

# CHRISTIAN STEWARDS ARE GRACIOUS GIVERS

By Rev. Thomas Soltis, SELC Stewardship Director

## God Is a Gracious Giver

Ephesians 2:8 is a beautiful expression of gracious giving: "It is by grace you have been saved through faith, and this not from yourselves, it is a gift from God." The N.T. word for grace is "charis" which means "that which affords joy in a lovable way." God lovingly graced us with the joyous gift of salvation through the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus, on the cross. What a relief!

Everything else, in heaven above and on earth below, is also the result of God's grace.. The N.T. Greek word for gift is "doron" which means "a present - a gift graciously given". God is a gracious giver. In grateful thanksgiving for His giving grace, we should graciously give as well.

## Scriptural Encouragements

**Psalm 112:1;9;5** - Blessed is the man who fears the Lord ... He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor ... Good will come to him who is generous.

**Prov. 21:26** - The righteous give without sparing.

**Prov. 25:21-22** - If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat ... the Lord will reward you..

**Matt. 25:34-46** - (Judgement Day) The King will say to those on His right: "... *I was hungry and you gave me something to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink. I was a stranger and you invited me in. I needed clothes and you clothed me. I was sick and you looked after me. I was in prison and you came to visit me. Whatever you did for the least of these brothers of mine, you did it for me.*"

**Luke 6:38** - Give and it will be given to you.

**2 Cor.9:6** - Whoever sows generously will also reap generously.

## Good Stewards Are Cautious Givers

Personal money management involves giving wisely. For example, a quick, convenient handout to a street beggar, may destructively support an alcohol or drug addiction. Instead, take him to a restaurant and pay the bill. Ignore scam letters. One from Kiev, Ukraine, reported an attack on the way back to a hotel with money, bank cards and a mobile phone stolen. A plea for \$2,950 USD (wire transferred) was requested to pay bills and buy a flight ticket home. Scams have catapulted in multiple forms to deceive the unwary. Even seemingly legitimate charities are not on the level. The Federal Trade Commission recently leveled

fraud suits against: Cancer Fund of America, Inc.; Cancer Support Services, Inc.; Children's Cancer Fund of America, Inc.; Breast Cancer Society.

Regulators said donations were diverted to fundraisers and friends for personal use - cars, cruises college tuition, shopping trips, etc. David Boroschoff of "Charity Watch" indicated, "Lax



reporting requirements allow charities to manipulate both the numbers and giving public." To investigate an unfamiliar charity before you donate, contact:

[www.CharityWatch.org](http://www.CharityWatch.org)

## Be Selective in Your Giving

In January draw up a list of charities you know and wish to support annually. To ease the pressure of cash flow, spread them out throughout the year by selecting specific months for specific charities.

Budget some extra bucks should a need arise unexpectedly you wish to support - natural disaster, tragedy, community need, beggar, needy neighbor, etc. The following list contains terrific Lutheran causes worthy of your annual support:

- **The Lutheran Haven** - The SELC District's heavenly aid to the elderly. (1-407-365-5676)
- **Lutheran World Relief & Human Care** - An LCMS funding source for the hungry, needy, disasters, etc. Recently over \$7 million was contributed to aid those affected by the rash of natural disasters in 2017. Distribution costs will allow 94% for aid. (1-888-930-4438)
- **Lutheran Housing Support** - Provides lodging for the underprivileged. (1-800-248-1930)
- **Lutheran Immigration & Refugee Services** - A safe, legal refugee process. (1-877-291-7061)
- **Lutherans for Life** - Helps protect the helpless unborn from abortion. (1-888-364-5433)

## RELATED RESOURCES

[www.selc.lcms.org](http://www.selc.lcms.org) - Personal Stewardship  
Personal Finances "Con Man Scammer"  
Community "Stewards of the Needy"  
Community "Stewards of the Hungry"