

## Excel in the Grace of Giving!

*Three-week Stewardship Program*



*But just as you excel in everything ... in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us ... see that you also excel in this grace of giving” (2 Corinthians 8:7).*

***Program Instructions***

## ***Program Description***

*Excel in the Grace of Giving!* is a 3-week stewardship program designed to be an integral part of your stewardship plan. It will create a positive atmosphere in which to focus on commitment of your members. We recommend that it be accompanied by monthly communication and inspiration about stewardship throughout the year, such as a bulletin or newsletter insert. This will provide a consistent, meaningful backdrop to conveying the stewardship theme.

## ***Program Material Files***

The program material files contain all of the materials required to undertake a successful program: newsletter articles, bulletin messages and inserts, email messages, lay reader presentations, sermons, children's messages, letters from the pastor, giving charts and a commitment form. These materials are available at the *Parish Resource Center* (<http://www.parishpublishing.org/resourcecenter>), placed in separate files making them easy to find and use. Simply download the material to your computer and you can edit or change any material, if desired.

**Keep your log on information handy:** Username \_\_\_\_\_ Password \_\_\_\_\_

The following materials are included:

- † Program Instructions
- † Background photo
- † Newsletter articles (2)
- † Bulletin messages (5)
- † Email messages (4)
- † Letter from pastor to accompany Commitment Form
- † Letter from pastor regarding "Give Plus One Challenge"
- † Letter from pastor to those not returning a Commitment Form
- † Letter from pastor to thank members who turned in a Commitment Form
- † Give Plus One Challenge worksheet
- † Giving Chart
- † Bible study answer guide
- † Commitment Form

Materials for each week of the program:

- † Bulletin insert
- † Children's message
- † Lay reader presentation
- † Worship suggestions
- † Bible study (including Bible study answer guide.)
- † Sermon

## **Tri-fold Program Brochures**

There are four tri-fold brochures that are an important part of this program; excellent tools to help educate your members about the stewardship of giving and the blessings we receive through

giving. They should be placed in the bulletins or handed out as worshippers enter the sanctuary. The tri-fold brochures provide a meaningful message, while remaining brief enough to be read quickly by busy people.

Order tri-fold brochures in advance of the program and use them in the following order:

- ✠ “Excel in the Grace of Giving” To accompany commitment form and pastor’s letter.
- ✠ “Overcoming Selfishness” First week
- ✠ “Giving from the Heart” Second Week
- ✠ “God Blesses Faithful Givers” Third Week

## **Give Plus One Challenge**

During the second week of the program, members will be introduced to a “Give Plus One Challenge.” This challenge asks members to prayerfully consider taking a leap of faith in their giving, by giving one percent more of their incomes than they currently give. A “Giving Chart” and a “Give Plus One Challenge” worksheet are available in the program material files. If you want to do a mailing regarding this challenge, a letter to enclose with them is also included.

## **Bible Studies**

In order to **excel in the grace of giving**, it is essential to be in God’s Word. There are three Bible studies included for each week of this program. The Bible studies are filled with many excellent discussion questions and will deepen the spiritual basis for giving.

## **Provide Year-round Inspiration**

It is important to maintain a consistent communication and inspiration about stewardship throughout the year. We recommend using a monthly bulletin insert on stewardship, available separately from Parish Publishing.

## **Program Suggestions**

- ✠ The tri-fold brochures serve an important part in the program. To help launch the program, send a tri-fold brochure along with pastor’s letter and the commitment form. The tri-fold brochures for each week should be placed in the bulletins or handed out as worshippers enter the sanctuary.
- ✠ Use the program background photo when publishing bulletin or newsletter messages, either behind the text or as cover art.
- ✠ We encourage you to ask some people to share their testimonies regarding their lives as stewards to augment or replace the included lay reader presentations. If there are no volunteers, use the lay reader presentations that are available for each Sunday.
- ✠ The “Give Plus One Challenge” letter and mailing is optional. The challenge is introduced on the second Sunday. Be mindful that the “Give Plus One Challenge” encourages a one percent giving increase of people’s incomes, not a one percent increase of their current offering.
- ✠ Emphasize the importance of attending the Bible studies. In order for people to grow and excel in the grace of giving, they need to be reading and studying God’s Word.
- ✠ This program can be offered any time during the year.
- ✠ Make Commitment Sunday a special day. Offer refreshments. Have balloons. Make it a day of celebration as people offer their commitments to the Lord. Make it an exciting and memorable day.

## ***Program Time Line***

We recommend providing monthly stewardship bulletin or newsletter inserts in order to maintain consistent inspiration and communication throughout the entire year.

### **Preceding the three stewardship Sundays**

<b>Bible studies</b>	Schedule Bible study groups, or church-wide sessions. Email the Bible studies to those people attending.
<b>Lay reader presentation</b>	Identify and schedule lay readers.
<b>Newsletter articles:</b> “Excel in the Grace of Giving” “Giving: an Obligation or Opportunity?”	Publish one month preceding the program. Publish during the program.
<b>Order the tri-fold brochures.</b>	
<b>Schedule Bible study meetings.</b>	
<b>First mailing:</b> Letter from the Pastor Tri-fold “Excel in the Grace of Giving” Commitment Form	Mail to households so they are received just before the beginning of the program.
<b>Bulletin Messages</b>	Publish one message in the bulletin prior to the three Sunday program. Then, one for each Sunday.
<b>Email Messages</b>	Send email preceding program.
<b>“Give Plus One Challenge” letter</b>	This letter is optional. It informs people about the “Give Plus One Challenge” introduced the second Sunday.

### **During the three stewardship Sundays**

<b>First Sunday</b>	Hand out tri-fold brochure: “Overcoming Selfishness” Publish bulletin insert. Lay reader presentation: “Who Owns You?” Teach children’s message “Mine” Use worship suggestions. Preach sermon: “Overcoming Greed”  Send email for first week. Host Bible study session during week.
<b>Second Sunday</b>	Hand out tri-fold brochure “Giving from the Heart” Publish bulletin insert. Lay reader presentation: “Give Plus One Challenge” <i>Distribute “Giving Chart” and “Give Plus One Challenge” worksheet (optional).</i>  Teach children’s message “Toys” Use worship suggestions. Preach sermon: “More Blessed to Give” Send email for second week.

Host Bible study session during week.

### **Third Sunday**

Hand out tri-fold brochure: "God Blesses Faithful Givers"  
Publish bulletin insert.

Lay reader presentation: "Spiritual Rewards"

Teach children's message "Poor Widow"

Use worship suggestions.

Preach sermon: "Receiving through Giving"

Host Bible study session during week.

Invite your members to place their commitment forms  
on the altar. Have extra forms available.

Send email third week at end of week or after program.

### **After the three stewardship Sundays**

Letter to those

not returning a commitment form:

Send reminder letters to those who failed to return their  
commitment form.

Letter to those

who turned in a commitment form:

Send thank-you letters to those who turned in  
commitment forms.

Email message and bulletin message:

Thank-you to people for their generosity.

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