

Biblical Principles for Stewardship and Fundraising*

Christian leaders, including development staff, who believe in the Gospel of Jesus Christ and choose prayerfully to pursue eternal kingdom values (Mt.6:19-21, 6:33), will seek to identify the sacred kingdom resources of God's economy within these parameters.

1. God the creator (Gen.1) and sustainer of all things (Heb. 1-3; Col. 1:17) and the One "who works within us to accomplish far more than we can ask or imagine" (Eph. 3:20), is a God of infinite abundance (Ps. 24:1; 50:10-12) and grace (2 Cor.9:8; Phil. 4:19).
2. Acknowledging the primacy of the Gospel (Rom.1:16) as our chief treasure (Matt.13:44) Christians are called to lives of stewardship, as managers of all that God has entrusted to them (1Cor. 4:1-2).
3. A Christian's attitude toward possessions on earth is important to God (Matt. 6:24;1Tim. 6:6-10) and there is a vital link between how believers utilize earthly possessions (as investments in God's kingdom) and the eternal rewards that believers receive (Phil. 4:17; Matt, 19:27-30; Matt. 25:31-46;1Tim.6:17-19).
4. God entrusts possessions to Christians and holds them accountable for their use, as a tool to grow God's eternal kingdom, as a test of the believer's faithfulness to God, and a trademark that their lives reflect Christ's values (Luke 16-1-9).
5. From God's abounding grace, Christians' giving reflects their gratitude for what God has provided (Lev.7:11-15;2 Cor.9:10-15) and involves growing an intimate faith relationship with Christ as Lord of their lives (Mark 12:41-44; Luke12;16-34).
6. Because giving is a worshipful, obedient act of returning to God from what he has provided (1 Chron. 29:10-14), Christian fundraisers should hold a conviction that, in partnership with the church, they have an important role in the spiritual maturation of believers (James 3:1).
7. The primary role of a Christian fundraiser is to advance and facilitate a believer's faith in and worship of God through a Christ-centered understanding of stewardship that is solidly grounded in Scripture (2 Tim.3:16-17).
8. Recognizing it is the work of the Holy Spirit that prompts Christians to give (Isa.32:15-17; 34:16; John 6:63;14:15-21; 15:4-5,16-17, 26;16:13-14; Rom.12:4-8;1 Thess.1:2-6; 2;13; Gal.5:16-25;1 Peter 1;2) (often through fundraising techniques) (Neh.1:4-2:8; 2 Cor.9:5-7), fundraisers and /or organizations must never manipulate or violate their sacred trust with ministry partners.

9. An eternal, God-centered worldview promotes cooperation, rather than competition among organizations, and places the giver's relationship to God above the ministry's agenda. (1 Cor. 3:1-9; 2 Cor.4:16-18, Gal.5:13-25; Phil. 4:17).

10. In our materialistic, self-centered culture, Christian leaders should acknowledge that there is a great deal of unclear thinking about possessions, even among believers, and that an eternal kingdom perspective will often seem like foolish nonsense (1 Cor.2:14) to those who rely on earthly kingdom worldview techniques (1 Cor.2:1-5).

When these principles are implemented, which rely on God changing hearts more than human methods, the resulting joy-filled generosity of believers will fully fund God's work here on earth (Ex. 36:6-7).

**The above principles were developed in 2003, when a national task force was formed under the joint auspice of the Christian Stewardship Association (CSA) and the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA) to address a period when secular practices were dominating even Christian organizational fundraising. The Christian Stewardship Association (CSA), Christian Management Association (CMA) and the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA) boards each independently approved these principles. The task force consisted of 23 Christian leaders including three seminary presidents. The task force members (titles as of committee service in 2003) were:*

Randy Alcorn (Founder and Director, Eternal Perspective Ministries),

Rebekah Burch Basinger (Consultant for Fundraising and Board Education),

Ron Blue (Managing Partner, Ronald Blue and Co.),

Howard Dayton (CEO, Crown Financial Ministries),

Lu Dunbar (President, Royal Treasure),

Daryl J. Heald (President, (Generous Giving),

Thomas Jeavons (General Secretary, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends),

Brian Kluth (Senior Pastor, First Evangelical Free Church, Colorado, Springs, CO.),

Lauren Libby (Vice President and COO, The Navigators),

Tom McCabe (President, KMA),

Thomas H. McCallie III (Attorney, The Maclellan Foundation),

David L. McKenna (Chair, Board of Trustees, Spring Arbor College; former president: Spring Arbor College, Seattle Pacific University, and Asbury Seminary),

Adam Morris (Committee Vice Chair and Senior Director of Stewardship and Resource Development, Biola University),

Richard J Mouw (President and Professor, Fuller Theological Seminar),

Paul D. Nelson (President, Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability),

John Pearson (CEO, Christian Management Association),

Scott Priesler (President and CEO, Christian Stewardship Association),

R. Scott Rodin (Consultant; former President Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary),

J. David Schmidt (President, J. David Schmidt, and Associates),

Janet Stump (Director of Development, Association of Christian Schools International),

Rollin Van Broeckhoven (Federal Judge, Washington, DC, Former ECFA chair),

Mark Vincent (President and Lead Partner, Design for Ministry, Mennonite church),

Wesley K. Willmer, (Committee chair and Vice President of University Advancement and Professor, Biola University).