

Faith Aflame: 360 Degrees

Corporate Stewardship



Session Three – Activity Two



False Start? In the book *Stewards in the Kingdom*, R. Scott Rodin tells the story of British Olympic sprinting champion Linford Christie. At the 1996 Atlanta Summer Olympic Games, Christie failed to defend his 1992 gold medal Olympic title as fastest man in the world. His failure was not the result of getting beaten by a faster runner. He beat himself by committing two false starts which resulted in his disqualification from the race.

Rodin suggests that congregations commit false starts when it comes to stewardship. He writes, “For too long, attempts to undergird Christian tithing and fundraising with some sort of theology have employed the term *stewardship*. The problem that should be immediately apparent is that this focus indicates a classic false start. Stewardship is the practice, the work, the vocation of a steward. It is the ‘how-to,’ the ethical imperatives of the call to be a steward. The very term indicates that we can move past the whole discussion of what it means to be a steward and focus on the practice of *stewardship*. This is a false start.” (Page 16)

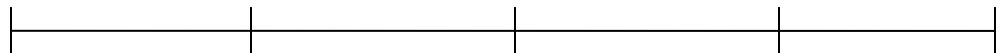
Classic False Starts in Stewardship:

Focusing almost entirely on what the steward does instead of who the steward is.

Where is your congregation on the following continuum?

Focuses on what the steward does

Focuses on the identity of the steward

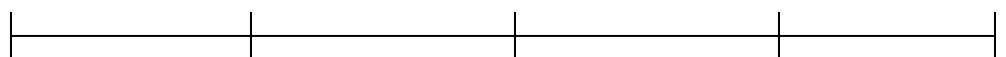


Focusing almost entirely on the financial aspects of stewardship neglecting the importance of relating stewardship to all of life.

Where is your congregation on the following continuum?

Focuses on financial stewardship

Focuses on stewardship as all of life

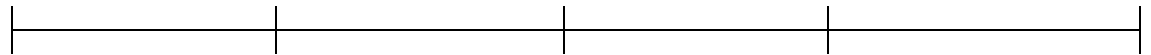


The primary encouragement from congregational leaders is to give “to” the budget rather than “from” a grateful heart.

Where is your congregation on the following continuum?

Focuses on giving “to”

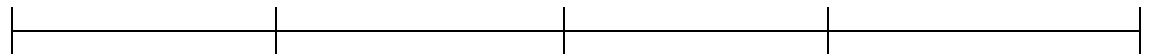
Focuses on giving “from”



Stewardship is treated almost exclusively as an institutional issue instead of a spiritual issue.

Stewardship is an institutional Issue

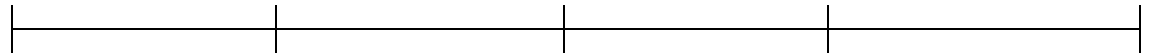
Stewardship is a spiritual Issue



Members of the congregation are encouraged to do what the leaders are unwilling to do.

Congregation keeps almost all offerings for home purposes

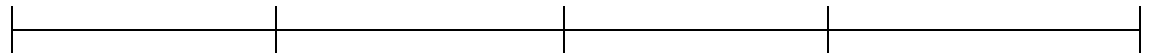
Congregation gives generously to district and synod



The congregation operates from a position of scarcity rather than from a position of abundance.

Congregation operates from a position of scarcity

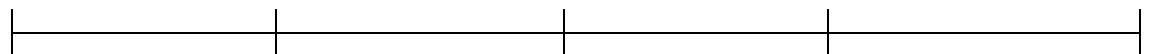
Congregation operates from a position of abundance



Leaders focus on “quick fix” solutions to symptoms rather than doing the hard work of adaptive change.

Congregation looks for “quick fixes”

Congregation does the hard work of adaptive change



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