

How can you prosper through Biblical Inspired Fundraising?

Stewardship helps over 30,000 generous Christians give over £100m to over 10,000 ministries in the UK. In this session they share their practical perspectives on the spirituality and practice of generosity and of fundraising. How should one inspire generosity in your Church? How should a Church leader seek financial support for their ministry?

Stewart McCulloch is the CEO of Stewardship. He has worked in international financial services for over 35 years. Prior to joining Stewardship, he worked for the microfinance operations of World Vision across Africa and Southeast Asia. Stewart worships at Bishop's Stortford Baptist Church; he is married to Sarah and they have 5 Children and one grandchild.

I. Introducing Biblically-Inspired Fundraising

I have worked with some of the poorest people in the world through the effects of major natural disasters and I have worked with some of the richest people in the world to manage their philanthropy. My conclusion is that the bible gives guidance to all who seek God's will and so Christians define themselves through abounding love and generosity that only increases as things get tougher:

A. 2 Corinthians 8 & 9 – The bible has all the guidance we need to raise funds for ministry

1. Paul acts as a fundraiser putting enormous energy into a gift from the gentiles in Greece to the Saints in Jerusalem
2. The severe trials, extreme poverty and rich generosity of the Macedonians
3. A test of the sincerity of the wealthy Corinthians
4. Administered in a way pleasing to God, and man
5. Reaping what is sown
6. Expression of thanks to God abounding in prayers and blessings
7. God loves a cheerful giver

B. Outcomes and evidence

1. See the benefit of engaged and disciplined church members and supporters;
2. Be increasingly able to fulfil the New Testament call to be generous and aboundingly resourced;
3. Operating with best practice stewardship in managing money given; and...
4. Be a church that is 'good to give to' and so is growing in breadth and depth

II. ATTITUDE:

A. Your attitude to money will colour how you fundraise

1. We all have different gifts
2. We are called to have one master not two
3. Our Lord promises that we will have what we need to abound in every good work
4. There are generous Christians who want to be part of your ministry
5. You will always significantly underestimate the willingness and capacity of those you know to give – but be realistic about what is possible within a community.
6. Fundraising is biblically inspired and central to ministry

B. Your understanding of giving will colour how you raise funds – a giver goes through 3 stages:

1. Discerning a biblically inspired heart to be generous and having a plan to act generously
2. Discerning ministries to commit time, treasure and talent to
3. Being spiritually enriched by the relationship with the ministry they engage with

C. This leads to an approach to fundraising that is truly Christian

1. Teach what the bible says about money and generosity regularly and without expectation
2. Share your vision for your ministry boldly and seek active engagement regularly and without expectation
3. Offer those who may support your ministry spiritual food, love and relationship without any expectation
4. When you are in relationship and the plans for your ministry are clear to all; then ask boldly for what is needed to achieve the calling of the Lord and it will come

III. ADMINISTRATION:

2 Corinthians 8:19 the gift was administered "...to honour the Lord Himself"

- A. Good stewardship of funds gives confidence to givers
- B. Plans and budgets give people time to think and a goals to achieve
- C. Sound application of local tax and charity law makes giving easy
- D. Take care to balance requests for mission, ministry, running costs and capital projects
- E. Get help for more complex giving: legacies, property, shares, dual nationality...
- F. Honour and embrace anonymity
- G. Give thanks and praise to God

IV. ACCOUNTABILITY:

2 Corinthians 8: 17 – 21 Avoid criticism do things right in the eyes of the Lord and of man

- A. Have a clear mission and ministry plan you revise infrequently and report against
- B. Establish an annual financial plan and report progress
- C. For specific projects publish a plan and report progress
- D. Thereby get a reputation for delivering what you promise
- E. Encourage a culture of challenge and thereby get a reputation for accountability
- F. Do this and givers will have confidence in you

V. What happens where AAA is not evident?

- A. Sickness in attitude becomes evident in the church when a church loses support over time and so becomes starved of resources and can thereby goes into a long term decline
- B. Sickness in accountability becomes evident where trust and confidence drop to a point where collective giving in fellowship drops away
- C. Sickness in administration is evident when individual givers hold back in confusion and lack of confidence

VI. Starting New Churches:

- A. Apply the AAA to a blank canvass from the ground up
- B. Process helps formation

1. Self-supporting church planter binding a group together
2. Self-supporting new Church family building a church
3. Establishing a church building charity and staff as the church matures
4. Fundraising for mission, ministry and growth to broaden and deepen the church
5. Planting again

C. Generosity fuels mission and deepens relationship

VII. Conclusion

A. Invite financial support

1. Invite people into a new relationship with the wealth God has bestowed on them
2. Invite people into a relationship with your ministry
3. Invite them to support the ministry with their time, treasure and talent.

B. Healthy ministries and churches can raise funds from a place of strength in God's agenda

C. Sustainability and growth is a crucial aspect in your ministry mission, strategies and plans - finance is a critical aspect so embrace it

D. Church Planting is the perfect opportunity to establish healthy new leaders and churches

E. Let the Bible lead the way

Suggested Reading

Henri Nouwen, *A spirituality of fundraising*

John Stott and Chris Wright, *Money and the Gospel*