

(4<sup>th</sup> Quarter)

## STEWARDSHIP MESSAGE FOR YOUR CHURCH

I was listening to the radio program "Little Known Facts" with Chaz Allen and he said the industrial age changed the look of Christmas gifts. Before this era, gifts were made by hand. They took a long time to make but they were personal. When machinery could make items quickly people felt gifts were no longer special. This was when the use of colored wrapping paper began to increase dramatically - to make people feel better about the gift they were receiving.

Tis the season of non-stop consumerism ads. Count the number of ads you see over the next few weeks that promote the message - save and give. You'll only need one hand to count, if you have to count at all.

In the book *Passing the Plate* by Smith and Emerson they indicate one of the largest influences on giving is how *Mass Consumerism* dominates Christian life. We have become "permanently discontent" with what we have. Our focus has turned away from blessings and abundance.

First we needed wrapping paper to make us feel better about Christmas. Now we need more stuff to make us feel better about Christmas. This year:

- Give at least one gift away this year. Make someone feel special by donating in their name.
- Consider alternate gifts fairs - where you give a gift to a mission or ministry you'd like to support.
- Focus on your abundance. Thank God for all you have and focus on what you need.
- Go crazy - wrap a gift in a brown, paper sack



**Dakotas United Methodist  
Foundation**  
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PO Box 460  
Mitchell, SD 57301

800-224-6552 or [www.DakotasUMF.org](http://www.DakotasUMF.org)

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