

Stewardship December 2006

Wants, Needs and All Between

"For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains." 1 Timothy 6:10

In the Broadway musical hit, Cabaret, one song declares, "Money makes the world go around!" No doubt about it – money talks. And we know that what the writer of 1 Timothy says is true: "the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil." Money can be used for evil purposes, and all kinds of evil things can happen when people misuse wealth or hurt others in order to gain wealth.

Of course, money itself is not the problem. It's our values and attitudes and habits that determine whether or not we are using money in positive, life-sustaining ways. One of the biggest challenges individuals and families face in our affluent culture is determining how to spend their money. That challenge really hits home at this time of year! It doesn't help that advertisers are good at turning "wants" into "needs." We are all vulnerable to that, but children and youth are especially vulnerable. That's why it is so important for parents and mentors to help them establish healthy financial habits, habits that include saving and sharing money with those who are in need.

The more we are blessed with wealth, the greater our need to examine our values and our attitudes and our habits toward it. How is it with you and your money? How do you and your family sort out the needs from the wants? How do you determine what to spend, what to save, and what to share with others who are less fortunate? Do you have a plan? As we end one year and look forward to the start of a new year, take time to think about your personal or family money plan. Pray for wisdom to make decisions about money that lead to healthy habits and life-giving opportunities.