

Northwest Conference Revitalization Gatherings for Pastors

January 9, 2013- noon

Purpose of Re-Connect:

1. Mutual Learning Opportunities
2. Sharing of Best Practices
3. Extend Connection and Support
4. Prayer Support
5. "Real Time" Peer Consultation and Support

Agenda

- **Welcome/Prayer for Lunch/Introductions-**
- **Small Group Reflection-** Jeremiah 6:13-20 (backside)- Issues/dynamics of congregational vitality
 - Reflections on the last few months of ministry- What is going well? What new challenge(s) are you facing?
 - Prayer for one another
- Reflections on Marker- **Sacrificial and generous living and giving** (*Romans 12:1-8*)

Focus questions:

- Do we help people discover, develop and deploy their spiritual gifts?
- Do we graciously and unapologetically teach on the importance of financial stewardship in the spiritual growth of the Christian?
- Do we have many examples of lifestyle choices being made on the basis of stewardship and the priority God plays in the lives of our members?

Resources: Loving & Giving Brochure
Week 7-Whole Life Stewardship
Capetown 2010 Advance Paper on Stewardship
11 for 11 Generosity

- **Prayer/Dismiss**
- **Confirm Next Meeting- Wed, February 13, 2013- noon**

Bring Your Own Lunch...Beverages Provided

"As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another"... Proverbs 27:17

Jeremiah 6:13-20 (New International Version)

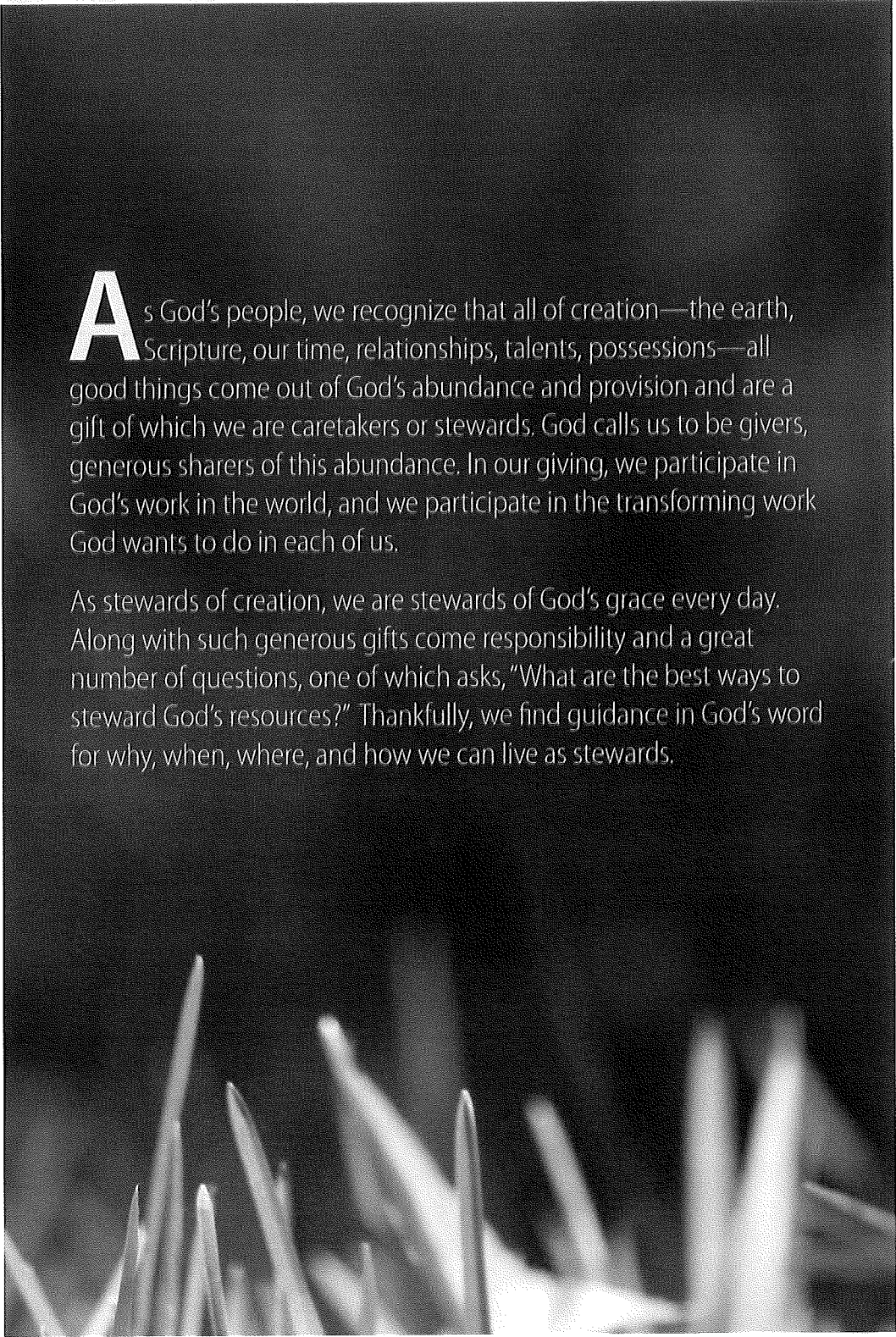
13 "From the least to the greatest, all are greedy for gain; prophets and priests alike, all practice deceit. 14 They dress the wound of my people as though it were not serious. 'Peace, peace,' they say, when there is no peace. 15 Are they ashamed of their loathsome conduct? No, they have no shame at all; they do not even know how to blush. So they will fall among the fallen; they will be brought down when I punish them," says the LORD. 16 This is what the LORD says: "Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls. But you said, 'We will not walk in it.' 17 I appointed watchmen over you and said, 'Listen to the sound of the trumpet!' But you said, 'We will not listen.' 18 Therefore hear, O nations; observe, O witnesses, what will happen to them. 19 Hear, O earth: I am bringing disaster on this people, the fruit of their schemes, because they have not listened to my words and have rejected my law. 20 What do I care about incense from Sheba or sweet calamus from a distant land? Your burnt offerings are not acceptable; your sacrifices do not please me."

THE STEWARDSHIP COMMISSION OF  The Evangelical Covenant Church

Loving & Giving

A Stewardship & Generosity Resource





As God's people, we recognize that all of creation—the earth, Scripture, our time, relationships, talents, possessions—all good things come out of God's abundance and provision and are a gift of which we are caretakers or stewards. God calls us to be givers, generous sharers of this abundance. In our giving, we participate in God's work in the world, and we participate in the transforming work God wants to do in each of us.

As stewards of creation, we are stewards of God's grace every day. Along with such generous gifts come responsibility and a great number of questions, one of which asks, "What are the best ways to steward God's resources?" Thankfully, we find guidance in God's word for why, when, where, and how we can live as stewards.

Why We Give

To Reveal God's Likeness in Us

God so loved that God gave. God gives us the Holy Spirit who moves us to give with glad hearts, to give just as God gives. When we give we allow the Holy Spirit to transform us from within to help us take on the very nature of Christ. Through us, God reveals the reality of himself to the world—loving by giving.

Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children (Ephesians 5:1).

To Grow in Our Dependence on God

God promises to care for us more than the birds of the air or the lilies of the field (Matthew 6:28-34).—When we stretch our faith through giving, we experience his care for us and our faith grows stronger. We learn that our dependence is not on ourselves or our ability to produce, but our dependence is upon our God.

And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work (2 Corinthians 9:8).

