

# Casting our Crowns

## *Annual Stewardship Campaign*

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Dear Members and Friends of Holy Trinity Anglican Church,

Every year, we ask our parishioners and friends to kindly estimate their giving for the coming year. The purpose is two-fold. First, the Gospel calls us to be faithful stewards of God's gifts. Second, it is necessary that our parish plan a ministry budget for the new year. This year, for the second year in a row, the Vestry and I have asked Vestryman Andy Figueroa to lead our efforts for the planned giving campaign which we are calling "Casting our Crowns." Andy has written a series of helpful articles intended to inform us about the salient issues we ought to consider when contemplating the Gospel call to give for the Kingdom of God.

May God continue to bless us all at Holy Trinity Church.

Fr. Brad Cunningham+  
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## Godly Use of Possessions

11/23/2014 Andy Figueroa

The concept of Godly stewardship requires that believers use all their possessions in ways that are pleasing to God and faithful to Holy Scripture. While researching the topic I found a section of the article *Biblical Ethics* in the on-line ESV commentary: <http://www.esvbible.org/resources/esv-study-bible/article-ethics/> to be very well balanced. It is the primary source for today's article.

*We urge you, brothers, ... to work with your hands, as we instructed you, so that you may walk properly before outsiders and be dependent on no one. (1 Thessalonians 4:10-12 ESV) and If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. (1 Timothy 5:8 ESV)*

As Paul wrote to the Thessalonians and Timothy, Christians should work and some of the wages or profits should be used to support ourselves and our families. However, there are strong warnings in the Bible against the love of money, the temptations of wealth, and spending that is wasteful, selfish, or self-indulgent. As is written in the letter to the Hebrews, *Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."* (Hebrews 13:5 ESV)

A second Godly use of our possessions is to save for the future. As James wrote, *you do not know*

*what tomorrow will bring. (James 4:14 ESV) However, accumulating savings may become a significant temptations to sin, reflecting covetousness and greed. Jesus said, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth ... but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, ... For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (Matthew 6:19-21 ESV)*

The third use of possessions repeatedly emphasized in the Bible, is giving money to those in need, or to the Lord's work in the church and in missions. Under the Old Covenant, God required a "tithe." God said, *"Every tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the trees, is the LORD's; it is holy to the LORD."* (Leviticus 27:30 ESV) However, Christians are not bound by the Old Covenant law to give a "tithe" or a tenth of one's income. Instead, Christian giving should be generous (2 Cor. 8:2), cheerful (2 Cor, 9:7), sacrificial (Mark 12:42-44), and proportionate (1 Cor. 16:2).

We are the heirs of the Hebrew people to whom the promises and the commandments of the Old Covenant were given. Through these, we can learn much about the will of God even though we are not specifically bound by the Old Covenant laws. In his book, *Answers to Questions*, F. F. Bruce wrote, *Each Christian must come to a conscientious decision on this subject before God, and not be content to submit to the dogmatic statements of others; and it will be surprising if grace does not impel him to give a larger proportion than ever the law demanded.*

*You will find a copy of this article at <http://2chronicles36.org/>*