

Developing Generous Children in a Materialistic World

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Culture can be toxic for children and other living things with its emphasis on acquisition, materialism and self-centered living. Christ calls us into community - to love one another as we have been loved.

Four Keys for Nurturing Faith

1. **Caring conversations:** Learn how to talk to and especially how to listen to one another. Value time spent getting to know one another:
 - a. What happened today that you enjoyed?
 - b. What made you proud?
 - c. What in the world concerns you?
 - d. What do you dream about?
2. **Family devotions:** Pray together
 - a. Say grace
 - b. Pray before bedtime
 - c. Pray for one another and pray for those outside the family.
 - d. Find God in your everyday lives.
3. **Rituals and traditions:** Practice family rituals that include God
 - a. Instead of yelling, "Get up now, the bus is coming!" invite your children to greet the day as God's creation and gift to them: "This is the day the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it."
 - b. "God go with you today."
 - c. "I'll be praying for you. What would you like me to pray about?"
4. **Family service:** Take opportunities to serve together at church and in the community
 - a. At church: greeting before the service, reading lessons together, cleaning up the church grounds in the spring
 - b. In the community: serving dinner at a soup kitchen, visiting a nursing home resident, making cards for shut-ins or participating in a family mission trip.

We can make a difference in helping families become stewards of God's precious gift of time together.

Stewardship Strategies for Parents

1. **Give generously yourselves.** If you want your children to become givers, you have to give them an example to follow.
2. **Use family devotions.** When you teach your children the stories of our faith at home, explain to them what the Bible says about giving.
3. **Expose your children to ministry.** Let your children see for themselves the many opportunities that exist to give to the Lord. Get involved with the various ministries in your parish – outreach, service, mission, leadership, liturgy (ushers, acolytes, choir, lectors, lay Eucharistic ministers, teachers, etc.).
4. **Get them started.** Give them a sum of money with the assignment to give to a ministry of their choice. Then let them move on to giving a percentage of their allowance regularly.

A Child's Understanding of Stewardship¹

Very young children:

- Learn about the world in which we live in order to appreciate God's gift of the earth;
- Build an appreciation of themselves as a foundation for understanding how they can care for (be stewards of) God's world and God's people;
- Learn to put their possessions away and care for them as God's stewards, and be called stewards when they act in this manner;
- Grow as we praise them for their positive stewardship actions.

Children ages three to six will:

- Enjoy songs, stories and games about caring for the earth and for those around us;
- Hear the word "steward" used in reference to those who care for the world and all that is in it;
- Know persons who care for (are stewards of) various parts of our world;
- Develop group skills that lead to a sense of being stewards and caring for others;
- Grow in pride in the church family and recognize ways that the church acts as God's steward, caring for the world and helping the people of the world;
- Appreciate the talents and abilities that God has given them;
- Find simple ways to use their abilities to act as stewards, and be affirmed in those actions;
- Recognize that we come together to worship and study and then go out to be God's stewards.

Children in Grades 1 – 3 will:

- Learn how their actions affect the earth and other people, and learn to accept responsibility for their own actions;
- Enjoy expanded experiences of songs, games, and stories about caring for the earth and the people;
- Learn to manage (be stewards of) their time;
- Learn that money is a gift from God and belongs to God;
- Recognize money as the product of ways we use our God-given talents;
- See different ways money functions in the church, learning how we need money for classroom supplies, cleaning materials, salaries, mission giving, etc.;
- Expand understanding of acts of stewardship toward the world and others outside the church, and develop ways to express those acts.

Children in Grades 4 – 6 can:

- Distinguish between independence and interdependence, recognizing that we are all dependent on the earth and interdependent among each other;
- Recognize our responsibilities as a church member to act as a steward through prayers, presence, gifts and service;
- Develop specific talents to use as stewards;
- Relate facts about the earth to the way we follow God's instructions to care for the earth and all that is in it;
- Research and initiate conversations in order to find out about stewardship themselves;
- Become aware of and carry out ways to practice stewardship through special projects and in everyday life.