To Join Jesus in the Work He Is Doing in the World through the Church

The body of Christ makes it possible for the many to do what individuals cannot do alone. In covenant with the Lord and with one another, we commit gifts and invest resources for God's work in the world. As

Covenanters we pledge ourselves to the Evangelical Covenant Church as our primary ministry arm of mission in the world.

To equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up (Ephesians 4:12).

To Share the Giving Love of a Living Savior

Giving and loving are never separate in the Bible. Nor are they separated in the life of a disciple of Christ. Behind every act of Christ is an act of giving. This consistent and giving love is a testimony to the reality of Christ's resurrection and life-changing presence, and it continues to be the basis for our mission and ministry efforts everywhere.

By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another (John 13:35).

To Grow in Our Understanding That We Are Stewards and Not Owners

God is the source of everything we receive, and all our abilities, including our ability to produce wealth. As stewards of God's abundance and grace, we become a channel through which others can share in this abundance. The act of giving breaks the toxic powers of greed and pride in our lives and more deeply connects us with God, the source of every good gift.

You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me." But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth (Deuteronomy 8:17-18).

How We Give

Cheerfully

It was God's good pleasure to create an abundant world. We give in gratitude and joyfully participate in being part of God's plan. This is a command, but it is also an invitation. Our gracious, giving God invites us into the joy and adventure of participating in the distribution of his good gifts in our world. When the Apostle Paul writes, "Each of you should give what you have decided," he means that our giving is a choice. We are not forced or coerced into sharing; so, our strong, consistent, and generous giving can bring enormous joy. By giving, we participate in and reflect God's own joy in giving.

Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver (2 Corinthians 9:7, TNIV).

Regularly

God's love for the world and its people is steadfast, and we demonstrate our faithful stewardship through steadfast and regular giving. Consistency in our commitments creates a healthy community and healthy ministry; life becomes fragile when we have fragile commitments. Faithful giving is another reflection of God's character in us. It is doing God's work as he himself does it—faithfully.

On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income...[for the tithe] (1 Corinthians 16:2).

Proportionately

Our giving is a reflection of God's abundance. Since all of life, everything, is a gift, it is very important that there is a clear connection between what we receive or earn and what we return to God. When we give in proportion to what we receive, we intuit a deep connection between our receiving and God's giving, and the Holy Spirit is able to work deeply in our lives.

Each of you must bring a gift in proportion to the way the Lord your God has blessed you (Deuteronomy 16:17).

Sacrificially

God's gift of his only son was the costliest sacrifice ever made. As the beneficiaries of that sacrifice, we, too, give sacrificially. For many of us, this means giving well beyond the tithe. We know that God receives our gifts, not according to their size but according to our hearts. God's economy is a radical departure from the economies of this world.

"Truly I tell you," [Jesus] said, "this poor widow has put in more than all the others. All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on" (Luke 21:3-4).

What We Give

Time

Our willingness to serve God through our church, our community, and the world demonstrates good management of life's gifts...our "tithe" of the hours and days we live. "Redeeming the time" (Ephesians 5:15-16, KJV) by offering it to our Redeemer is another mark of a disciple. Sabbath keeping is also an important gift of time. When we live in a rhythm that includes Sabbath rest, it reinforces our dependence on God. When we receive a Sabbath rest, we are reminded that for God, time is not empty, but full. It is full of God's presence and promise and providence.

Teach us to number our days that we may gain a heart of wisdom (Psalm 90:12).

Talents

The body of Christ functions fully only as its members exercise their God-given gifts in service. Our individual spiritual gifts, talents, and abilities are intended to complement those of other members of the body.

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms (1 Peter 4:10).

Testimonies

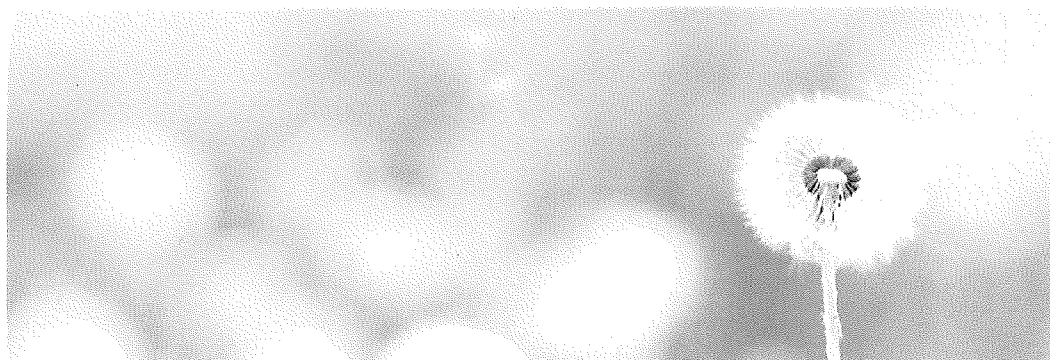
By giving each of us a "faith story," God has made us stewards of a gift that is able to lead others "out of darkness, into his marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9, NAS). What an honor to be entrusted with a gift no other person but you can give. God doesn't say our testimonies must be eloquent—just real and ready (1 Peter 3:15).

This, then, is how you ought to regard us: as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the mysteries God has revealed (1 Corinthians 4:1).

Treasure

As Christians, we struggle with trusting in God's ability to meet our every need, often substituting trust in God with our own efforts to provide for ourselves. Our fear of scarcity can create the very shortage it anticipates: "whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly" (2 Corinthians 9:6). In giving proportionately and sacrificially from the good we receive, we advance God's kingdom in our world.

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also (Luke 12:34).



Where We Give

To Our Church

From the tabernacle Moses built in the wilderness to the house churches Paul nurtured in his journeys, God has urged his people to participate in a worshiping, local fellowship, and then to regular tithing through that fellowship. God has given us all the resources we need to impact the world God has called us to reach—but only as we respond together is that reach strengthened and lengthened.

In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability (2 Corinthians 8:2-3).

To Spirit-Revealed Opportunities

God gives each of us unique opportunities to demonstrate his love to others through our use of time, talents, testimonies, and tithes. This openness to human need is one of the

