

Answer These 5 Questions to Help Steward the Resources God Has Given You

When it comes to church, revenue and redemption don't feel very closely connected. Theologically speaking they aren't, salvation is a free gift of God. (Ephesians 2:8) However, the contemporary church as we know it, doesn't function without financial resources. Candidly, in every church I know, money is tight.

There never seems to be quite enough money and sometimes there is a significant shortfall. In fact, I'm not aware of one church that has so much money that they don't know what to do with it all.

A real issue for the majority of churches where the money seems "too little," is that they are not sure how to best use the money they have.

Budget season in any church can be an experience that is full of stress and tension. Part of that is natural because the discipline required to be a good steward requires critical thinking, tough conversations and strategic solutions.

It's all about what you do with what you have.

Let's start with an example. One church really wanted to hire a children's pastor and an administrative pastor. The needs were great in both areas. However, they felt stuck because they only had room in the budget for one, but believed they had to have both. How do they decide?

Begin by acknowledging and focusing on what you can have.

There is a principle that can save you a lot of unnecessary stress, it goes like this.

You can have most anything you want, you just can't have everything you want.

If you use that principle in light of Godly biblical standards, vision-driven values, and common sense, it will serve you very well. It frees you up to think with an abundance mindset rather than a scarcity mindset. That means that financially you focus on what you do have, rather than what you don't have.

Let's be honest about what we "want".

So as a leader, what do you want? If the word "want" bothers you, try the word "need." What do you need? I personally think the word "need" can be even more loaded and subjective. The word "want" is honest and real.

If I trust my leaders, their character is a given. I already know they are not pushing their agenda. They want to reach more people for Jesus. They have the church's best interest in mind. So we

are back to *discipline* and *stewardship* and the question, “*What do you want?*”

5 questions to help you move forward:

1) What problem do you want to solve?

All churches have problems and good leaders solve problems. That’s one of our most basic responsibilities. However, no leader can solve all the problems and some are not worth solving. Further, some of the situations are tensions to be managed rather than problems to be solved. So the first step is to list the problems you see, decide which ones are real problems, then prioritize the weight and value of each one. Start at the top of the list, and put your money there.

2) What ministry do you want to improve and advance?

We want all our ministries to thrive and be productive. But I’ve never found it possible to have them all be working at top performance at the same time. That is not the nature of any church or organization because when you are taking new territory and working with people, there is constant change and innovation. So, as you review your ministries, which ones do you prayerfully believe are the ones to focus on and therefore apply your financial resources to? It is not wise to apply “equal and fair” when it comes to the amount of money to your ministries. Be strategic!

3) What staff member do you want to hire?

What staff do you want to hire and why? This is not always the obvious call. For example, if your worship leader resigned, it may or may not be in the church’s best interest to hire another one. What if the need is greater for someone to join the team in children’s ministry and you had an amazing volunteer who could lead worship? Think through all the options for the best way to strategically determine how best to use your money.

4) What impact do you want to have in the community?

The greatest impact of any church is outside the walls of its building.

From having a true life change effect on those far from God resulting in a changed way of living, to a consistent engagement in the community partnering with compassion and justice endeavors, this is the mark of a great church. What is God saying to you for your church? What do you want to accomplish in your community? Be specific and focus.

5) What legacy do you want to leave?

This involves long term thinking. When you imagine the legacy of your church 20 years from now, what comes to mind? What is the vision? What do you want to see happen in the lives of people? The more specific you are, the more likely these things will come to pass. The more clarity you have in direction, the better you can allocate your financial resources.

> Back to our example, the church I mentioned hired the children's pastor. They chose potential growth over solving the in-house administrative burdens. The strategy was to grow first, *then* hire the administrative help. They forced themselves to answer the key question: "What are you willing to *give up (or delay)* in order to get what you want?"

I pray these thoughts help you steward the resources God has given you.

Need help answering stewardship questions at your church? [Connect with an Auxano Navigator today.](#)

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