



Everything we have and everything we are is a gift of God’s providential care. We understand that we’re not islands unto ourselves. We could not exist without those who have gone before us and those who walk alongside us. God has given us forefathers in family, country, and faith. We are recipients of what God worked through them. We know God provides for our well-being through these means.

He gives us farmers and ranchers so we can eat. But more than that, God created and gave us all the things those farmers and ranchers cultivate. He gave us the corn, the beans, the wheat, the cows for milking, the steers for grilling. He gave each of those things for our nourishment and sustenance. Without God creating and instilling in those things their taste, their nutritional value, etc., we would not exist.

God gives us doctors, surgeons, nurses, and hospitals. He gives us medicine and medical instruments, and, of course, He gave us everything to make those medicines and medical instruments. He instilled in those things the properties to be utilized for those purposes. Without God creating and instilling healing properties into those things – and without God creating the ability within man to learn this and implement it to serve our medical needs – we would not enjoy the health we do now.

But there’s more. He gives us gainful employment through our employers and provides for the necessities of life through the labor of our hands:

“Then Moses said to the people of Israel, ‘See, the Lord has called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah; and he has filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, with intelligence, with knowledge, and with all craftsmanship, to devise artistic designs, to work in gold and silver and bronze, in cutting stones for setting, and in carving wood, for work in every skilled craft. And he has inspired him to teach, both him and Oholiab the son of Ahisamach of the tribe of Dan.’ ” (Exodus 35:30–34)

And one step back from that, He has created and given us hands, and attached to hands are arms with strength. He created us with minds to make those arms and hands move and accomplish the work set before us. And with that mind, He has given us reason and senses.

That mind, because of the reason God has instilled in it, is able to work through difficult problems before we press those arms and hands into labor. It allows us to grapple with concepts and run through scenarios instead of having to experience every situation personally. It allows us to learn from the mistakes, as well as from the accomplishments, of ourselves and others. This can be done for our entire body, all our skills and talents, everything that makes us ... us.

So, everything we have and everything we are is a gift from Him. This is what we confess in the First Article of the Creed when we say that we “believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.”

But that is just the First Article of the Creed. We confess two more articles that deal with God’s provision for our spiritual well-being. He sent his Son to die and be raised on the third day for our justification. He delivers that justification through the means of grace (baptism, preaching and the Word of God, and the Lord’s Supper). And to give you those means of grace, He gives pastors and teachers, etc. Literally everything we have and everything we are in this life – and the next – is an inexpressible gift from God.

And it is for this, all of this, that we give thanks. And that is what stewardship is all about — giving thanks for God’s provision for us. To give thanks is more than having an attitude of gratitude, more than just a feeling in our hearts.

It is an action. It begins in the heart, but it doesn’t stay there. It works its way out through the mouth in praise for God’s gifts and in love and charity through the hands to our neighbors in family, country, and church.

“For all this it is my duty to thank and praise, serve and obey him” (*The Small Catechism*, 16).

So give thanks to God for His inexpressible gifts — for everything we have and everything we are. Do this not only in word but also in deed.

**ST. JAMES ENROLLMENT** – Enrollment for the 2019-2020 school year has begun. Share this great opportunity with everyone you know. I would love the opportunity to talk with families about our school and how they can become a St. James Eagle! Current St. James families, please return your Current Student Enrollment Form to the school office. Thank you if you have already done so. –Principal Landskroener

**BOXTOPS AND UPC LABELS** – Please continue to save General Mills Box Tops, Hy-Vee UPCs and Tyson A+ labels throughout the school year. They help support our school library! Thank you!

**COLLECTING LIDS** – We have a lot of caps, but will continue collecting more! Thank you for your efforts to collect caps and help us purchase a new 6-foot bench for our hallway at school. We will collect lids until we have at least 200 pounds (the more the better). You can bring them into the church or school office. The lids must be clean!! **Unacceptable caps** include metal lids or trash, soap/lotion pumps, grocery bags, K-Cups, straws, fast food drink lids, plastic pieces that are not a lid. **Acceptable caps** include caps from medicine bottles, milk jugs, detergent, hair spray, toothpaste, deodorant, apple sauce pouch, drink bottle (soda, water, juice, sport drinks), flip-top (ketchup), spout (mustard), spray paint, ointment tube, baby food, shampoo/conditioner, cottage cheese container, mayonnaise jar, yogurt, peanut butter jar, ice cream bucket (under 8 inches), Cool Whip container, coffee can, cream cheese container, butter container and Pringles lids. Remember, the lids must be clean! Thank you for helping us purchase another bench!

#### **EAGLE VISION**

**EVERYONE** deserves our respect

**ACT** with kindness

**GOD'S LOVE** is our greatest strength

**LOVE** one another

**EVERY DAY** live for Jesus

**SHOW OTHERS** we are Christian