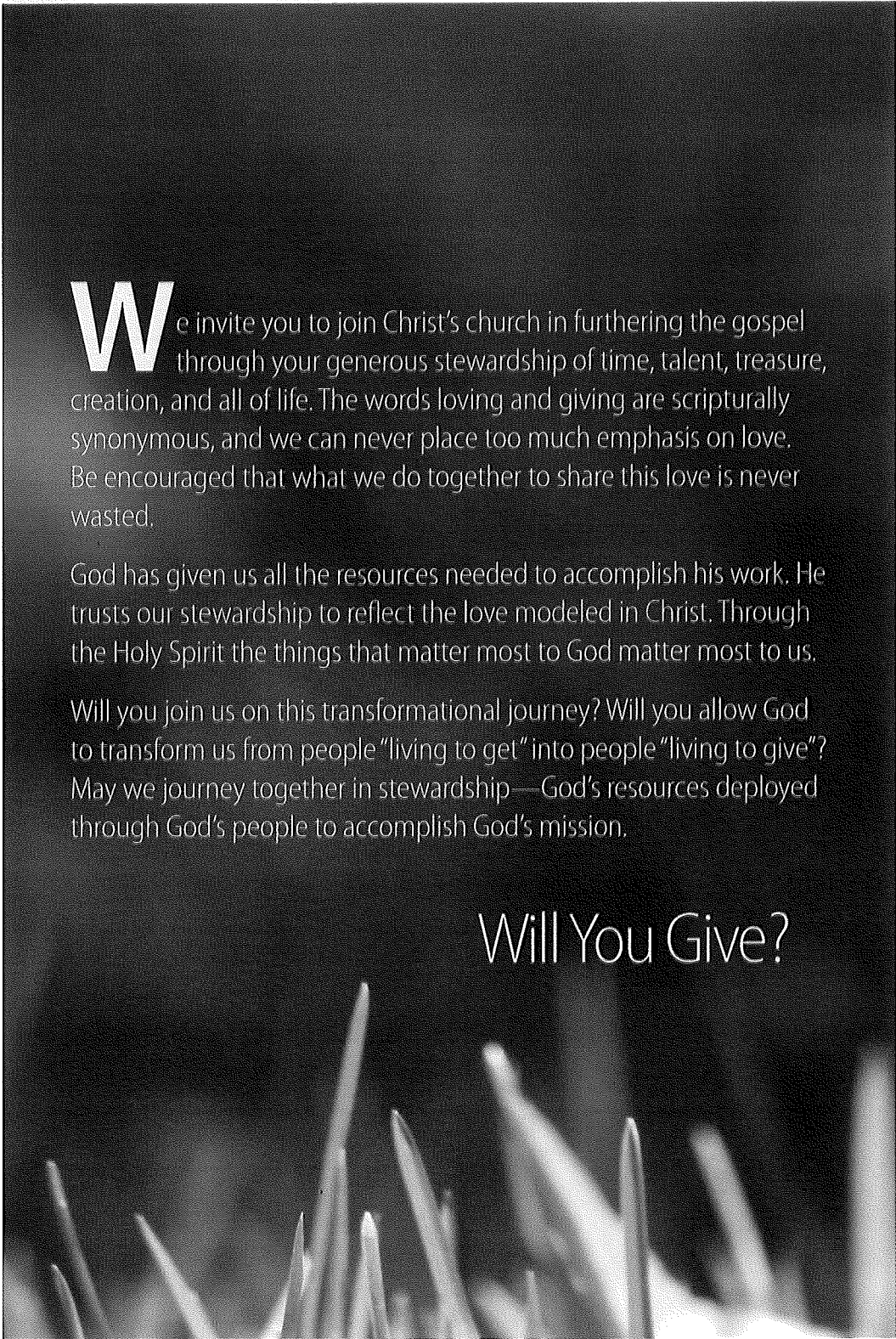
highest forms of witnessing and is a gift from God. When we reach out to others, we are responding to the word as the hands and feet of Christ.

Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers (Galatians 6:10).

To the Preservation of God's Creation

All of creation is a gift from God. Christians are the people God has called to care for it. Through our lifestyles and thoughtfulness, we care for that creation until Christ comes again and all things are made new (Revelation 21:5).

The earth is the Lord's and everything in it, the world, and those who live in it; for he has founded it on the seas, and established it on the waters (Psalm 24:1-2).



We invite you to join Christ's church in furthering the gospel through your generous stewardship of time, talent, treasure, creation, and all of life. The words loving and giving are scripturally synonymous, and we can never place too much emphasis on love. Be encouraged that what we do together to share this love is never wasted.

God has given us all the resources needed to accomplish his work. He trusts our stewardship to reflect the love modeled in Christ. Through the Holy Spirit the things that matter most to God matter most to us.

Will you join us on this transformational journey? Will you allow God to transform us from people "living to get" into people "living to give"? May we journey together in stewardship—God's resources deployed through God's people to accomplish God's mission.

Will You Give?

Visit CovChurch.org/stewardship for tools to help you get started with...

- Stewardship of the earth
- Financial stewardship
- Life stewardship



The Evangelical Covenant Church
STEWARDSHIP COMMISSION



DEEPER

Experiencing Christ through
Spiritual Disciplines

Week 8: Whole Life Stewardship

Whole Life Stewardship: Being the Best Me Jesus Wants Me to Be

A person who follows Jesus discovers the joy of whole-life stewardship!

"Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

2 Corinthians 9:7

"Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will repay him for his deed."

Proverbs 19:17

"But as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love for you—see that you excel in this act of grace also."

2 Corinthians 8:7

Stewardship isn't a very common word outside of the church. It used to be very common. A steward is essentially an asset manager. In many of the British castles, you will still find a castle steward. That person isn't a member of the generational family who is connected to the property, but has been charged with the castle's upkeep, care and protection.

Merriam-Webster's Dictionary defines stewardship as:

"The conducting, supervising, or managing of something; especially the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care."

The practice of stewardship begins with hearing the Good News of Jesus Christ. It is the power of the Holy Spirit working through Word and Sacrament that changes our hearts and wills so that we become the generous children of God.

The practice of stewardship continues by providing opportunities for people to live out their faithful and joyful response to the Good News of Jesus. Stewardship is everything that we do after we say, "I believe".

The practice of stewardship involves the way we speak of Jesus and our faith. Paul says that we are "stewards of the mysteries of God" which have been revealed in Jesus. As good stewards of the Good News of Jesus we speak confidently, yet humbly, of what Jesus has done for the world and for us. Our participation in worship and the Eucharist "proclaims the death of Jesus until he comes again".

The practice of stewardship involves the way we devote our time and energy in daily life to God by serving others. As we are faithful in our vocations (family, citizen, job, member of a congregation, friend, etc.), we serve God with our activities of daily living, some of which occur within the congregation, but most of which occur outside of our congregation.

The practice of stewardship involves the way we care for the earth. As people who share in dominion over the earth, we exercise responsible and careful management of the earth's resources. We value the creation not only for its usefulness to us, but also for God's evaluation that it is "very good".

The practice of stewardship involves the way we manage our financial resources. As people who have received all things as gifts from God, including personal talents, skills, interests, and the ability and desire to develop these, we share a portion of what we have been given with others.

Proportionate giving has been the Biblical way of determining how much we are going to faithfully manage for the benefit of our own lives and how much we are going to faithfully and generously give away for the benefit of others and the proclamation of the Good News of Jesus.

As a steward of Jesus' Kingdom on Earth, I honor God by caring for, serving in and giving to the local church, the community outside the church; and through personal lifestyle choices—living a simple, modest lifestyle—to share with and bless others in need.

The greatest work we might do in Christ and for Christ is compassionately giving through motivated love.

Dave Ramsey, author of *Total Money Makeover*, writes, "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."

"One of the monks, called Serapion, sold his book of the Gospels and gave the money to those who were hungry, saying: I have sold the book which told me to sell all that I had and give to the poor."

-from *Wisdom of the Desert: Translations from the 'Verba Seniorum'* by Thomas Merton, 20th Century American Catholic Monk and Theologian

"Find out how much God has given you and from it take what you need; the remainder is needed by others."
Augustine,
4th Century,
Bishop of Hippo

"If I have but enough for myself and family, I am steward only for myself and them; if I have more, I am but a steward of that abundance for others."

George Herbert,
17th Century Welsh
Poet and Theologian

"In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

Acts 20:35

Giving My Money

Giving liberates the soul of the giver. You never walk away feeling badly. Whether through a tithe, charitable contribution, or gift to a friend in need, give away at least some of your money.

Not only does it generate good feelings, but it generates contentment.

Remember, no one has ever become poor by giving.

I do not beat people up for not tithing because Jesus certainly did not, but let me encourage you to keep giving.

Other Ways to Give

There are plenty of opportunities to volunteer at a soup kitchen or charity. You can help that single mom down the street by offering to babysit her children while she goes to night school or takes an evening to herself. You can also cook dinner for someone in your church who has lost a loved one.

A person is so encouraged when he or she sees someone else being kind to them. As you learn new ways to give, you will find that money is just another way to give. The real giving comes from you. Pile up money and give away money, but don't forget from where the real spirit of giving comes.

