

## 5 Helps to Leading a Generous Church

Church leaders worry about money. They worry about the church being able to pay its bills. They see the gap between the vision they believe God has given them and the reality of the contents of the offering plate. They're nervous about what will happen if they can't finish the year strong financially. **Most pastors go into ministry because they want to care for people. Then they are rudely awakened to the reality that they are actually running a small business.**

Years ago, I listened to an interview with Willow Creek's Bill Hybels on tape ... that tells you how long ago it was ... and he said something that has stuck with me: **"If the only thing that is holding back the vision of your church is money, you need to get out and raise it!"** Not rocket science but it stayed with me. Part of our role as church leaders is raising the financial resources necessary to accomplish the vision God has given us. It's not magical or mystical ... it's just work.

In the same vein, I've seen so many people get fired up in their own spiritual lives by increasing their generosity. Living a life that is about giving instead of acquiring is a core discipleship truth that people need to learn. People win when we help them grow in generosity. **In a world obsessed with consumption, our pastoral responsibility is to show people a better way to a generous life.** Some church leaders don't want to "talk about money" because of the stigma associated with it. They are robbing people of a potential spiritual breakthrough!

Here are some resources to help you increase the culture of generosity in your church:

- **Offering Talks //** Taking a moment before you receive the offering to frame that experience is one of the ways you can encourage generosity without feeling like a used car salesman. As you thank people for being generous, they move toward being more generous. The resource below walks you through what makes a great offering talk. It even provides you with sample scripts to put into action right away.
  - [8 Elements of Effective Offering Talks \(Plus 8 Example Scripts!\)](#)
- **Year-End Campaigns //** The last 45 days of the year are a critical time in non-profit fundraising. Our culture is primed to give to "philanthropic causes" around the end of the year but most churches ignore the opportunity to see a 10-15% bump in their annual revenue. Think through a strategic plan to cast vision for giving to your church like any other non-profit that contacts donors during this time. It can help fund great ministry opportunities for the coming year. This resource walks through the essential steps for a successful campaign in the next Christmas season:
  - [8 Phases of Effective Christmas Giving Campaigns](#)
- **Major Campaign Initiatives //** At some point in the histories of most churches, they need to cast a compelling "game-changing" vision and ask people to give far above and beyond what they normally give. Major giving campaigns that fund new campuses, new ministry initiatives or traditional bricks-and-mortar projects are still a mainstay. I've led two major multi-million dollar campaigns and from experience I can say that doing it with a trusted advisor is preferred over "doing it alone!" Find out some of the things they

won't tell you:

- [6 Things Consultants Won't Tell You About Capital Campaigns](#)

- **Tithe Challenge** // What would happen if you asked people to take Malachi 3:10 at face value for 90 days? “Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the Lord Almighty, ‘and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.’” Then if people don't experience the transformation we believe they will through generous giving, you return their offering to them. Sounds crazy, right? After studying a few other churches that did this tithe challenge, we've done it for the last three years. It continues to be a fruitful tool and people say their perspectives on generosity were challenged and changed because of it. Here are some questions I would challenge you to ask before deciding to head into a 90-day tithe challenge campaign:

- [6 Questions to Ask Before Your Church Does a 90-Day Tithe Challenge](#)

- **Be Seen to Be Generous** // People need to be led and taught in lots of areas of their lives. They need to be shown what it looks like to have an authentic prayer life and they need to see healthy relationships modeled for them. The same is true for seeing what generosity looks like. Churches need to model generosity on a corporate level as a part of the journey toward people being generous with us. One of my core convictions as a leader is that people are drawn to generous organizations ... if we're stingy with our resources then they will be too. If we're generously reaching out and helping others around us, then people will follow suit. Listen to this interview with a leader of a church that is doing an amazing job leveraging assets in a tangible way to be a blessing to their community:

- [Mike Lynch on Mobilizing Your Church to Impact Your Community](#)

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