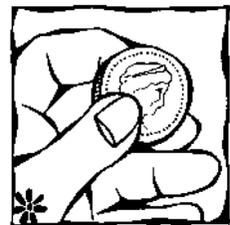
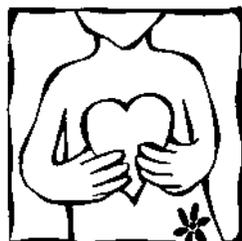


# St James Carlisle



“All things come from you, and of your own do we give you”

1 Chronicles 29:14



*A practical guide to  
help you review your  
giving to God*

*As Christians we want to commit our entire lives to God, recognising that He has provided our salvation and all our resources of time, health, money, skills and talents, possessions, family and friends.*

*How do we say thank you to God for all these blessings? How do we manage them effectively for the work of His kingdom here on earth? Here's a simple step-by-step approach.*

## **When to review?**



Choose a regular time each year to review your stewardship with God. It could be your birthday, the new tax year, our annual gift day, or one of the major Christian festivals like Christmas, Easter, or Harvest. Pray that God will help you as you go through the review



process.

## **Your time and talents**



Work out how much time you spend on God's work. Include your personal devotions, your church activities, and the work for community charities you do as part of your Christian ministry. Remember to include those occasional or once-a-year activities. How many hours is this in a typical week? What is your non-sleeping time (probably about 100 hours a week)? You're a Christian for 24 hours

for 7 days a week, at work and play, but what proportion of your waking time do you specifically commit to God's work?

## **Your money**

Work out how much money you give to God. Include regular giving to your church and responses to one-off appeals. Add in your gifts to external Christian organisations like home and overseas mission agencies. Then add your donations to local and (inter)national charities and good causes. What does this total over a typical week or month? You may find it easier to work out the annual total if you give annual donations to many organisations. Now work out what your take-home income (pay, benefits, pensions, bonuses etc after tax and national insurance) is over the week, month or year. So what proportion of your take-home income do you devote to God's work? And how much goes to your local church?



## Your possessions

What about the stewardship of your possessions? Do you use your home for God's work (e.g. hospitality) – or your car (lifts to church etc)? Do you look after his environment by recycling waste and saving energy? Do you support fair trade producers in your shopping? If you have savings and investments, are they ethically sound?



## Bible and prayer



Armed with the facts about your current commitments to God's work, you can then pray about what your response should be. You may find it helpful to read a relevant passage of scripture like Jesus' parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30) or Paul's encouragement to the church members in Corinth (2 Corinthians 8 and 9) and Timothy (1 Timothy 6:17-19).

## Christian principles

How can you apply the Biblical principles of Christian stewardship to your situation?

- Give **first to God** before spending time and money on self
- Give **regularly** (weekly, or monthly by banker's order)
- Give a **proportion** of available time and income
- Give **generously**: God promises to provide for all your needs
- *these days we can add . . .* Give **tax-efficiently** (eg Gift Aid)

*Many Christians through past centuries practised the Biblical standard of giving - **the tithe** – one tenth of income (10%). The New Testament suggests that generosity starts with a tithe.*

## Plans and priorities

At the moment your existing time and financial commitments may mean you cannot give what you feel is really due to God. So work out a plan of how you can gradually move towards greater generosity over the next few years. What activities or expenses are pure luxuries, and could be gradually cut down? Can you save yourself money by shopping around more, and give some of the benefit to God? Can you give him a significant proportion of any pay rise or windfall income, rather than spending it mainly on yourself?

## **Records**

Make a note of your decisions and plans, so you can monitor your progress. They will be a very useful input to your stewardship review in a year's time.