Giving is an important discipline and one of the most rewarding parts of following Jesus as we work out being the "body of Christ" in our world today.

Through whole life stewardship, we model Jesus. As the Lord Himself declared, **"Even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."**

(Matthew 20:28 ESV)

Further Reflection on Whole Life Stewardship

Day 1

Read Matthew 25:14-30

After reading the theme passage, why do you think Jesus says that the two servants are worthy of greatness?

Take a moment to think about the talents that God has given you. How effectively do you feel you are using those talents?

How would you feel if the master returned today?

Do you think the master reacted properly to the servant who originally received one talent? Why do you feel this way?

Can there be improper motivations in the way we use our talents?

Further Reflection on Whole Life Stewardship

Day 2

Read Deuteronomy 14:22-29

The tithe (10% of my personal income) was not instituted for God's benefit as if He needed some of our "stuff"...He already has all the money He needs... He has everything...He does not need our money!

So why does He ask us to give 10% to Him? Tithing was created for our benefit. It teaches us how to keep God first in our lives and how to be unselfish people.

Unselfish people make better husbands, wives, friends, relatives, employees, and employers. God is trying to teach us how to prosper over time.

Whatever you make, set aside 10% to give to those less fortunate than you.

As Dave Ramsey has challenged, "If you cannot live off 90% of what you make, what makes you think you can live off 100%?"

In your words, why did God establish a "tithe" with His people?

These passages are from the Old Testament, do you think this still applies today? Explain your answer.

What does a 10% dedication of your time and money look like in your regular week?

Further Reflection on Whole Life Stewardship

Day 3

Read Malachi 3:7-12

Target One: Give Regularly

- What is my present giving plan?
- Which of the verses we have studied gets my attention most?
- Is regular giving the next step for me?

Target Two: Give Proportionately

- Do I presently give a certain percentage of my income to God?
- What percentage would I like to start with?
- How can I grow that percentage to a regular tithe?

Target Three: Give Sacrificially

- What does "sacrificial giving" really mean?
- What am I willing to sacrifice so that I can go beyond a tithe?

Make a plan for giving:

- My present giving pattern is _____.
- I would like to grow to the point of giving _____.
- I am willing to partner with _____ to help me.

Further Reflection on Whole Life Stewardship

Day 4

Read James 2:14-17; Titus 1:16; 1 John 3:16-18

As we grow in our Christian lives, we come to a deeper and deeper realization that every good thing we receive, our Father gives us. We are in a life-long process as stewards of His possessions. Whole life stewardship is a life management style; in other words, it is not man's way of raising money but God's way of raising disciples. In three steps, we see that Christian stewardship is:

- 1. God's resources,**
- 2. deployed through God's people**
- 3. to accomplish God's mission.**

In the past week, describe something in your schedule that took the most time or emotional energy.

If you were to open your calendar or daily planner, what would you find in it about how your time is scheduled?

It has been said that "time wasted is forever lost." How does this make you feel?

Further Reflection on Whole Life Stewardship

Day 5

Read Luke 12:13-21

"God has given us two hands – one to receive with and the other to give with. We are not cisterns for hoarding; we are channels for sharing." - Billy Graham

"I have held many things in my hands and I have lost them all. But whatever I have placed in God's hands, that I still possess." - Martin Luther

Why do the possessions in our home sometimes give us a feeling of security?

How would you summarize the Bible's teaching on possessions?

What do you think it means to be "rich towards God"?

We know that God blesses us daily. What one thing has God given you this week that has been especially meaningful?

Further Reflection on Whole Life Stewardship

Day 6

Read Ecclesiastes 5:12

Richard Foster, author of *Celebration of Discipline*, believes there are three inner attitudes related to possessions that lead to peace. "If what we have we receive as a gift, and if what we have is to be cared for by God, and if what we have is available to others, then we will possess freedom from anxiety."

Foster's 10 principles for simplifying life to be a better steward:

- Buy things for their usefulness rather than their status.
- Reject anything that is producing an addiction in you.
- Develop a habit of giving things away.
- Refuse to be propagandized by the custodians of modern gadgetry.
- Learn to enjoy things without owning them.
- Develop a deeper appreciation for the creation.
- Look with a healthy skepticism at all "buy now, pay later" schemes.
- Obey Jesus' instructions about plain, honest speech.
- Reject anything that breeds the oppression of others.
- Shun anything that distracts you from seeking first the kingdom of God.

How does simplifying life help me become a better steward?

Circle two or three of the 10 principles you can put into practice to help simplify your life.

Further Reflection on Whole Life Stewardship

Day 7

Read Mark 10:17-31

All of us have time, money, and talents. And all of us have something that could potentially cause us to walk away from Jesus and become deprived of a life that counts. Jesus offers us a life that counts, now and forever; all we have to do is let go of what we want and put our resources in his hands.

Jesus offers us a life that counts, now and forever, if we will put all of our resources in his hands. If you've never accepted his offer, that is the first step toward living a life that counts. If you are a Christian, but you've allowed something to get in between Jesus and your resources, let it go. In the Christian life, we are often asked to give up something valuable to us to gain something that is invaluable.

If Jesus were to say to you, "One thing you lack..." what would it be?

What kind of freedom would you experience if you let go of that one thing?

What would it take to do that?

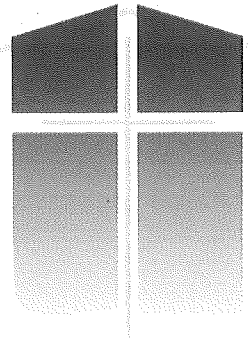
What "treasure in heaven" (v.21) do you need to be investing in right now?

What emotions go through your mind when you read verses 29–30?

"Superficiality is the curse of our age. The doctrine of instant satisfaction is a primary spiritual problem. The desperate need is not for a greater number of intelligent people, or gifted people, but for deep people.

The classical Disciplines of the spiritual life call us to move beyond surface living into the depths."

Richard Foster, Celebration of Disciplines



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Cape Town 2010 Advance Paper

Kingdom Stewardship: Equipping Disciples, Mobilizing Resources and Utilizing Technology to Advance God's Mission in the World

Author: The Resource Mobilisation Working Group

Date: 19.06.2010

Category: Resource Mobilization

Editor's Note: This Cape Town 2010 Advance Paper has been written by Ram Gidoomal in collaboration with the Resource Mobilization Working Group as an overview of the topic to be discussed at the Multiplex session on "Mobilizing Resources for World Evangelization." Responses to this paper through the Lausanne Global Conversation will be fed back to the author and others to help shape their final presentations at the Congress.

Introduction

At the beginning of the twenty first century, an unprecedented opportunity exists to disciple the church in the fundamental biblical pattern of holistic stewardship. As the church becomes increasingly aware of issues of sustainability, seeks to understand and foster the role of business, and expands the message of the grace of giving as a central motif of the Christian life, an environment for transformation takes root: personal and corporate.

Christ-centered stewardship—that is, management of God's resources for his intended purposes—will begin to foster more accountability for business and ministry, more collaboration among ministry efforts for greater effectiveness, and healthy motivations and patterns of giving in the lives of all Christians, regardless of wealth, location or status.

Section 1. Kingdom Stewardship: Christ-Centered Steward Discipleship

While most, if not all, Christians employ stewardship language to describe God's mission in the world, the foundational theological understanding of stewardship varies greatly across denominations and religious traditions.

Some groups think stewardship is tithing. Others think stewardship means volunteering or living a simple lifestyle. Still others identify stewardship with environmental conservation, social action, charitable giving or the making of disciples through evangelism.

