

Attitude of Expectancy

By Jim Mall

My goal for everyone is to become the complete package, not just sales people.

Great salespeople and great people. Your clients stereotype you as a salesperson, when you come with an attitude of teaching and helping, the entire conversation changes. One of the most important attitudes we must have in selling is an attitude of expectancy. This comes when we give of ourselves. Our life, our time, our talent and our treasure. This process comes from stewardship.

Before we get into the meat of this topic, I want to ask you three questions.

1. Could you use more time? How many times have we run out of time trying to accomplish our goals? Wouldn't all of us love to have more time with our family, doing the things we love to do?
2. Could you use more talent? Wouldn't we all love to be better at our job? How about better parents, spouses, friends?
3. Could you use more money? That is a rather stupid question. But think about it, who couldn't use more money and what would you do with it?

The reason I ask these three questions is because I want to get your attention and help you realize, they all relate to the process of Stewardship

So, let's first define and understand stewardship. For most of us, if you have ever gone to church and this was the topic, all we heard about was that we needed to give more of the money we couldn't afford to give.

Stewardship is about money and everything else we have been given. If we focus on any of our gifts too much, we miss the point. Our goal as an everyday steward is to give and not count it as a loss. In your life, you may be asked to give money, time, prayer, skills, talents, compassion, or many other things. Our response to this call is a key to transformational stewardship.

So, let's start with what Mr. Webster defines as a Steward, According to Webster's Dictionary a steward is, "A person who manages another person's property and or finances." The way we need to look at life is the fact that everything we have comes from God, we get to manage it for him and will be held accountable for everything we do and have done with what God has given us, someday. Our time, how did we spend it? Did we help others? Our talents, the gifts God gave us, did we help others? Our treasure, our money, how did we spend it, did we help others? Tough questions, great reasons to practice stewardship. Not a good enough reason for me. I'm from the "Baby Boomer" generation, also called the "me" generation. The fall of 1976, I was working my way through college pumping gas. This was the days of "full service." We filled your tank, checked your oil, the air pressure in your tires and washed your windshield. A car came through our station that had a bumper sticker that said, "I Tithe." I had no idea what that meant. My sister has always been more biblical than me, so I asked her. She informed me that this was a person that gave ten percent back to God. This planted a seed of curiosity in my head, but nothing more.

I continued to think about it and listen at church about it, but I was not doing it. I was like most when it came to giving, if I had any leftover, I would give, be it time, talent or money.

Now, if you classify yourself as a Christian, if you believe what the Bible says about this subject, it is not an option, but an obligation. Lets read Romans, Chapter 14 verse 11 & 12. I am reading from the New International Version of the Bible. It is written: "As surely as I live, says the Lord, Every knee will bow before me, every tongue will confess to God." So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God. This is a powerful reason, but still hard to do. Kind of like exercising and flossing our teeth, we know we should do it but we can always find a reason not to. It still wasn't enough of a reason for me.

In 1988, over ten years after I had serviced that one car at my job, I decided to start a new occupation that was totally commission based. No salary, hourly pay. No expense account or financial help in any way. You ate what you sold. I have a huge fear of failure, so I thought, what a great time to "try" this tithing thing. As I had done some reading on the subject, I found that the Bible actually gave me permission to test it out. Lets read from Malachi, Chapter 3 verse 10. "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this, says the Lord Almighty, and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it."

"TEST ME IN THIS," says God.

So I did.

I visited with my wife and we agreed to give ten percent of every dollar I made selling insurance. That was in 1988. So I came to God with an attitude of fear and greed, for all the wrong reasons and he didn't say no. So stewardship for us started with tithing. We have done this faithfully since 1988 and we have been extremely blessed in every aspect of our lives. As we received the blessings of tithing we started studying the principals of stewardship and realized we were also giving of our time and talents by coaching our children's teams, working at the schools and serving at church. What we found was that stewardship equals blessings. Stewardship is nothing more than an attitude of giving.

This is how I feel the process works.

Give what you have right now, time, talent or money.

Receive what you need, right now.