¹ Halverson, Delia. *Let the Children Give: Time, Talents, Love and Money* (Discipleship Resources, 2007).

Frequently Asked Questions about Children & Money

Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. Deuteronomy 6:6-7

How can we train up our children to carry on family generosity? The single best thing parents can do is to practice Christian generosity in the sight of their children. Children learn by example, and parents are their foremost teachers. Particularly if you have a tradition of family giving, you should take care to make the gospel of Jesus Christ the main thing, rather than the family legacy. Family legacy, while a good thing, cannot motivate true Christian generosity. Parents must teach their children to be committed first and foremost to Christ and his kingdom. Anything else, family included, must take second place.

“Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple.” Luke 14:26

With that warning, there are certain steps parents can take to train up their children well:

1. Teach them to associate money with labor.
2. Teach them to save.
3. Give them opportunities to practice giving.
4. Take them with you to serve the poor.
5. Teach them some basic financial planning tools.
6. Teach them by example how to live simply.
7. Show them how family finances work.
8. Teach them that many things are more important than money.

At what age should children start learning about generosity? As early as they can understand. Of course, just when this time comes may not be entirely clear to parents. But the words of Moses from Deuteronomy to the people of Israel are relevant in this regard: “Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.” By the things parents say and do in the home, day in and day out, they teach their children how to live.

Of course, different measures will be appropriate to different ages.

1. Toddlers may watch you put money in the offering plate.
2. School-age children may give out of their allowance.
3. Adolescents may give out of their own babysitting income.

What opportunities are there for children to practice giving? The desire to give children practice at giving is commendable, and opportunities are abundant.

1. Children of all ages can be involved in the family giving process. Do your children know to whom you give? If you involve them in the decision-making process, you can teach them both about giving and about the gospel.
2. Children of all ages can give their time and energy in acts of service. Consider taking your kids with you to deliver a meal to a needy family, visit a nursing home, or rake leaves for an invalid. In this way, they can learn to give even before they have money of their own.
3. When children are old enough to have money of their own (whether from allowance or employment), parents can train them to give regularly and generously to the church.
4. Above and beyond church giving, it is good to give children chances to give voluntarily to projects that excite them. Parents should look for opportunities to expose them to foreign missionaries, local ministries and people in need, explaining that they are free to give where the Lord leads them. The opportunities for children to practice giving are abundant; you must determine which ones suit your children best.

When the offering plate comes around at church, should I give my children pocket change to put in it? Giving children spare change to put in the offering plate is certainly OK, but there may be other and perhaps better ways to teach them about giving to the Lord. For example, depending on their age, parents might want to pay their kids in return for small chores around the house, and then teach them to give an offering from their own income. Or again, parents might want to take them along to bring a meal to a needy family, so that they see more concretely where their offerings go. Giving children spare change for the offering plate is fine, but it is good to consider other teaching opportunities as well.

Should children receive an allowance? Under the right circumstances, yes. A parents' specific decision on this issue will depend largely on the child's situation and degree of maturity. Some children are too young for an allowance – they are not ready to manage money of their own yet. Other children are too old for an allowance – they should be gainfully employed rather than being supplied by their parents. A good rule of thumb is: If a child is old enough to practice managing money of her own, but not yet old enough to hold down a regular job outside of the home, then an allowance may be a good idea. Allowances are simply tools for good parenting. Parents should use them to the degree that they help them understand how to share, save and spend; they should not feel enslaved by them. If giving an allowance helps you teach your children about who God is and how to handle his money, then you should feel free to use it. But if it doesn't serve this end, then consider putting an end to it.

In all toil there is profit, but mere talk leads only to poverty. Proverbs 14:23

Should children be expected to work for their allowance money? Generally speaking, yes. Here too, a lot depends on the ages and circumstances of the children. Obviously, with very young children, parents provide for them without expecting labor in return. But as children get older, we naturally (and rightly) expect increased responsibility from them. One manifestation of this responsibility is the institution of chores – jobs done to contribute to the common life of the family. When children are old enough to receive an allowance, they are probably old enough to do chores as well. And one good parenting tool can be to connect allowance with chores – wages with labor. It is good in general to teach children to associate money with labor, as this is a basic biblical principle. But parents need not do it in exactly this way. Allowances and chores are simply tools for good parenting. We should use them to the degree that they help us get biblical truths across to our kids; we should not feel enslaved by them. But having said so, expecting children to work for their allowance money can be one good way to accomplish this parental goal.