Each of these good and necessary activities points to an essential facet of stewardship. But each on its own falls short of capturing the inspiring vision of biblical stewardship as a form of whole-life discipleship that embraces every legitimate vocation and calling to fulfill God's mission in the world. In this sense, holistic stewardship, transformational generosity, workplace ministry, business as mission, and the theology of work movement all share a common point of origin in the biblical view of mission as whole-life discipleship.

Why has this inspiring vision suffered a setback? It was set back for two primary reasons: (1) because evangelicals siphoned stewardship off from a holistic understanding of God's mission in order to raise funds for global missions and the local church, and (2) because evangelicals, at the same time, upheld the problematic distinction between clerical vocations and ordinary vocations, which only served to reinforce the age-old wall that had been erected between sacred and secular callings.

In the immediate aftermath of the First International Congress on World Evangelization, John Stott, in his 1975 Oxford lectures entitled *Christian Mission in the Modern World*, pinpointed the theological root cause of the problem. He discerned that evangelicals seemed unable to integrate satisfactorily the Great Commandment (Lev 19:18), to "love your neighbor as yourself," with the Great Commission (Matt 28:19), to "go and make disciples of all nations." God's mission, Stott urged in keeping with Matthew 5:13-16, "describes rather everything the church is sent into the world to do. [It] embraces the church's double vocation of service to be 'the salt of the earth' and 'the light of the world'" (pp. 30-31). The aim of Lausanne is for the whole church to present the whole gospel to the whole world.

We in the Resource Mobilization Working Group believe that a proper understanding of the scope of God's mission places a stewardship responsibility on every Christian to join with the Son in the power of the Spirit to fulfill the Father's purpose in creation and redemption. At its most basic level, biblical stewardship is holistic and missional, touching every area of life and employing every legitimate vocation in service to Jesus Christ, who is "the firstborn of all creation" and "the head of ... the church" (Col 1:15-20).

In light of this renewed sense of mission, the charge of the Resource Mobilization Working Group is to offer the global church a robust concept of kingdom stewardship and generosity through the distribution of strategic biblical resources, as well as to advance a global opportunity to increase kingdom collaboration to support sustainable ministry worldwide through the use of today's emerging technologies and unprecedented connectivity.

Kingdom Stewardship

Stewardship is a central theme throughout Scripture much like the fundamental biblical themes of creation, fall, redemption and consummation. Before we go much further, however, we need to come to a common understanding of the term.

The term *stewardship* has been abused over the years. Webster defines *stewardship* as the "management of someone else's property." This may be an accurate enough definition for most uses, but the word *stewardship* is a translation of the Greek word *oikonomia*, which relates primarily to the financial management of a household. The term is a combination of *oikos*, house, and *nomos*, law.

In classical Greek usage, the word had two meanings: (1) to exercise an administrative capacity, and (2) the office of the administrator, or steward. It was used of such things as the arrangement of a building, the disposition of speech, and more particularly, the financial administration of a city.

In the gospels, *oikonomia* is used principally to mean the management or administration of the property of others (Matt 20:8; Luke 12:42; and Luke 16:2). Matthew's account of the Parable of the Talents (25:14-30) and Luke's Parable of the Dishonest Manager (16:1-13) clearly illustrate this usage of *oikonomia*.

In Paul's letters, however, *oikonomia* is given its fullest and widest significance. It is applied (1) to the responsibility entrusted to Paul for preaching the gospel (1 Cor 9:17); (2) to the stewardship committed to Paul to fulfill the divine plan and purpose relative to the church which is the body of Christ (Eph 3:2); and (3) to the arrangement or administration of God, which as the letter to the Ephesians states, was "set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth" (Eph 1:9-10; 3:9; 1Tim 1:4). The meaning here is that God is the Master of a great household (*cosmos*) and is wisely administering his rule over it; this he is doing through the person of his son, Jesus Christ, who has in turn commissioned his human stewards (Gen 1:28-30) to manage the Father's household through the animating power of the Holy Spirit.

At its core, biblical stewardship is a coronation of God's human stewards to fulfill the Father's mission in creation and redemption. This is a profound privilege and goes well beyond simply being a wise trustee of God's money and property. In fact, Scripture tells us that each of us is a steward of God's creation and design for every area of life.

Our management of God's resources is not a request; it is a fact. We do not choose to be managers of God's resources; God has already *entrusted* his resources to us.

The *Who* of Stewardship

Almost everyone agrees that we need to be effective and responsible managers of money, time, resources and opportunities. Whether we are talking about financial stewardship, environmental stewardship or corporate stewardship, who would argue that we should not manage each of these areas effectively?

Yet, if we go back to the definition of stewardship, that is, "the management of someone else's resources," we first need to determine the *Who* of stewardship. By definition, we are managing for someone else. But for whom are we managing these arenas of life? Depending on whom you ask, you will get a variety of answers. Scripture, however, tells us that we are managers of God's estate. We see already in Genesis 1 that God is the sole founder and owner of the cosmic enterprise we call the universe. Scripture leaves no doubt about his uncontested ownership and control of all he has made, from the earth itself to natural resources to plants and animals.

At no time in Scripture do we ever read about God relinquishing his ownership of anything he created. Psalm 24:1-2 reminds us, "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; for he founded it upon the seas and established it upon the waters." God's sovereign right to his creation is further reinforced by Psalm 50:10-12, "For every animal of the forest is mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills. I know every bird in the mountains, and the creatures of the field are mine. If I were hungry I would not tell you, for the world is mine, and all that is in it."

God is the *Who* of stewardship. We are managing for the living God. Other people or organizations may benefit along the way as we become effective stewards. But our primary responsibility is to the One who entrusted all things into our care.

The *What* of Stewardship

Having established God as the creator and owner of all that we see and experience, the next question to ask is, “*What* has God entrusted to our care?” The *NIV Stewardship Study Bible* reveals more than a dozen distinct areas of life that God has designed for us to steward. These areas reflect the *what* of stewardship.

A close study of Scripture shows that God’s stewards have been entrusted with a diverse array of stewardship responsibilities as follows: God’s mission in the world; truth; new life in Christ; tangible assets such as money and possessions; grace and forgiveness; the environment; God’s revelation of his will in the Bible; institutions such as the family, the state, and the church; our bodies; time; relationships of all kinds in the family and beyond; our character formation; our various service roles; and our talents, natural aptitudes and spiritual gifts.

This kind of comprehensive management is a profound responsibility and goes well beyond simply being a wise trustee of God’s money and property. When this understanding of stewardship is distilled to its core idea, we see that biblical stewards are managers in trust of God’s design for every area of life. Of course, the privilege of being God’s stewards requires that each of us grasps *what* he or she personally has been called to manage. And furthermore, as the people of God sent to all regions of the world and sectors of society, we must maintain a sound understanding of the church’s double vocation of service to be “the salt of the earth” and “the light of the world,” and the implications for our daily lives and our theology of stewardship.

The *How* of Stewardship

The first major theme of stewardship recurring throughout Scripture is the fact that God is the author and owner of all things seen and unseen. Closely associated with this overarching theme of God’s ownership is the idea that our effective stewardship of all things must be evaluated by God’s standards. In other words, since God is the Creator of this world, who better to ask about how to manage every arena of life effectively than the author and designer himself?

Stewardship and generosity are two of the Christian’s most profound privileges. They are privileges granted by a God who loves us and wants only the best for each of us. God does not want us to view them as responsibilities to be performed or obligations placed on us by an uncaring God.

