

## StewardLife LESSON 20



### STORY:

We drove over the hill and saw what looked like flares burning on the road ahead. Did the police leave them in the road after an accident? Luckily no cars were coming in the opposite direction. I swerved into the other lane to avoid the flares. But the shooting sparks weren't flares. A high-voltage wire had fallen onto the road from the pole above. The shooting sparks were from the electricity in the wire flowing into the ground.

Power in the wire high up on the pole was safe, but power flowing uncontrolled from the downed wire certainly was dangerous. If I had not been able to swerve into the other lane to avoid the wire, we would have driven right over it.

I quickly pulled into a shop nearby and called 911. I was told a report had already been made. By the time I hung up the phone, fire engines, power company trucks and police were converging on the scene.

### INSIGHT OUT:

Why is it important that spiritual gifts be managed? See 1 Cor. 12:21-25 for Paul's counsel to the Corinthians, whose use of their gifts had run amok.

The philosopher Aristotle said, "I count him braver who overcomes his desires than him who conquers his enemies; for the hardest victory is the victory over self."

## STORY:

“Aw-w-w, have a heart!”

You've heard people say that. What do they mean? Usually they are asking for some consideration of their position. People who say that are asking you to put yourself aside to serve their needs.

In 1 Corinthians 12 Paul writes about the church as a body, with each part doing its job. Think of the heart's selfless service. It beats 24/7. It's there when you need extra power. Even when you are at rest it beats, keeping the body's functions going. With every beat it receives and gives, receives and gives. Of all the blood the heart distributes each day, it takes very little for itself. It serves more as the conduit of life for the body.

The Christian who has a heart for God's world and His purposes serves in the same way. Such a person receives and gives, receives and gives, needing precious little to live on compared to what passes to the world. Such a person serves as a conduit of life for the church. And Scripture assures us that God makes sure that a Christian with heart has plenty coming in to give.

## EXERCISE:

As you travel today or this week, watch for displays of uncontrolled power. It can take the form of a squealing start from a stop sign or zooming in and out of traffic on the freeway. Or it can take the form of road rage--uncontrolled anger toward other drivers or pedestrians or bicyclists. Fuel explosions in a car engine generate a great deal of power that is controlled by the engine design. Our thoughts and actions generate a great deal of power that we are to control. As you observe forms of power out of control, let it remind you of the power of God's grace that you have—the power of the cross—at your fingertips. Don't mis-apply that power, your Christian freedom, or how you use your gifts. Let the power of God's gifts flow through you to others in selfless service as you receive and give, receive and give.

This site is maintained through The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Foundation, Stewardship Ministry Services. Contact Rev. Ronald E. Nelson, Associate for Stewardship Ministry, at [ronald.nelson@lcms.org](mailto:ronald.nelson@lcms.org)

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