Should children tithe from their allowance? Yes. An important prior question is whether your children are old enough to have an allowance, i.e., to manage money of their own. If they are, then they should be expected to do everything that comes with that responsibility, including (for Christian kids) giving to God. After all, the Bible teaches that giving is the privilege and responsibility of all God's people, regardless of age or income, because all have been changed by God's gospel of redemption in Jesus. Children are fully capable of giving to the Lord; in fact, it is often surprising how eager they are to do so. In short, if your children are old enough to receive an allowance, then they are probably old enough to give to the Lord from that allowance.

Now as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in utmost eagerness, and in our love for you—so we want you to excel also in this generous undertaking. I do not say this as a command, but I am testing the genuineness of your love against the earnestness of others. For you know the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich. Corinthians 8:7-9

Teaching children about money & stewardship

Allowances = power & responsibility & limitation

\$1 per week per year of age (5 years = \$5 a week)

1. Save 1/3 (for big things)
2. Spend 1/3 on anything
3. Give 1/3 (to their choice)

Given on a monthly basis and put into 3 jars.

Guidelines - money that is given away must be given out of the home - no strings attached. One is not to expect anything in return. We must learn to relieve ourselves of the attachment to money.

In the congregation;

- Figure out what your kids are giving in the congregation and recognize them as you do the adults
- Develop a narrative budget - how do you acknowledge donors/contributors to mission and ministry?
- Life of the worship/education/etc. committees should be like a discussion around the dinner table - all involved
- Children and youth need to be part of the stewardship/budget process
- Give children the information for making decisions: use justice issues (hunger) for starters

In the family:

- All members of the family should be part of the discussion on how a family is saving and how spending is done (on big ticket items).
- In Advent, each person gets \$25 to spend per person on another family member.
- In Lent, as a family choose a charity or organization to pray for and make a contribution to. Follow a Lenten calendar and put a coin into a jar for each good deed done, nice comment received or given, something to give thanks for, etc.

Children's Stewardship Pledge Card

I want to give too! My giving shows God my "thanks"!

My name is _____

I want to give:

In the space to the left, draw or write about what you would like to give this year!

Some ideas might be to:

- Help family/neighbors/friends.
- Give clothes, toys, or food to others.
- Take care of the earth, clean up litter, turn out lights, etc.
- Give tithes of allowance, gift money, or other earned money to church and missions.

Questions for group discussion (with examples of responses):

1. How are you a steward of yourself?
 - Exercise
 - Prayer
 - Rest/play
 - Not abusing our bodies
 - Blood donor
 - Meaningful work
 - Human love
 - Sexual satisfaction
2. How are you a steward of your living space?
 - Clean & repair it
 - Energy saving
 - Open door - people living with us - student exchange
 - Having a pet - caring and loving them
 - Creating a safe, comfortable and secure home
3. How do you exercise stewardship in /with the greater community in which you live?
 - When walking the dog bring a bag along to collect garbage on the way
 - Vote / know the issues
 - Volunteer in the community
 - Keep an atlas in the dining room to discuss world issues
4. How do exercise your stewardship of money?
 - Having a will / budget / giving ideas
 - What is your proportional giving? How do you decide who/what to give to?
 - How indebted are you?
5. How are we stewards of our relationships?
 - Taking time with kids on their own (once a month breakfast out / movie)
 - Always love them - don't always like them - always forgive them
 - Take time away from the kids at least 4 times a year

