back in 1996 with her major-label debut *Heavenly Place*.

Summary: On the first single, "Give Them Jesus," Velasquez sings that the smallest things in life can shine the brightest for God. "Girl" is a song about self-worth and purity.

Our Take: This long-awaited comeback album is a gem for listeners of all ages.



CULTURE & TRENDS

- The latest names for child-rearing styles include "hippo parents," who "sit" on their kids until they obey; "hot-tub parents," who create relaxing environments to foster conversations; and "wishbone parents," who merely hope situations will improve. (nytimes.com)
- Technology is invading play-dates. Many kids now bring along cell phones and get into older siblings' video games. Meanwhile, supervising parents are often busy on Facebook. (cnn.com)

QUICK STATS

- Children just might be hard-wired for missions. When asked, "What would you like to do someday?" 51% of 8- to 12-year-olds said, "Travel throughout the world," and 50% answered, "Be able to speak another language." (Harris Interactive)
- 85% of moms use their kids to escape social obligations. And nearly one in three moms uses work as an excuse to avoid caring for her kids. (Today.com)



GAMES & SITES

Title	Content	Rating & Platform
<i>Pushmo</i>	This highly rated game involves engaging 3D puzzles. Players must think spatially to create stairs out of blocks.	3D play is recommended for children ages 6+; \$6.99 at Nintendo eshop
<i>The Oregon Trail: 40th Anniversary Edition</i>	This classic has been updated for new gaming systems. Players try to complete a trek before winter, facing pioneer hardships along the way.	E10+; Wii, Nintendo DS
<i>Freefall Money</i>	With this new game-style app, children learn how to count coins and perform money math. Players can earn fish to fill a virtual tank.	Best for ages 6+; \$1.99 at iTunes.com

This page is designed to help educate parents and isn't meant to endorse any movie, music, or product. Our prayer is that you'll make informed decisions about what your children watch, listen to, and wear.