Imagine—the God of the universe has called you and me to be his stewards. This curious fact alone should move us to discover not only *what* has been entrusted to our care, but also *how* God intends every area of life to be managed for his ultimate glory.

We serve a perfect God—a God who does not have some vague idea of how life best functions. God’s design for life is flawless. Since humanity fell into sin and became separated from God, our tendency is

to manage life as if it were our own—as if we know what is best for us and how God’s mission can best be accomplished.

We can only understand the *How* of stewardship when we seek to know and understand the *Who* of stewardship. Effective stewardship can only be achieved when we diligently seek the One for whom we are commissioned as royal stewards.

The *Why* of Stewardship

Why would an all-knowing, all-powerful God, who is in control of all he created, appoint us as stewards over his resources?

God does not need us to be his stewards. God is more than capable of managing his creation. If God does not *need* us to be his stewards, why has he *chosen* us to be his stewards?

Scripture reveals seven purposes for which God has commissioned us as his stewards.

First, God wants his stewards to have impeccable character. Our effective stewardship prompts us toward who we are called to be as individuals. We are God’s image bearers. This is a profound privilege and responsibility. Such a responsibility requires a lifetime of intentional stewardship.

Second, God seeks to develop in his stewards a sense of unflinching commitment. Our effective stewardship prompts us toward obedience to God regardless of the cost. God entrusts resources into our responsibility—money, assets, intelligence, time, freedom, institutions, relationships of all kinds, children and the possessions that can sometimes clutter life. In return, he expects our management of these things to reflect our unflinching commitment to him.

Third, God wants his stewards to exhibit conformity to his will as we become more conformed to his image. Our effective stewardship prompts us toward conforming to God’s will and desires. It is only in our relentless and consistent pursuit of God that he reveals his good and perfect plan for our lives. And his perfect will for our lives is far beyond what we can dream up on our own.

Fourth, God desires his stewards to embody compassion as we act on the Great Commandment to love your neighbor as yourself (Lev 19:18). Our effective stewardship prompts us to place others’ needs before our own. Throughout Scripture we read of God’s desire for us to be generous givers, to live life open-handedly. The apostle Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 8:7 that God further desires us to “excel in the grace of giving.” We were designed to live in relationship, in community with others. And God desires that we share his heart for those he places in our path.

Fifth, God has gifted each of his stewards with a unique calling. Our effective stewardship prompts us to fulfill our unique role in the Body of Christ (1Cor 12:12-30). God lovingly informs us in Psalm 139:13 that he has knit each one of us together in our mother’s womb. Individually we are unique creatures, and as a species we are unique among all of the creatures God brought into being.

Sixth, God wants his stewards to have a sense of unparalleled commission. Our effective stewardship prompts us to recognize the privilege of sharing in the fulfillment of God's mission. As we seek to become effective stewards in every area of life, we become much better equipped to play a part, however small or large, in the unparalleled commission of sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Seventh, God wants his stewards to engage in unending celebration of his glory. Our effective stewardship prompts us to glorify continually the One who has chosen us to be his stewards. As we mature in our stewardship, our motivation for the management of his gifts increasingly reflects our desire to glorify, honor and praise him simply because he is worthy of that expression.

Becoming Kingdom Stewards

God's purposes for stewardship may best be understood through the lens of his plan, his people and his process:

God's Plan. God has entrusted us with his Son to repair our broken relationship with him. He entrusts us with a relationship with his Son. Our response is perhaps the greatest stewardship decision we will ever personally face.

God's People. *God has also entrusted us with the momentous responsibility to implement his mission in the world. He could have chosen a multitude of other ways—including options that we cannot humanly conceive of—and yet he chose you and me to accomplish this urgent task. Think of it—God, knowing that we have a tendency to fail him on a regular basis, chose and still chooses us to spread the gospel and to make disciples of all nations.*

God's Process. In his infinite wisdom, God has also entrusted his resources to us to accomplish the tasks he set before us. He provides us with everything we need to accomplish his divine purposes. He chooses to rely on us to share our resources, and to exercise our God-given vocations and callings to fulfill his mission in the world.

All of us have been entrusted with resources designed and created by God. Each of us has the opportunity to serve and glorify God with what he has entrusted to our care. Every individual is a steward by God's intention. But God does not want us to manage his creation by *default*. He wants us to manage it by *design*—his design. God's design to complete his mission in and through the church requires a significant degree of collaboration and generosity among his people in order to create effective and sustainable ministries worldwide. It also requires a savvy and aggressive use of technology in order to mobilize resources and to share valuable information across wide geographical regions.

Section 2. Kingdom Stewardship: Technology and the Internet in the Christ Following World

Current Trends and Opportunities for Growth in Generosity and Resource Mobilization

The Internet, much like the Gutenberg Bible, continues to revolutionize how Christ followers around the world get access to information, inspiration and community. We in the Resource Mobilization Working Group see this trend accelerating at unprecedented rates. With the advent of the 'Web 2.0' sites—sites

that offer fluid flow of information, targeted communication, and immediate dialogue via dominant platforms of internet communication—as well as the ever-increasing access to mobile technology worldwide, the continued innovation of internet capabilities can and will dramatically impact the Christ following ministry in the coming twenty years.

Nowhere do we see this trend having more of an impact than in resource mobilization. Christ followers at organizations like Kiva.org, CharityWater.org, and GlobalFast.org, as but a few examples, are leading the way using their God-given talents to bring innovative giving tools to the world.

One of the great aspects of the Internet (and technology developments as a whole) is how it democratizes content and community, providing information and e-commerce applications for both the modern day Widow and her mite, and the Rich Young Ruler and his fortune.

If the current crop of resource mobilization platforms that have come into prominence over the past several years is any indication, we know that the leading platforms twenty years from now are likely to be entirely different. Many of those future sites, however, are likely to be inspired by the current crop of platforms that impact resource mobilization:

Such websites include, but are not limited to:

1. Kiva.org—a platform that brings online peer-to-peer transactions to the world of Microfinance.
2. CharityWater.org—a fundraising platform for clean water, reaching the masses through a brilliant design and aesthetic, multimedia tools and live Twitter festivals from communities with new wells.
3. Durhamcares.org—a platform that highlights organizations that set outcome goals for themselves, and allows users to give directly to that charity, and/or if/when the charity hits their goals.
4. MinistrySpotlight.org—an open platform that seeks to help Christ followers find ministries that match their passions, along with an expert blog section to help users learn about effective ministry approaches.
5. GlobalFast.org—a platform (inspired by Isaiah 58) that only accepts financial donations that have been made through fasting and praying. With its “track your impact” functionality, it is particularly effective in equipping adolescents and young adults in creating a new generation of givers and transforming the recipients of such aid as they learn the source.
6. GenerousGiving.org—less high-tech, but possibly the best online resource for materials for pastors, educators, seminarians, small groups and individuals on the “Why” of giving.
7. Nationalchristian.com—an evangelical organization, National Christian Foundation (NCF), which is leveraging technology at a very high level in the stewardship/charitable arenas. All of NCF’s processes harness the web and sophisticated technologies to impact the kingdom from a

financial stewardship standpoint. As a result, in just the first three and a half months of 2010, NCF has managed over 6,800 transactions totaling over \$90 million in contributions for thousands of givers. It also managed over 17,000 transactions totaling over \$125 million in grants to fund Kingdom work all over the world. Virtually all of this activity is driven by the web and other related technology. NCF is also investing several million additional dollars in 2010 specifically to expand how it leverages technology for the coming decade.