Families Challenging Materialism

How Families/Communities Can Challenge Materialism & Promote Stewardship

1. **Use public facilities.** Instead of always buying new books, use the public library where children learn to care for resources not because they own them, but because others need them too. Public parks and playgrounds provide many enriching opportunities that backyard play equipment can't.
2. **Critique advertising.** Watching TV with our children, looking through magazines together, commenting on billboards provide opportunities to help young people become more critical thinkers and less susceptible to advertising.
3. **Enjoy the outdoors.** Young people who grow up learning the delights of natural beauty are less interested in having lots of stuff in order to be happy. From walks in the park to hiking in mountains, from sleep-outs in the backyard to camping or canoeing, from local botanical gardens and arboretums to state and national parks, the beauty of creation delights far more than computer games and video arcades.
4. **Personalize celebrations.** Personal "presence" can be more satisfying than purchased presents when we celebrate birthdays, holidays, and other special occasions. Surprise parties, albums with special photos and personal statements, "homemade" gifts, going special places with the person being celebrated, etc., are all wonderful alternatives to consumer-oriented rituals.
5. **Open our homes and hearts to others.** Hospitality at home can include welcoming new neighbors, inviting school friends to dinner who are having a rough time at home, reaching out to relatives or neighbors living alone, offering a place to stay for teens needing temporary shelter or respite, and including international students who can't go home for holidays. Regular visits to local shelters, soup kitchens, food pantries, and nursing homes offer opportunities to meet and develop relationships with people who are hurting. This might motivate us to make sacrifices in one's life-style in order to help others who have less.
6. **Spare and share.** Set up a regular process for cutting back on desserts, soda and liquor, costly entertainment, or new clothes. Calculate the savings and decide as a family how to distribute them. Collect appeals for money that you receive through mail, email, the phone, or at the door and have the whole family decide which to help.
7. **Institute an "Exchange System".** Consider an "exchange system" whereby for each new item brought into the home, a similar item is given away to someone in need. This works especially well with articles of clothes but can also apply to books, games, toys; dishware, appliances and furniture.
8. **Shop with a conscience.** Buying from local producers (e.g., open air or farmers markets), eating at neighborhood restaurants, shopping at local stores, buying the handicrafts of "Third World" artisans for gifts, participating in boycotts of companies that exploit their workers and/or the environment all demonstrate and teach a sense of social responsibility. For a regular update on consumer boycotts, see www.boycotts.org (the website for Co-op America).
9. **Provide clothing allowances and shop at thrift stores.** Using thrift stores for some clothes when the children are young opens up a whole new world for them beyond the shopping mall. Inviting their friends to go along to a thrift store provides peer support for this way of being "different." Putting older children on a clothing allowance helps them learn how to budget and shop for bargains, while eliminating many a "please buy me..." argument.

The Shakertown Pledge

Recognizing that Earth and the fullness thereof is a gift from our gracious God, and that we are called to cherish, nurture, and provide loving stewardship for Earth's resources, and recognizing that life itself is a gift, and a call to responsibility, joy, and celebration, I make the following declarations:

1. I declare myself to be a world citizen.
2. I commit myself to lead a life of creative simplicity and to share my personal wealth with the world's poor.
3. I commit myself to join with others in the reshaping of institutions in order to bring about a more just global society in which all people have full access to the needed resources for their physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual growth.
4. I commit myself to occupational accountability, and so doing I will seek to avoid the creation of products which cause harm to others.
5. I affirm the gift of my body and commit myself to its proper nourishment and physical well-being.
6. I commit myself to examine continually my relations with others, and to attempt to relate honestly, morally, and lovingly to those around me.
7. I commit myself to personal renewal through prayer, meditation, and study.
8. I commit myself to responsible participation in a community of faith.

In April of 1973, a group of religious retreat center directors and their staffs gathered at the site of a restored Shaker village about 40 miles south of Lexington, Kentucky. When talk turned to statistics about the world's poor, the group began to examine their lifestyles and how their choices affect others. At a later meeting, some of the participants drafted this pledge and vowed to seek lifestyle examination and change.

This pledge was written by a group of religious retreat leaders who felt badly about being members of a privileged minority in a nation guilty of the over-consumption of the world's resources. They recognized that their own lifestyles were part of the problem. They named their pledge the Shakertown Pledge in honor of their original gathering place and because the Shaker community had believed wholeheartedly in lives of "creative simplicity." You, too, may want to sign it, or create a different one that suits your particular family and hang it in your kitchen.

