

The One-Kingdom Approach to Generosity

Is your congregation stuck seeing generosity as what they cannot give rather than why or how they give?

Generosity is a way of living that involves one's daily activities, values and goals for life, and the use of all possessions. It begins with recognition of God as Creator of all things, and our position as steward of some things.

As stewards, we are in charge of the possessions God has given us – an authority that is real, but secondary to God's ultimate ownership.

When we get these two ownerships mixed up, problems follow.

Solution #1: Strive for one-kingdom living

THE QUICK SUMMARY - Development 101: Building a Comprehensive Development Program on Biblical Values

In our 60 years of combined experience with faith-based non-profits we have seen high turnover rates in development staff, a general lack of a driving philosophy/theology of development in most ministries, confusion from boards over their proper role in development, and development staff who are frustrated and burned out by the demands of their work. The common denominator is a lack of a comprehensive, biblically based, fundamentally sound, development strategy.

We see at least four main reasons for this situation. First, far too few ministries have taken the time to think through and create a theology of development that serves as a rule and guide for all of their work in raising kingdom resources. The result is that the demands for money, rather than Scripture, dictate the techniques used for fundraising. Second, many organizations set unrealistic goals and expectations for their development team. When they are not reached, the ministry makes a change and tries again. When you add to this a lack of adequate training for new development officers, the turnover rate is understandable. Third, we see a serious lack of integration in development work. Ministries take a shotgun approach, trying all sorts of different ways to reach income goals, but far too seldom take a comprehensive, strategic approach that serves the giving partners not just the organization. Finally, we experience consistent misunderstanding and confusion over the board's role in development work, compounded by an inability by the board to develop metrics for measuring effectiveness and success in raising funds based on kingdom principles.

This book is our attempt to address these concerns and provide development professionals with a tool that can help them build robust, God-honoring development programs. It is our prayer that this book will help development staff and CEO's set realistic goals based on the time it takes to

build a solid program and develop genuine, God-honoring relationships with giving partners. We hope this book will be a first step in training people who are new to the development field. We have included charts, templates and diagrams that we hope will aid in understanding how to build your plan and implement it successfully.

A SIMPLE SOLUTION

Generosity success is 100% impossible without embracing this valuable principle: **God owns everything**. We are steward of a small few things that God owns. God owns your life, your salvation, your uniqueness, your calling, your job, your body, your car, your bank account, your cash, and your television.

It is God's responsibility to provide for you, your church and family, not your responsibility. Your responsibility is to release ownership and be an obedient steward.

We were created to be one-kingdom people. That is, God created and redeemed us to be children in His kingdom where He and He alone is Lord.

As one-kingdom people, we know that everything belongs to God, and we respond by living as faithful stewards. The problem of sin is that it tempts us to build a second kingdom where we play the lord over the things we believe we own and control. It could be said that the entire cosmic battle between good and evil is played out in this arena of two-kingdom living. When we submit to the temptation to believe we are in control of our own kingdom, we treat money as something that we ultimately own. When we do this, we cannot be faithful, generous stewards.

Jesus summed it up with razor precision: "No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money" (Matthew 6: 24).

As we go about our development work, we must realize that every one of our giving partners struggles with this two-kingdom temptation. Our work as Christian development professionals is to be used by God to help our giving partners recommit themselves to being one-kingdom people. This may sound like a huge responsibility, and indeed it is. For this reason we believe strongly that development work is ministry. Let us say that again. Rather than seeing your development work as a means for raising the resources necessary for ministry to happen, we want you to reconsider that your development work is ministry. You have a wonderful opportunity to watch God use you in powerful ways in the lives of your giving partners. Once you make this commitment, it will affect everything you do in this field: your messaging, your planning, your budgeting, your writing, your strategy, your metrics, and your prayer life.

Does your organization operate from a two-kingdom or one-kingdom worldview?

John R. Frank and Scott Rodin, *Development 101: Building a Comprehensive Development Program on Biblical Values*

A NEXT STEP

Think of yourself as the manager of a trust. You have been given a key role and a great responsibility, so make the most of it. God Himself has trusted you with time, money, material things, and great opportunities. Your objective is to maximize the investment of all that has been put into your hands. Take some time to examine the three gauges of how you are managing God's investment: your calendar, your bank account and your spiritual gifts.

In light of the one-kingdom principle, how would you grade yourself in each area? What is one thing you can do in the next few weeks to better your One-Kingdom GPA one point?

In the final analysis, the hallmark of stewardship is administration not acquisition. Only by pursuing the goal of pleasing God do we find true pleasure and satisfaction for ourselves.

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*This is part of a weekly series posting content from one of the most innovative content sources in the church world: **SUMS Remix** Book Summaries for church leaders. SUMS Remix takes a practical problem in the church and looks at it with three solutions; and each solution is taken from a different book. As a church leader you get to scan relevant books based on practical tools and solutions to real ministry problems, not just by the cover of the book. Each post will have the edition number which shows the year and what number it is in the overall sequence. (SUMS provides 26 issues per year, delivered every other week to your inbox).*

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