Our children attended private Catholic schools, part of that process required a lot of fund raising since we did not have government tax dollars to help. I have a friend that is a very successful businessman. The first time I contacted him for a donation, he replied, "anytime you need money, please ask. But don't ask me to serve on any of the committees we have at school, due to my business affairs, I don't have the time. The time I do have after work I want to spend with my family."

He understands stewardship, he is giving of what he has and enjoying the blessing of what he needs.

Start where you can, you don't have to give a lot of your time, talent or money.

Matthew Chapter 10 verse 42 states this, "And if anyone gives a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward."

God does not need our time, there are no clocks in heaven.

God does not need our talent, really??? I think God can do anything he wants or needs to do.

God does not need our money, the streets of heaven are paved with gold.

There is a funny story supporting this information. A very wealthy man has been informed by his doctor he does not have long to live. He cashes in all his investments, sells all his property and has all the money converted into gold bars. When he passes away, he heads for heaven with his large suitcase full of gold bars. Saint Peter meets him at the gates of heaven and asks him, "what do you have in that huge suitcase, it looks very heavy?" The gentleman replies, "this is full of gold bars, I wanted to bring all my wealth with me." Saint Peter smiles and hollers at Saint Paul stating, "check this guy out, he brought some street paving material with him to heaven."

God does not need our time, our talent or our money.

God is looking for a change of heart.

I came to God for the wrong reasons, he did not say NO!

God is testing us all the time.

He is testing our character, our faith, our obedience, our love, our integrity, and our loyalty. Character is both developed and revealed by tests and all of life is a test!

You are always being tested. God constantly watches our response to people, problems, success, conflict, illness, disappointment and even the weather.

He watches the simplest actions such as when you open a door for someone, pick up a piece of trash or when you are polite toward a waitress or clerk.

You will be tested with poor leads pulls, no shows, rude, angry people, cancelled policies, illegally replaced policies, being lied to, delayed promises, unanswered prayers and undeserved accusations, just to name a few.

When you understand that life is a test, you realize that nothing is insignificant in your life. Even the smallest incident has significance for you and your character development. Every day is an important day and every second is a growth opportunity to deepen your character, to demonstrate love and depend on God.

The biggest detriment to stewardship, and many great changes, is the concern that we have to make huge, monumental changes in our lives. This is not the case at all.

We are all practicing stewardship everyday of our lives.

Many of you have given of your time.

You helped others. You opened a door for someone, offered words of encouragement. Coached your child's team. Volunteered at church, school or work to help others.

You have given of your talent by helping someone change a flat tire, fixing something for someone, cooked a meal for a grieving family. Help someone with knowledge you had that made their lives easier.

You have given of your treasure by paying for someone's meal, donating to any charity, giving to your church. Handed a homeless person some money on a street corner.

We are all giving many different ways, I want you to realize this, because God is rewarding you. Start looking for your blessings, God wants to bless us.

You don't need to change much of anything, just realize you are practicing stewardship and do more of it. You can't out give God. JC Penney gave away 90% of his income and died one of the wealthiest men in the world.

Don't look at the cost, Stewardship does not cost, it pays.

You will live differently, you will sell differently, when you are being a good steward, as you are giving you should expect to receive.

Let me give you a few examples that have occurred in our lives.

As I mentioned earlier, I am a Baby Boomer. When I was a kid, the vacation every child wanted to go on was Disneyland. We were fortunate enough to make the trip, but we stayed off site to save money. Every kid knew you wanted to stay at the Disneyland Hotel, eat with Mickey & Minnie, Goofey and Donald Duck, ride the monorail and get into the park one hour before everyone else. I promised myself, if I ever took my family, we would stay at the Disneyland Hotel. This opportunity presented itself, so we made the plans. On our day of arrival, the Disneyland Hotel was a “zoo.” The front desk was backed up ten people wide and ten people deep. When we finally got to the desk, I gave them our name, and I was escorted into the manager’s office. I was informed we had a problem, the family in our room would not leave. We would be put up at a hotel down the street, our dinner paid for and brought back in the morning to enter the park. They would then store our luggage and put it in our room after the family moved out. A little disappointed with the situation but not a deal breaker. My children were totally excited since they took us to our new hotel, which happened to be a 5-Star Hotel, in a long, white limousine. We were brought back in the same vehicle the next day. I met with the manager again, she had our ticket packets ready, stored our luggage and off we went.