10 Tips for a Simpler More Meaningful Christmas

1. Plan ahead. Instead of going on auto-pilot the day after Thanksgiving, hold a family meeting to decide what the group really wants to do and who's going to do what.
2. If you need a symbol for giving (in addition to Jesus and the Three Wise Ones), learn about St. Nicholas. Santa Claus has been completely taken over by commerce.
3. Avoid debt. Refuse to be pressured by advertising to overspend.
4. Avoid stress. Give to yourself. Don't assume that things have to be the same way they've always been.
5. Draw names rather than everyone giving something to everyone else in your giving circle. Set a ceiling for each recipient. Give children ONE thing they really want, rather than so many gifts. If need be, pool funds.
6. Give appropriate gifts. Get to know the recipient. Give what they want to receive, not what you want to buy.
7. Give alternative gifts. Give 25% of what you spent last year to the needy... individuals or groups locally, nationally or internationally. Buy crafts and clothing from developing countries at alternative gift markets, not from commercial importers, so that the artisans receive a fair price for their work. Give of yourself, not just "stuff" - a coupon book for future services (such as baby-sitting or an "enchanted evening"); something baked, sewn, handmade, composed, etc.; or a family service project, such as working together at a soup kitchen.
8. Celebrate Advent for four weeks before Christmas.
9. Put the gifts under the tree shortly before opening them. Then take turns opening them around the tree, not all at once, so that each gift can be admired and each giver thanked.
10. Make changes slowly but persistently. Don't try to change everything and everybody all at once. The resistance will make you feel defeated and lonely.

THE CHRISTMAS PLEDGE

Believing in the beauty and simplicity of Christmas, I commit myself to the following:

1. To remember those people who truly need my gifts.
2. To express my love for family and friends in more direct ways than presents.
3. To rededicate myself to the spiritual growth of my family.
4. To examine my holiday activities in light of the true spirit of Christmas.
5. To initiate one act of peacemaking within my circle of family and friends.

from *Unplug the Christmas Machine*, by Jo Robinson and Jean Coppock Staeheli

10 Tips for a Simpler More Meaningful Easter

1. Plan ahead. Instead of going on auto-pilot, hold a family meeting to decide what the group really wants to do and who's going to do what. Observe Lent for 40 days before Easter, possibly with a study/action/prayer guide or calendar.
2. Focus on relationships with family, friends and other people, and with God, rather than on "stuff." Spend your time, energy and money nurturing people, not things.
3. For a symbol of Easter, look to Jesus' resurrection. Bunnies, eggs and candy have been taken over by commerce. Do they tell the story you want to tell? Let's tell the real stories of our faith and values. Reserve fertility rites for the first day of Spring, March 21st; Earth Day, April 22nd or May Day, May 1st.
4. Avoid debt and gluttony. Refuse to be pressured by advertising to over spend or over eat. Build community with a meal of mostly locally produced food - planned, prepared and cleaned up by the whole family.
5. Avoid stress. Give to yourself. Don't assume that things have to be the same way they've always been. Make changes slowly but persistently. Don't try to change everything and everybody all at once. The resistance may make you feel defeated and lonely.
6. If you need to give gifts, give appropriate ones. Get to know the recipient. Give what they want to receive, not what you want to buy. Give children one thing they really want, rather than many gifts. Set a price ceiling. Put gifts out shortly before opening them. Then take turns opening them, not all at once, so that each gift can be admired and each giver thanked.
7. Give alternative gifts. Give at least 25% of what you spend to the needy... individuals or groups locally, nationally or internationally.
8. Give of yourself, not just "stuff" - a coupon book for future services (such as baby-sitting or an "enchanted evening") or something baked, sewn, handmade, composed, etc. Consider more time for volunteering rather than entertainment. If you need to give cards, make your own.
9. If you need to buy gifts and clothing, buy those from developing countries at alternative gift markets, not from commercial importers, so that the artisans receive a fair price for their work. Avoid mass produced knickknacks, novelties and toys. Fancy, expensive clothes are signs of status, not respect for God. In church they show an inappropriate blend of culture and faith. Decline to compliment people for their finery. Avoid the "ritual display of plenty" characteristic of the Easter fashion parades prevalent earlier in the century.
10. Choose simplicity of decoration over extravagance, for example, one modest, well-placed display instead of dozens of lilies in church or home. Avoid plastic and imported flowers and trimming.

