

Session 1: “Ask, Thank Tell”

Lane’s suggested Stewardship Team Mission

“The goal of our stewardship ministry is to help God’s people grow in their relationship with Jesus through the use of the time, talents, and finances God has entrusted to them.” (page 11)

Chapter 1. Discipleship, Not Membership

Complete this table to summarize the differences between membership and discipleship.

MEMBERSHIP (pages 13-15)	DISCIPLESHIP (pages 15-16)
1. Give money to support others who do ministry.	1.
2.	2. Give as part of growing relationship with Jesus.
3. Live life as a good citizen. Don’t become a public scandal.	3. Live life in community, relating to Jesus and others.
4. The mission field is elsewhere.	4.
5.	5. The goal of the congregation is to make disciples.
6. Congregations have low expectations of members.	6.

In your opinion, is our congregation more focused on Membership or Discipleship?

Examine the basic marks of discipleship found in Real Faith for Real Life, by Michael Foss (listed on page 15 in Lane):

Daily prayer
Daily scripture reading
Weekly worship
Grow in giving to the tithe or beyond
Serving other in Jesus' name
Sharing the faith story with the unchurched.

In earlier book, Michael Foss arranged these six marks of discipleship into the acronym

PoWeR SuRGe:

Pray daily.
O
Worship weekly.
E
Read the Bible daily.

Serve others.
U
Relate to others to encourage spiritual growth.
Give a tithe or beyond.
E



How can our congregation encourage members to follow these discipleship guidelines without implying that people can earn salvation by their own works?

“It is far more important to ask the right question than it is to get the right answer. If you ask the wrong question, the answer doesn’t matter. If you ask the right question, even if you get the answer wrong the first time, you still have a chance.” (page 19) ***How might we go wrong if focus on these questions?***

“What can the Stewardship Team do to raise enough to pay the bills this year?”

“What can we do to motivate the congregation to give enough to meet this year’s budget?”

“How much should I give back to God?”

“How much of my money does the church need this year?”

Chapter 2. It All Belongs to God

“The Biblical truth – that it all belongs to God – is the cornerstone of everything we have to say about stewardship.” (page 22)

What does the Old Testament say about stewardship?

Psalm 24: 1-3 *The earth is the Lord’s and all that is in it.*

“The language we use leads us to believe that we are the ultimate owners of the things that are in our control.” (page 23) ***Can you give some examples of how our use of language (for example in legal documents like wills or deeds) can give us a false sense of ownership?***

Deuteronomy 8:11-18 *Do not say to yourself, “My power and the might of my own hand have gotten me this wealth.” But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives the power to get wealth ...*

“Rather than taking credit for my wealth, my wealth ought to cause me to ponder why God has chosen to so bless me. Rather than focusing my life on amassing wealth that dramatically exceeds my needs, I ought to focus my life on using the wealth that God has entrusted to me to help those who have less.” (page 29) ***How does the American concept of the “self-made man” conflict with the message of this verse from Deuteronomy?***

Genesis 1:27-28 *Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.*

Psalm 8:3-5 *You have made them a little lower than God, and crowned them with glory and honor.*

“Humanity has the highest place in the created order.” (page 26) ***What do these verses mean for our responsibility to be stewards of the environment?***

Psalm 8:6 *You have given them dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under their feet.*

“We should celebrate the fact that God has named us stewards. To be a steward is to be in a place of high esteem and responsibility.” (page 30) ***Would you consider it an honor and a privilege to serve on the Stewardship Ministry Team?***