We had a wonderful week at Disneyland. The morning we got up to leave, as expected, our bill had been pushed under the door. I opened it to check everything over and to our surprise it was blank. We had not been charged for any part of our stay, our tickets or any meals we had eaten. I headed to the manager's office to see what this was about. Her comment was, "I thought I would get to see you this morning Mr. Mall." I explained my concern and she just smiled and stated, "we were very impressed as to how you and your family handled a difficult situation. You could have yelled and made threats, as most people in this situation do, and you did not. We take care of our customers that understand these situations and treat us as we try to treat our customers. Disneyland has taken care of your entire stay, thank you and come again." WOW! A great life lesson learned by all of us. The golden rule still holds true, treat others as you would like to be treated.

Another example occurred when my wife inherited the job of caring for her elderly mother the last 7 years of her life. During this process my daughter needed a formal dress for prom. I was instructed by my wife how much money the dress should cost and away we went. We live in a rural part of America and our buying options are limited so we were in a town a hundred miles away. We shopped several dress stores and found one we could work with. They paraded my daughter in front of me in several different dress options until we agreed on the one my daughter loved. It needed a few alterations and we only had two weeks to get it done. They charged me for the dress, the alterations, a rush charge and shipping.

The \$150 dollar dress quickly added up to over \$300 dollars. I have bought many suits and have never paid for alterations, but being new to the dress purchasing business took it all in stride. I wrote the check and we headed out of the store. As I opened the door for my daughter I noticed she was crying. I asked what the problem was, thinking she didn't want the dress. My daughter stated, she loved the dress, she was concerned that we had spent way too much money. I explained to her it was not a problem and not to be concerned, besides, she looked amazing in it. I was speaking at an educational seminar the week of prom and flew back home just in time to stop at the restaurant to see my daughter and her date. As she stood to greet me I realized she was not wearing the dress we purchased. I asked what happened and was informed the dress never came. I hugged her, told she looked beautiful, and headed home. I was steaming. Called the dress shop and inquired where our dress was. After some checking and digging they found the dress hanging in the back of the store. It never had been shipped. Realizing they dropped the ball they offered to ship it out overnight as soon as possible. I told them not to worry, the dress was needed today and I would pick it up next week when I drove through the town on my way to or from work. When I arrived I again was escorted to the managers office. She handed me our dress and a check for a full refund on the entire cost of the dress including alterations, rush charge and shipping. I offered to at least pay for the dress and she stated that was not company policy. It was their mistake and wanted to make it right.

She thanked me for my patience and hoped we would come back in the future.

Again, treat people as you would like to be treated, great things will happen.

I cannot even begin to talk about the many blessings we have seen from our practicing of stewardship.

In my business, I cannot count how many times I have met with a client that informed me they were not buying anything and would not sign anything. One hour later I am leaving with a signed application, firm handshake and many thanks for taking the time to help them solve a huge problem they had been worrying about. I have even been thanked and informed I was the answer to a prayer made just the evening before I knocked on their door. Look for your blessings!

Another incident occurred as I was leaving one appointment to get to the next one on time and my Jeep informed me I had a low tire and the pressure was dropping quickly. Realizing I had hit something in the road I headed for the nearest tire shop. I did find one that could fix my tire and I was within walking distance of my next appointment. Made that sale, walked back to pick up my Jeep and get on with my day. Luck? Coincidence? I don't think so.

The last incident I want to tell you about happened in a very small town in southern Kansas. I was 4 hours from home, had a full day of appointments and had just sold my 10 am appointment.

As I backed out of their driveway I lost my power steering. Pulled to the curb, popped open my hood and realized I had a broken power steering pump bracket. All major components of new vehicles are run with one belt so I knew I had a major problem. I headed to the only mechanic in town, the Chevrolet dealer and was informed they could look at it on Thursday morning. This was Monday. They informed me there was a “shade tree” mechanic across the street. I headed there. He looked the situation over, came up with a solution and went to work. One hour later I was on the road. Grabbed a quick lunch and worked to get back on schedule. By the end of the day I had made almost twice as many sales as I usually make. Point being, I could have gotten frustrated, mad or worked up. I trusted in God’s promises and have never been disappointed.