Activities To Do at Home

Roll-a-Prayer

All ages

Using a die from any game, take turns rolling the die and offering simple prayers, based on the following:

- 1 – Thank God for something you enjoy owning
- 2 – Thank God for someone you enjoy knowing
- 3 – Thank God for something you are glad you can do (a gift or talent)
- 4 – Tell God something nice you'd like to do for someone else
- 5 – Ask God to help you do something
- 6 – Ask God any question

Source: *Growing A Grateful, Generous Heart* (Parent/Family Resource) Living the Good News

Ten Thin Dimes

Age 10 and above

There once was an unemployed man who made a bargain with God. If God would get him a job, he would give God 10% of all the money he made each year. The first year he made \$100, and he gave God \$10. The second year he made \$1,000, and he gave God \$100. The years went by and the man became wealthier through investments and hard work, always giving God 10% of what he had each year. Finally after 10 years the man made \$1,000,000. When it came time to give God 10%, the man realized that he would have to give God \$100,000. The man went to God and asked to be released from the bargain saying he just could not afford \$100,000. God replied, "I cannot release you from your bargain, but I can make it possible for you to afford me again."

Give everyone 10 dimes.

- How hard would it be to give a tenth of this to the church for God's work?
- What would it be like to give all of it?
- Refer to Luke 21:1-4 (Widow's offering) Why did the woman give all her money to the temple?

Pretend each dime is worth \$100.

- Would you be able to give away all of it? Why? Why not?
- If each dime were worth \$1,000 or \$1,000,000, would you be able to give all of it away? Half of it? A tenth?

God doesn't ask for all we have. But God does ask for the best of what we have.

- What are the things that God asks from you?
- How does God's expectations differ from the world's expectations?

Source: *"Treasuring Our Gifts" Leader's Guide* Episcopal Curriculum for Youth (Morehouse Publishing, 1998)

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"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give." *Winston Churchill*

Books about children and money for adult reading

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Dungan, Nathan. *Prodigal Sons & Material Girls: How Not to be Your Child's ATM* (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2003). An exploration of who and what is shaping the financial habits and values of today's young people and what to do about it by proposing the "share, save, spend" method.

Halverson, Delia. *Let the Children Give: Time, Talents, Love and Money* (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 2007). Resources, activities, ideas to supplement any ongoing ministry with children for teaching how to use their gifts, talents, and the earth's resources as a way to show their love for God.

Roehlkepartain, Eugene C., Elanah Dalyah Naftali and Laura Musegades. *Growing Up Generous – Engaging Youth in Giving and Serving* (Bethesda: Alban Institute, Inc., 2000).

Searls, Michael J., *How to Make Money Make Sense to Children* (Summit Financial Publishing, 1998). Answers many of the questions children ask and things parents want children to know. Also contains excellent suggestions about other resources on the subject.

Taylor, Betsy. *What Kids Really Want That Money Can't Buy: Tips for Parenting in a Commercial World* (New York: Warner Books, 2003). Ways to re-instill a love of life's simple pleasures such as friendship, family rituals, appreciation of nature, Sabbath and turning away from consumerism.

