

Sources
sf.gov.org/scorecards/safety-net/homeless-population
www.cnbc.com/2019/10/26/only-24percent-of-young-adults-are-financially-independent-by-22-per-pew.html

demonstration of the giver's commitment to God. These patriarchs recognized that it was only through God's power that they were sustained, and the least they could do was give some portion of their gain back to Him. In the same way, when young adults pay tithe, it is a tangible show of gratefulness and commitment to God—a small bit of gratitude for the wondrous things He has done.

DON'T OVERLOOK OFFERINGS.

Offerings can be a very easy part of stewardship to overlook for young people. After already paying tithe, some might feel tempted to pinch pennies when the plate is passed down the pew. Haven't we already given enough? What about all the other things we need to pay for? Will we have enough money to buy the luxuries that we want?

Contrary to popular belief, it is not God's desire that His people be in poverty. The plans that God has for His children are those that would give them hope and a future (Jeremiah 29:11). It is also God's will, however, that His stewards be aware of the need of others. Not all have received the many blessings that the youth of the church now enjoy. Much of the world is suffering from the effects of sin without the hope and knowledge of a Savior. A 2019 Point-in-Time homeless count found that

San Francisco had more than 8,000 homeless residents, more than half of whom were unsheltered.¹ Christ said, "The poor will always be with you" (Matthew 26:11, *NIV*). God has not only entrusted His stewards with His money, but with His people.

Giving offerings in church is not the only way young people can help those in need. There are many different ways: giving someone spare change or buying him food, volunteering at a soup kitchen, donating old clothes to a Goodwill, etc. When we give to those less fortunate than us, the Lord sees and blesses us more than we could have ever imagined (Malachi 3:10).

If the youth are to be the future of stewardship, then it is important to understand the purpose of God's money and His vision for its use.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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The STEWPOT

A POTPOURRI OF PRACTICAL IDEAS to help you become a better steward

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YOUNG STEWARDS

BY JORDAN GREENE

Does a commitment to stewardship hold true for young adults in 2020—or is it a relic from a bygone era? As young people raised in the church, my friends and I were always told: "You are the future." With each passing year, more of the church's youth grow into young adults, taking on many responsibilities and challenges. We have to deal with a number of financial stresses like medical insurance, rent, and student loans. All of these monetary obligations that the world has set up for us can make it easy to forget the stewardship responsibilities we owe to God.

Caught up in the crazy rat race of adulthood, young adults find themselves giving any number of excuses for neglecting their role as stewards of God's kingdom. However, if we study Scripture, we'll find some practical reminders that we can use in our everyday lives to help us be better stewards.



STEWARDSHIP is a total lifestyle. It involves our health, time, talents, environment, relationships, spirituality, and finances.

YOUR MONEY IS NOT YOUR OWN.

We live in world built on the idea of ownership. Material things have worth, and therefore we place our value on how much stuff we have. This desire to own things is even further enhanced by the fast-paced nature of our society, where something new turns into something old in a matter of months. Young adults often find themselves attributing their success, possessions, and money to their own hard work or skill: "I earned this. I pulled myself up by my bootstraps. I deserve this money!"

As Christian stewards, it is important to remember that nothing that we have has been earned on our own. Our successes are due in part to the many hours put in by parents, teachers, pastors, and others who have made sure we received education and guidance.

Of course, everything we have is due in whole to the sustaining power of God. John the Baptist said, "A person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven" (John 3:27, *English Standard Version*), and Solomon wrote: "The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps" (Proverbs 16:9, *ESV*).

In the Parable of the Talents in Matthew 25, the two faithful servants used the money their master gave them to increase the master's wealth, while the wicked servant hid and hoarded his portion. When receiving a paycheck, young adults should understand that the reason for making money is not solely for personal enrichment. God gives His stewards wealth and success so that they can further advance His kingdom and cause. This can be done by supporting

our pastors through tithes, by donating to Adventist schools and universities, and by giving to programs such as Adventist Community Services and Pathfinders.

GIVE GOD WHAT'S HIS.

Very few people enjoy paying bills. When we pay for heating, electricity, cable, and rent, we do so because we expect those services in exchange for our money. If we stop paying, the benefits stop as well. Thankfully, we serve a God who does not force us to pay for His blessings.

Young stewards should understand, however, the role they play in helping to finance the church and its mission. Christ put it simply: "Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and give to God what belongs to God" (Mark 12:17, *New Living Translation*). As we learned, *all* things in heaven and on earth belong to God and come from Him. He does not need our money. So why should we pay tithe?

The first mention of tithing in the Bible can be found in Genesis 14:20. After defeating many pagan kings and rescuing his nephew Lot, Abram is blessed by the priest Melchizedek, who praised God for delivering Abram's enemies into his hands. Abram then gives Melchizedek a tenth of the plunder that he had taken. Another instance of tithing comes in Genesis 28:20-22, when Jacob makes a covenant of safety and protection with the Lord. "And this stone that I have set up as a pillar will be God's house, and of all that you give me I will give you a tenth" (Genesis 28:22, *New International Version*).

In both stories, tithe was given not as the response to a command, but as gift—a physical

Did you know?

A study done by the Pew Research Center found that, while the majority of Americans believe a young adult should be financially independent by age 22, only about 24 percent of young adults that age actually are.²



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