



## Faith Aflame: 360 Degrees

*Living as God's Child: Disciple and Steward*

As Christians we are both disciples and stewards.

Robert Kolb defines disciple as simply “one who follows Christ and learns from him.” (*The Christian Faith* page 10)

A steward is one who has been entrusted with property which is to be administered according to the owner's will or direction.

One who follows Christ and learns from Him will manage His property according to His will. Discipleship and stewardship are closely related.

In January of 1980, Dr. Walter W. Stuenkel presented a brief paper on the meaning of discipleship to district chairmen for the LCMS Great Commission Convocation. At that presentation, Dr. Stuenkel developed seven biblical points about the meaning of the term(s) disciple/discipleship. Read each point and discuss the questions which follow.

1. The disciple does not choose Christ. It is the other way around. Christ has chosen and called us to be His disciples. Christ is the active agent. We are the passive recipients (John 15:16). We claim no credit when it comes to being disciples or making disciples. Such activity is at the initiative of God and is His work in us.

### **How does one become a steward?**

2. Disciples grow. They grow in their commitment to their Master, Jesus Christ. Disciples grow more and more to the full stature of Christ. Jesus personally gives form and content to the relationship of His disciples. (2 Peter 3:18)

### **How does a steward grow?**

3. The reason for the devotion of the disciple to His Master consists in the sacrifice of Jesus on behalf of the disciples. The disciple's life, therefore, is wrapped up in his/her Master and Savior, Jesus Christ (Eph. 5:25, Romans 4:25-5:1, Eph. 2:8, Phil. 1:21)

### **How is the steward's life wrapped up in the Master?**

#### **Stewardship Prayer**

Thank You, Lord for making us both a disciple and a steward.

Where we have failed in both these important offices, forgive us.

Guide, direct, and empower us to grow in both our discipleship and our stewardship.

In Jesus' Name, Amen.

4. Discipling, then, is being molded and fashioned into the image of Christ. With the close bond between the disciple and Jesus, the disciple is willing to walk in obedience to Christ (I Peter 2:21).

**How does the steward walk in obedience to Christ?**

5. Disciples are ready to follow Christ in service and sacrifice even if it means death (Mark 8:34, John 15:20).

**How committed should a steward be?**

6. Discipling draws people of great diversity of background and personality. This does not bother disciples. They rejoice in it. God uses disciples with their diversity of gifts, talents, and abilities in His service. However, at all times the disciple recognizes that he/she has been called to be a disciple not because Christ needs him/her but because the disciple needs what He offers—forgiveness, grace, and peace.

**What does a steward need to be able to manage God’s gifts?**

7. Discipling happens through the means of grace—Word and Sacrament. We are His instruments in the discipling process (making of new disciples) using Word and Sacrament as the means by which the Spirit makes disciples.

**How does stewardship happen?**

8. Disciples are members of the Master’s (Christ’s) body, the Church. As members of His body, the Church, disciples, gifted by the Holy Spirit, use those gifts to build up the church (make disciples of all nations) to the honor and glory of Christ, its Head.

**How do stewards manage God’s gifts in the church?**

**How do stewards manage God’s gifts outside the church?**

**Closing:** Close by saying the stewardship prayer on the opposite side.



The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod  
District and Congregational Services  
Stewardship Ministry  
Rev. Wayne J. Knolhoff, Director