Resources and websites

5 Movies to Teach Your Kids About Consumerism – An independent blog about riding yourself off debt and paying off debt includes a post of links to movie clips regarding money / stewardship (Toy Story, Ice Age Robots, The Lorax, The Princess and the Frog, Bee Movie) <http://manvsdebt.com/5-movies-to-teach-your-kids-about-consumerism/>

Alternatives for Simple Living A non-profit organization that equips people of faith to challenge consumerism live justly and celebrate responsibly with downloadable resources. www.SimpleLiving.org

Bulfer, Bonnie. *Gratitude Banks* How to foster positivity, love and thankfulness, including an easily assembled mite-box for coins. www.thankinggod.com

Dungan, Nathan. *Financial Sanity* (2005) A full curriculum kit for teaching families budgeting, consumer awareness and sharing with others. www.ShareSaveSpend.com

Episcopal Relief & Development – numerous resources for clean water, malaria eradication and relief, including children & youth curriculum including "Nets for Life," "Abundant Life Garden Project," "Rita Mosquito," and "Act Out." www.er-d.org/Formation/

Frontline, "The Merchants of Cool" – A PBS documentary on the marketing of popular culture to teenagers. <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/cool/>

Heifer Project International – numerous resources for hunger education and giving opportunities, including “Fill the Ark: A Giving Calendar,” “Living Gift Market: Planning Guide for an Intergenerational Alternate Project,” “Animal Crackers: A Global Education Resource for Children, Youth and Adults” and “Lessons from Village Earth.” www.heifer.org

Junior’s Clubhouse: Life Lessons with Junior (Dave Ramsey) is a website of games, puzzles and stories for children, pages for parents and a curriculum for purchase. <http://kids.daveramsey.com/>

Larsen, Roland S. and Doris Larsen. **Values & Faith: Activities for Family and Church Groups** (Minneapolis: Youth & Family Institute, 1998). A variety of activities ranging from quiet to active regarding values clarification.

Moon Jar is a website as well as resource materials for teaching children about money. www.moonjar.com

Parenting for Peace and Justice is a division of the Institute for Peace and Justice (Jim McGinnis) that also includes activities and resources for stewardship. www.ipj-ppj.org

Teaching Tolerance is a division of the Southern Poverty Law Center that produces numerous videos and materials as well as a free quarterly magazine with ideas and resources on justice issues. www.teachingtolerance.org

World Vision produces numerous resources for hunger education and relief efforts, including their “30-Hour Famine” program. www.worldvision.org

Books to read with children

Children love to be read to . . . so take advantage of those times regularly and talk about the themes and message of each story. There are many books written for children that can be translated into themes of stewardship – sharing one’s talents, gifts, possessions, time and money with others. Whether it is caring for creation, learning what it means to be a friend or living in community, books can provide a bridge for parents and caregivers to discuss Christian concepts.

Barry, Robert. **Mr. Willowby’s Christmas Tree** (Doubleday) Teaches recycling on a young child’s level. Reading level: Ages 4-8

Baylor, Byrd. **The Table Where Rich People Sit** (Aladdin Paperbooks, 1994). A girl discovers that her impoverished family is rich in things that matter in life, especially being outdoors and experiencing nature.

Berenstain, Stan & Jan. **The Berenstain Bears’ Dollars and Sense** (Random House, 2001). Mama and Papa try to teach Brother and Sister the value of money and how to manage their allowance.

Berenstain, Stan & Jan. **The Berenstain Bears’ Trouble with Money** (Random House, 1983). Brother and Sister Bear learn some important lessons about earning and spending money.

Bond, Felicia. **The Day It Rained Hearts** (Laura Geringer) Gift giving that emphasizes the thought over the gift (Formerly: Four Valentine’s In A Rain Storm)

Brown, Marc. **Arthur’s Pet Business** (Little, Brown and Company, 1990). Arthur’s determination to prove he is responsible enough to have a puppy brings him a menagerie of animals to care for.

Brown, Marcia. ***Stone Soup*** by Marcia Brown (classic French tale of how soldiers are helped by villagers to create a feast out of nothing; sharing with all our neighbors. Reading level: Ages 4-8

Brumbeau, Jeff. ***The Quiltmaker's Gift*** (Scholastic Trade) Learning to give. Reading level: Ages 4-8

Buckley, Ray. ***The Give-Away*** (Abingdon Press, 1999). The animals gather and offer to give themselves in order to revive a declining vitality of spirit in the humans; a Native American tale of the most precious gift. Reading level: Ages 4-8

Charlip, Remy. ***Harlequin and the Gift of Many Colors*** Giving rather than giving up. Age: Baby-Preschooler