We believe there are a number of essential ingredients that any leading resource mobilization website must have to be successful:

1. **Interactive/User Contributed Content.** Sites can no longer get by with a sophisticated, online business card with static data. Users need to be drawn into an experience. Blogs, forums/chat groups, and comments are all ways to make this happen.
2. **Multimedia—MP3s, streaming video, webcams and movies.** There are few places where the difference between good and great is so pronounced. A good video promoting a ministry might get a few thousand views—a great one, a few million. One needs to search no further than the videos produced for Advent Conspiracy to see what a great video looks like.
3. **Translation Services.** It is essential that the global church be able to communicate readily with one another. New applications from providers such as Google offer a translation service via API.
4. **Social Marketing.** Websites must integrate with social marketing applications such as Facebook and Twitter.
5. **Equipping the Local Church.** Aside from Scripture, the primary distribution channel for inspiration, information and the selection of ministries to fund is the local church. Resource mobilization sites must look for ways to support the institution of the local church. Microsites and widgets are two ways to support local community and dialogue, such as private discussions with just the pastor and members of the church. Individual users should also be able to access the broader content from the entire database and participate in the worldwide dialogue.
6. **Security.** Resource mobilization initiatives around the world have differing needs for security, both in terms of information readily accessible on the website, as well as the need for protection from outside hackers. Techniques to address these challenges might include user permissions, allowing members to access various levels of communication, and hosting their sites with certain ministry leaders in the hosting space who are experts in that area.
7. **Sharing with Other Websites.** If this point is unheeded, confusion and inefficiency will result, scores of Christ followers will be unmotivated, and resources will remain un-mobilized.

The current state of Christ following Web 2.0 sites looks a lot more like a post Tower of Babel reality than a potential Acts 2 environment. If you are a Christ follower in Lisbon, Portugal, and have a passion for church planting movements in Cameroon, you are not currently likely to find a Christ follower in Manchester, England who shares that passion or one in Chicago who cares about Christ-Centered

Economic Development in Cameroon. With thousands of current ministry sites, they are likely to be going to different websites to get their information.

A new initiative has arisen among more than a dozen leading websites to share content and community among a federated yet independent and autonomous group of websites. Aside from the shared development costs (why build twenty different mapping modules or Facebook applications?), this presents a great opportunity to share content and community through APIs and shared contributions to a back-end, behind-the-scenes platform administered by a not-for-profit with a governing board made of ministry leaders and Christ following technologists from the for-profit sector. For more information on this initiative, please contact RWMG member, Henry Kaestner.

Finally, Web 2.0 sites are not the only means by which technology is impacting resource mobilization.

Some examples include the new podcast from the people at MinistrySpotlight, and the digitization of the NIV Stewardship Study Bible and related resources by the Stewardship Council.

In the Resource Mobilization Working Group, we do not believe that God needs our money to do his work, but we do believe that in marshalling our resources for his glory, we are brought closer to God. When used in giving/resource mobilization, technology is a ministry in and of itself, seeking to transform efficiently the life of the recipient AND the giver.

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11 for 11: Ideas That Work

Generosity Becoming a Fundamental Spiritual Discipline for Churches

by Chris Willard

Leadership  Network®

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Generosity Becoming a Fundamental Spiritual Discipline for Churches

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"My name is Brian and I am an addict—to stuff like nice Toyota trucks and flat screen TVs. I cannot get over the power that money and stuff has over me. Dealing with it is a lifelong process for me."

These words were not spoken in a support group, but in a sermon by Pastor Brian Tome as he launched a series on living in a culture of consumerism. Brian had been confronted with the reality that many people attending Crossroads Church in Cincinnati, OH (www.crossroads.net) were overwhelmed with stuff. As just one indicator, the amount of space occupied by self-storage containers in America is the equivalent of more than three times the size of Manhattan Island! In his message, Brian wanted to show that he too was not immune. But even more, he wanted to lead the congregation on a pathway toward true generosity.

Brian's message series was called "Consumed"¹ and week after week he challenged his church to stop being driven by the "kingdom of thingdom." People took the challenge and identified their various addictions to things. Many actually took the challenge to fast from activities like buying new clothes.

In turn, Crossroads shared all of their resources—sermons, media support



Senior Pastor, Brian Tome preaching at Crossroads Church.

and small group curriculum—for free, and dozens of Cincinnati churches walked through the journey with them. "We realized we're not here just to fund our local church ministry," Brian says. "We're part of a revolution God initiated to change the world. The revolution starts with every person at our church being a blessing to people around them."

Crossroads is becoming a dynamic example of a new wave sweeping through some leading U.S. churches, a wave that is changing the trajectory of

their ministries and impacting God's kingdom in new ways. Churches that are leading the charge in becoming generous congregations are taking their giving to a whole new level.

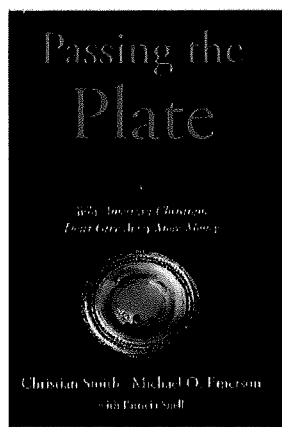
Many have seen the Navigator wheel of discipleship² that was popular in the 70s and 80s. It depicted four "spokes" as essential elements of a growing disciple—prayer, Bible study, fellowship and ministry. Today's churches like Crossroads would identify a fifth spiritual discipline for the Christian life—generosity. They

are modeling the generous life at every level of leadership, and leaders are mapping out comprehensive strategies that are transforming their ministry direction and changing the hearts of their people.

Metrics

- The average Christian in America gives 3% of their income to the church.

At least one out of five American Christians gives literally nothing to church, parachurch, or nonreligious charities, according to several national studies reported in the book *Passing the Plate: Why American Christians Don't Give Away More Money* by Christian Smith and Michael Emerson. The rest average about 3% of pre-tax household income as annual donations to all religious and charitable causes (and by comparison, nonreligious Americans give less than 1% of their income on average). The more frequently a person attends church, the higher the income percentage given to charity, including one's church. But despite a massive growth of real per capita income over the twentieth century, the average percentage share of income given by American Christians not only did not grow in proportion but actually



Research from the book *Passing the Plate: Why American Christians Don't Give Away More Money*, found that American Christian groups typically give away very small percentages of their income.

declined slightly during this period.³

The 3% statistic may actually be good news because it means that churches that cast vision and inspire giving can see that percentage increase significantly.

- The typical megachurch gives 14% of its budget to outside ministries or organizations, such as foreign missions or doing good in their community.

This is also an encouraging idea and contradicts the notion that very large churches raise money only to fund bigger buildings and higher salaries.⁴

Trends

- Generous churches are teaching differently about money.

In the churches many of us grew up in, it seemed like pastors were always talking about money. Seeker churches reacted against that, and intentionally shied away from talking about finances—until leaders discovered they had to somehow fund their fast-growing ministries. So money became a utilitarian topic. It often felt like there was a pretext for the reason we talked about money: We're behind on the budget, or we need to raise money for a new building, so let's "give until it feels good."

Now pioneering generous churches are taking a different approach with a much deeper reason behind the focus on finances. Church leaders are having this conversation with their people now because, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. I'm your pastor. I'm concerned about your heart. So we're talking about money." Leaders are making the connection that a generous Christian with a generous heart is a mature believer. Church leaders just can't ignore this topic, or make it a practical exercise to meet the needs of the church. This goes way beyond tithing and giving to the church to a different heart.

