

Weekly Devotion for October 28

Transient Stewards

by Duke Southard

"This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be trustworthy." – 1 Corinthians 4:1-2

We lived in the same house in the small town of Tuftonboro, New Hampshire, for almost forty years. Since it was new when we bought it, it will forever be "The Southard House" or "The Southard Homestead" as far as the community is concerned, no matter how many subsequent owners there might be.

We loved that home where our children were raised, where our marriage flourished, where unbroken friendships thrived, and where our little church on the lake became an integral part of our lives. When it came time to move on, there was considerable trepidation, despite there no longer being any children at home, and the size of the house and the land were demanding more love and care than we could give. We had been good stewards of that property, planting large gardens, a beautiful asparagus bed, and a high-bush blueberry patch as we maintained the house as it deserved.

As the closing approached, I developed a multi-page list of helpful hints for the new owners, including every possible thing we could think of to allow them to be good stewards for our precious home—the double well system, care and feeding of the gardens, the asparagus bed, the blueberries, and many of the idiosyncrasies and quirks of a house of that age. We trusted the new owners to love the home as we had.

Fifteen months later, that trust was shattered. The property had been foreclosed upon. The asparagus bed was mowed down and gone, the blueberries were strangled by other bushes, the gardens were nothing but weeds, and the inside of the house was a neglected and abandoned disaster. It was heartbreaking.

We learned a hard lesson—stewardship, by its very nature, is temporary. We were transient stewards of that property. We "owned" it, but in the final analysis, it was a gift from God for a long but necessarily temporary time. May the Lord help us to realize that material things are blessings, but we are transient custodians, just passing through and enjoying what is given to us while we can.

Journaling:
Have there been times in your life when you could have been a better steward of the blessings you've been provided, whether spiritual or material?


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