As you realize your blessings, give thanks and share them with others. You will get more. I repeat, share with others. This is the concept of stewardship so many people miss.

YOU CANNOT OUT GIVE GOD!

One question I get every time I give this talk is how do we calculate how much we give. How do we figure our tithe? Should we factor it on our gross income or our net income? My response is always the same. How do you want to be blessed, on your gross income or your net income? It is human nature to want to give on our net income but be blessed on our gross income.

2 Corinthians Chapter 9 verses 6-8 re-enforces this:

“Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each man should give, what he has decide in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.”

I do love writing my stewardship check every week!

I truly enjoy being a lector and Eucharistic minister, serving the church!

I really enjoy sharing my ability to sell with others to help them grow and succeed.

Give generously of what you have, expect to receive your blessings. You will live differently and you will sell differently when you develop an attitude of expectancy.

Dave Ramsey, the financial guru, explains in one of his books how much he struggled with the concept of stewardship. He asked himself many times over why God needed our money. He finally realized, he doesn't need our money, our time or our talent. What Dave realized is that God needed us on earth doing His work, that when we are giving, we are most like God. A very big WHY!

You will find it is much easier to live on 90% with God's help than to live on 100% on your own.

Luke Chapter 6 verse 38 says, "Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over."

We all need to realize the importance of this passage. Back in Bible times, your food and grains were not pre-packaged as we know it today. When you purchased a container of grain, you paid for that measure of grain. Many times the salesman just scooped it out and handed it to you, Jesus is saying, "I'm not going to just bless you, I'm going to fill your container, then press it and pack it down, then shake it until it will not hold anymore." In other words, He wants to bless us in ways we can't even imagine. This is a true measure of generosity from our Lord and He wants us to treat people the same way.

God wants us all to live a happy, satisfied and fulfilled life. Jesus said, "I have come that you might have life, and have it to the fullest, until your cup overflows. The only way we can accomplish this is to share from all the blessings we have received.

You will find your true happiness and create a life of fulfillment when you give from your blessings in life, with others. As we talked earlier from the book of Malachi, God promises to give back to us what we share with others, and multiply it many times over. When you do this, you show your faith in God that he will continue to bless you even as you give of your blessings. Remember, you can't out give God! This is the principle from the Bible, 2 Corinthians Chapter 9 verses 6-8 on sowing and reaping we talked about earlier.

God has planned every part of our lives for us. He expects us to share our lives and blessings with others, this is a way in which we can share and show others the Love of God. When we pray for and look for ways to help others, God will give us the opportunity, we must be willing to answer His call to share of our time, talent and treasure.

Stop Looking at the cost of stewardship and start looking for your blessings.

We have a prayer we use in our church concerning stewardship and it really brings home the thought process we need throughout life.

God our Father, You are the source of life and every blessing. All that we have comes from You. Help us to walk in your ways as faithful disciples of Jesus. As good stewards of your many blessings teach us to receive your gifts gratefully, cultivate them responsibly, share them in justice and love with others, and return them with increase to You, our Father. We ask this through Christ our Lord, who came that we might have life, and have it abundantly.

Amen.

Several excellent books to read that will help you in your stewardship journey:

The Prayer of Jabez – How God wants to bless us.

The Treasure Principal – Discover the secret of joyful giving.

A Purpose Driven Life – Why are we here and what should we be doing?

Your Bible – read this daily!

In closing:

We all need to realize, God is trying to work through us. By being faithful stewards we can help do God's work on earth. I feel that is what He wants us to do. God will tell us who needs us but we must be willing to respond. He also knows what we need and is willing to give it to us, but we must first become faithful stewards of all he gives us, and then ask God for what we need and expect to receive many of His blessings in our lives.

When We die, I want all of us to be welcomed at the gates of heaven by our Heavenly Father, To have Him look us in the eyes and say, "Well done my good and faithful servants! Come join me in paradise."

So, keep listening and keep learning in all aspects of your business and your life.

Remember, our goal is to help you become, "Simply the Best!"

Thank you