Coutant, Helen. ***The Gift*** (Random Library) After much deliberation, a young girl finally decides on the perfect present for her special friend, an old lady who has suddenly gone blind.

dePaola, Tomie. ***The Clown of God*** (Harcourt) Sharing our talents

Dr. Seuss. ***How the Grinch Stole Christmas*** (Random House). The Grinch schemes to steal the joy of Christmas. Reading level: Ages 4-8

Harman, Hollis Page. ***Money Sense for Kids*** (Barron's Educational Services, Inc., 1999). Explains the nature of money, the different ways in which it can be represented and how it can be saved or invested, discussing mutual funds, the stock market, banks and inflation. Includes games and activities.

Karlitz, Gail and Honig, Debbie. ***Growing Money: A Complete Investing Guide for Kids*** (Price Stern Slone, Inc. member of Penguin Putnam Books for Young Readers, 1999). Explains different types of investing - savings accounts, bonds, stocks, and mutual funds - and provides information to help make decisions on each kind of investment.

Keats, Ezra Jack. ***Peter's Chair*** (Harpercollins Juvenile Books) When Peter discovers his blue furniture is being painted pink for a new baby sister, he rescues the last unpainted item, a chair, and runs away. Property was meant to be shared. Reading level: Ages 4-8

Lawson, Robert. ***Rabbit Hill*** (Viking Press) Sharing God's provisions with all. Reading level: Ages 9-12

Lindgren, Astrid. ***Lotta On Troublemaker Street*** (Alladin Library) Family life, saying, "I'm sorry," forgiveness, steadfast love."

Lionni, Leo. ***Frederick*** (Knopf) Function and value of different members of the body. Reading level: Ages 4-8

Mayer, Gina and Mercer. ***Just a Piggy Bank*** (Golden Books Publishing Company, 2001). Little Critter learns about earning, spending and saving money.

McBrier, Page. ***Beatrice's Goat*** (2001). The story of a girl and the difference the gift of an animal makes in the life of a community from Heifer Project International.

Minarik, Else Holmelund. ***Kiss For Little Bear*** (Harper Collins) Love multiplies and creates an atmosphere of caring. Preschool

Ness, Evaline. ***Josefina February*** (Scribner) Unselfish giving.

Paterson, Katherine. *Summer of the Swans* (Harper Collins) ...unselfish love is a doorway to growth. Reading level: 3rd to 5th Grade

Paterson, Katherine. *The Great Gilly Hopkins* (Harper Collins) The power of accepting love.

Pfister, Marcus. *The Rainbow Fish* (North South Books, 1992). A little fish gives away all his gifts and turns into a beautiful creature; sharing one's prized possessions. Reading level: Ages 4-8

Rock, Lois. *Best-Loved Parables* (Augsburg Books) Thought-provoking stories.

Rodanas, Kristina. *The Little Drummer Boy* (Clarion Books) Reading level: Ages 4-8

Schneider, Richard H. *Why Christmas Trees Aren't Perfect* (Abingdon Press) The story is about Small Pine, a perfect tree, which allows itself to be used in service to those in need. "Even though its kind sacrifices for the animals of the forest have marred the perfection of its shape, Small Pine is selected to be the Christmas tree in the Queen's castle, demonstrating that living for the sake of others makes us most beautiful in the eyes of God."

Silverstein, Shel. *The Giving Tree* (1964). The classic tale of a tree that gives of itself over the years to a boy in selfless love.

Sendak, Maurice. *Where the Wild Things Are* (HarperCollins).... assurance of a safe return after forays into wild places.

Smith, David. *If the World Were a Village: A Book About the World's People*

Steig, William. *Amos and Boris*. Giving to strangers.

Taback, Simms. *Joseph Had a Little Overcoat* (Viking Children's Books) Stewardship of our possessions. Reading level: Ages 4-8

Tazewell, Charlies. *The Littlest Angel* (Ideals Children's Books) Reading level: Ages 4-8

Wood, Douglas. *Old Turtle*. A modern classic about giving and the stewardship of creation.