Andy Stanley, lead pastor of North Point Church, Alpharetta, GA (www.northpoint.org), has popularized a statement that sums it up: "We talk about money, not because of what we want *from* you, but because of what we want *for* you." This is something a teacher can't fake. Leaders are having a personal experience in their own heart with generosity, they're teaching it to their congregations in a way that deeply impacts their hearers' souls, and they are figuring out strategies to help support many forms of generosity among their membership.

- Generous churches are taking modeling to a new level.

Cross Timbers Church, Argyle, TX (www.crosstimberschurch.org), did the last thing you would expect from a church in the middle of a capital campaign: The congregation gave away its \$240,000 Easter offering to four ministries outside of the church. They didn't know what was going to happen that day. Somebody might have dropped a \$1 million check in the offering; but they were committed in advance to every bit of it leaving the building. Community Christian Church, Naperville, IL (www.communitychristian.org), has taken the principle one step further by forecasting the church's budget on 51 weeks of offerings—with intentional plans to give away their biggest offering of the year.

Leaders of generous churches are going to great lengths to model generosity on a corporate often massive-scale. And generous churches are also turning these types of giving events into *celebration events*. They are applauding, cheering, and raving about how great it is they get to share with other organizations and ministries. They point out and celebrate acts of generosity in the church, community and world. Celebrating engages hearts in a way that's different than instruction and exhortation. People are enthusiastic about giving to their



More churches like Gateway Church in Southlake, TX, are partnering with other outreach organizations to do everything from handing out Thanksgiving food boxes at local missions, providing “goody” bags for the prison ministry, to assembling new bikes for local children.

church when they realize that the church is serious about being generous in the community and the world.

- **Generosity is the new evangelism.**

Along with celebrating their church’s generosity and its impact, members of generous churches are inviting their non-Christian friends to these services. A church sharing with others becomes magnetic both to believers and non-believers. On another week, Cross Timbers announced ahead of time that everything that came in would be going to a school in Africa that might cost \$75,000 to build. People wanted to bring their friends to see what would happen in the offering that day! Sacrificial giving to those in need is often amazing and impressive to those inside the church—and outside. Generous behavior by Christians validates what we believe about God

and the Bible. Authentic generosity becomes magnetic to those who don’t yet believe in Christ.

Questions

- When seeking to inspire generosity, how does effective communication differ between women and men?

Too often, the conversation about generosity and stewardship in the church has been a “man-to-man” conversation. In fundraising circles, pastors or ministry leaders typically talk to men who work or men who have significant resources. What they often forget is there might be a wife or another significant money earner in that conversation who views things differently. Men often emphasize a Return on Investment when talking about giving, but in some cases

transformation stories are going to be more motivating to a female audience. We might want to rethink how we talk about money and giving. Are we communicating in a language that speaks to the unique needs and wants of a woman, and not just of a man?

Photo collage: Merry Christmas Gateway, mission metroplex, spokes for hope, warm the winter- caption- More churches like Gateway Church in Southlake, TX are partnering with other outreach organizations to do everything from, handing out Thanksgiving food boxes at local missions, providing “goody” bags for the prison ministry, to assembling new bikes for local children.

Predictions

- The best is yet to come, because the next generation of Christian leaders

will advance the idea and practice of generosity even further.

I had a revolutionary experience at the Exponential church planting conference in 2011, where none of the speakers talked about raising money to get these new churches off the ground. From time immemorial, church planting conferences have included content on fundraising—if you're going to get a church off the ground, you have to generate dough. But that's not what this group of entrepreneurs wanted to talk about. These folks are figuring out even before they get started that they want to understand the heart of generosity. And they want to build a generous church—not just a church that's well-funded. Like the churches I've worked with in the Generous Churches Leadership

Communities, they are creating a common language and identifying models of generous churches that are becoming the new normal.

More and more, churches are catching the heart of a leader and heart of a congregation such as Gateway Church, Southlake, TX (www.gatewaypeople.com), and its Senior Pastor Robert Morris. For Robert, generosity is his life message, and he has pumped massive resources—\$1 million when his church was only five years old—into developing Gateway's people in the area of financial stewardship, giving and generosity. As Robert puts it, "Jesus is the subject of the Bible, He's the noun. Giving is the verb." And for Robert, talk isn't cheap. He's given away everything he owns—house, bank accounts, everything—at

least once, and he's given away more cars than he can count.

Like Robert, leaders of generous churches are having a profound personal experience with generosity, and they are teaching it, modeling it and planning for it as an important spiritual discipline. When it reaches this level, generosity can't be relegated to only one staff person to think about, or something that comes up only when you need to raise money. It becomes a spiritual law that permeates everything a church does—you must live a generous life as much as you must read your Bible and pray. When a church gets to the point where generosity is that essential, its leaders start building it into every aspect of the church. And that's when things take off.

¹ <http://www.crossroads.net/my/media/messages.php?page=4>

² http://www.navigators.org/us/resources/illustrations/items/the_wheel

³ Smith, Christian, Michael Emerson, and Snell, Patricia. *Passing the Plate: Why American Christians Don't Give Away More Money*. Oxford University Press, 2008, pp. 24, 29, 48. See also Warren Bird, 2010 Large Church Finances and Staffing Report, Leadership Network, free download at www.leadnet.org/salary.

⁴ Warren Bird and Dave Travis. *2008 Leadership Network Salary and Economic Outlook Report*, p. 8. Available for free download at www.leadnet.org/salary. Percentage confirmed for 2010 through internal research by Leadership Network.

About Leadership Network

Leadership Network's mission is to accelerate the impact of 100X leaders. These high-capacity leaders are like the hundredfold crop that comes from seed planted in good soil as Jesus described in Matthew 13:8. Leadership Network is a division of OneHundredX, a global ministry with initiatives around the world.

To learn more about Leadership Network go to www.leadnet.org

About 11 for 11

The idea behind 11 for 11 is to profile eleven specific ministry innovations (one per month) during 2011. The total series will also include Global Connections Churches, Rapid Growth Churches, Trends in Collaborative Leadership, Large Church Senior Pastors, Missional Renaissance, Externally Focused Churches, Multisite Churches, Next Generation Pastors, Generous Churches, and Next Horizons.

Generosity Becoming a Fundamental Spiritual Discipline for Churches is also available in these formats.

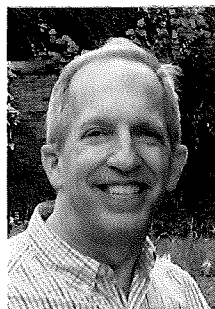


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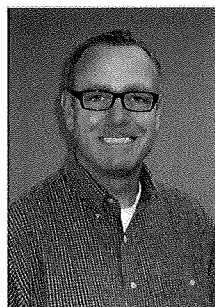
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About the Authors

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Chris Willard currently serves as the Director of Generosity Development for Leadership Network. Chris has also served as a Leadership Community Director focusing on key topics including generosity and rapid growth. With nearly 25 years of experience in ministry leadership Chris served as the Executive Pastor of Discovery Church in Orlando, FL, before he joined Leadership Network. His bio is at www.leadnet.org/chriswillard

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Additional Resources

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Contagious Generosity: Creating a Culture Of Giving In Your Church by Chris Willard and Jim Sheppard. (Zondervan, available April 2012).

Secrets of Generous Churches: Creating a Culture in Which Serious Stewardship is Normal by Liz Swanson. (August 28, 2006)

Suggested Reading

A Revolution in Generosity: Transforming Stewards to be Rich Toward God by Wesley Willmer. (Moody, 2008)

Generosity: Moving Toward Life That Is Truly Life by Gordon MacDonald and Patrick Johnson. (National Christian Foundation, 2008)