

THE STEWPOT

A POTPOURRI OF PRACTICAL IDEAS TO HELP YOU BECOME A BETTER STEWARD

May/June 2025 • Volume 2 • Issue 3

The Holy Spirit A Gift to Steward

By Audrey Folkenberg



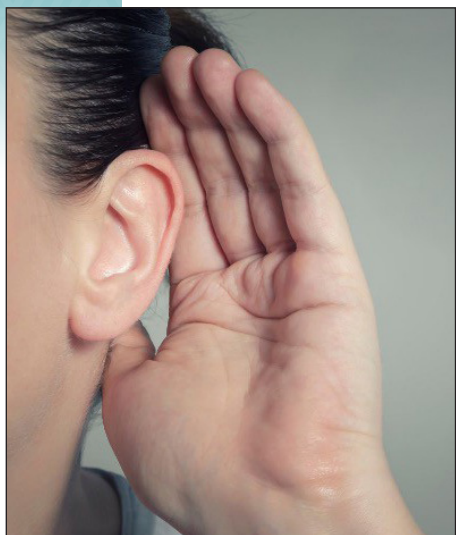
One of the bedrock principles of stewardship is “Trust in God.” Listening to the still, small voice of God is a gift to be stewarded. Let me explain it with these two stories.

While my husband was away on a work trip in Mainland China, I stayed home in Taiwan with our three children. The days were tough—frequent hospital visits and doctor appointments due to the kids’ upper respiratory infections made things exhausting. One morning, my husband called to check in. He was chatty, but I wasn’t in the mood. I had sick kids to care for, a messy house, meals to cook, and an empty fridge demanding a trip to the market. He sensed my need for support, cut his trip short, and came

STEWARDSHIP IS REVOLUTIONARY GENEROSITY. IT INVOLVES THE 7 T’S:
TIME, TEMPLE, TALENT, TREASURE, TRUST IN GOD, THEOLOGY, AND TESTIMONY.

home that night. I was so thankful to see him.

The next morning, after feeding our nearly one-year-old daughter and putting her down for a nap, I stepped out of our apartment, slipped on my shoes, and started down the stairs toward the market. Suddenly, I felt a strong impression—a voice within—urging me to go back. I paused, confused. Why go back? My husband was home, our daughter was napping, and the



boys were at their half-day Chinese kindergarten. I hesitated but kept walking. Still, the sense that I needed to return wouldn't leave me. Eventually, I turned around, took off my shoes (in good Asian fashion), and re-entered our apartment. Everything seemed fine. My husband was getting ready for the day. The apartment was quiet. Why had I come back?

Then I walked over to the crib—and froze. Our daughter's skin was bluish, and her breathing was shallow and labored. I immediately scooped her up and called for my husband. We rushed to the hospital, navigating traffic in a panic. I carried our daughter into the

ER, and just as we arrived, she went limp in my arms. Praise the Lord, when the medical team placed a nebulizer mask over her nose and mouth, she began to breathe freely again. Her color returned, and she looked up at me. I will never forget that moment.

On another occasion, during a furlough back in the U.S., we were visiting my sister and her family in Tennessee. Their home, nestled in a peaceful country setting, was a breath of fresh air. The kids loved playing outside—riding ponies, jumping on the trampoline, racing around the yard. It was so different from our urban missionary life, living in some of the earth's most densely populated cities. Having grown up on a farm myself, it felt wonderfully right to see my children experiencing this. When the kids asked to go play in the treehouse with their cousins, I smiled and said, "Of course! Have fun!" But the moment they left, I felt an impression to follow them to the treehouse. It didn't make sense. They'd be fine.

I ignored the feeling. Minutes later, I heard panicked screams, "Mommy! Mommy! He fell out of the treehouse! He's

**Check out
this video
about
trusting God:**



bleeding!" One of my sons had fallen ten feet from the balcony after leaning on a faulty railing. Discovering that blood was oozing from a gash just over his heart, I applied pressure to the wound and we rushed him to the emergency room. Thankfully, after cleaning the wound and placing stitches, we were able to go home.

Later that day, I walked to the treehouse, trying to understand what had happened. As I shuffled through the dried leaves below, something shiny caught my eye—it was an open pocketknife. My son had been using it to whittle a stick, and when he fell, the knife gashed his chest. I shuddered. The injury could have been far worse.

You might be wondering: what do these stories have to do with stewardship? Isn't stewardship just about money—those moments in church when the offering plate is passed, and we're reminded to return a faithful tithe? Yes, stewardship includes our finances—how we manage money and honor God with it. But it is much more.



Christian stewardship touches every part of life because it starts with the heart. Just as the heart pumps life-giving oxygen throughout the body, our love for Jesus—our gratitude, our commitment, and our desire to honor Him—flows into every area of our lives. How we use our time, our talents,

our resources, and even how we respond to challenges and opportunities reveals the condition of our hearts. Stewardship includes our spiritual practices too—our engagement in prayer, our freedom to own and read the Bible, our involvement in worship. It also includes how we respond to the promptings of the Holy Spirit.



Let's return to the stories I shared. The Holy Spirit is another precious gift—a treasure to steward. Luke 11:13 says, "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" God invites us to live in His presence, to listen for His voice, and respond to the Holy Spirit's promptings. Isaiah 30:21 says, "Your ears shall hear a word behind you,



saying, 'This is the way, walk in it,' whenever you turn to the right hand or whenever you turn to the left."

I believe it was the Holy Spirit who prompted me to return home that morning in Taiwan. I believe it was His urging I felt to follow the kids to the treehouse. Looking back, I am filled with awe and gratitude. Though I've doubted and failed at times, He remains faithful—a faithful steward of my life.

So, how will we live in response? What changes do we need to make? What choices can we take today to better reflect our love and trust in God? May we live in such a way that we hear these words one day, "Well

done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your Lord" (Matthew 25:23). The Holy Spirit is one of the greatest gifts we've been given—the very voice and presence of God in our lives. Let us steward that gift with joy, humility, and thanksgiving.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Audrey is the Director of Southern New England Conference's Stewardship and Planned Giving & Trust Services Departments. She enjoys anything outdoors, pets, ethnic foods, table games, and time with family.

PRODUCED AND
DISTRIBUTED BY:
STEWARDSHIP
MINISTRIES, NORTH
AMERICAN DIVISION
OF SEVENTH-DAY
ADVENTISTS.