

This is the Most Toxic Threat a Church Member Will Make

One of the most toxic statements a church member or group of church members can make is, “We pay the bills at this church.” Not only is it unbiblical, it is clearly divisive. It creates an “us versus them” mentality in the church.

Why is the statement so harmful? Here are five reasons.

1. **It makes giving more like paying country club dues than biblical stewardship.** Thus, a certain level of giving by a member or a group engenders a sense of entitlement. The people who give with this attitude never really let go of the funds. They continue to hold on to them with strings of conditions.
2. **It is manipulative.** In essence, giving becomes a controlling mechanism. If the church doesn’t do what I want it to do, I will withhold my funds. I have known church members and groups of church members that have held onto funds until they finally got their way. At that point, they released the funds to the church. They were truly holding the church hostage.
3. **It becomes a way of circumventing the budget.** Most churches approve a budget every year. It becomes the guide for the church to steward the funds given to the congregation. On too many occasions, a malcontent in the church decides he or she doesn’t like the approved plans for spending, so they threaten to withhold their funds. One person told me smugly he knew the church was not spending funds in the best way, so his implied threat to withhold funds was necessary. I wonder what he thinks of the biblical story of the widow’s mite (Mark 12:41-44). She gave without reservation, but I doubt the Temple was the paragon of stewardship excellence.
4. **It creates different classes of members in the church.** There are those who have and who can make such threats, and there are those who do not have and, thus, have insufficient resources to make demands. As noted earlier, this statement is both inflammatory and divisive.
5. **It is contrary to the servant spirit of Christ.** Jesus was crystal clear on his mission. He did not come to be served, but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many (Matthew 20:28). Some church members utter the toxic statement, “We pay the bills at this church” to get their own way. Jesus made the sacrificial statement that He would put others before Himself, so much so that He would die for others.

“We pay the bills at this church.”

It is a toxic statement.

It is an unbiblical statement.

It is contrary to the spirit in which the Lord Himself came to serve, to give, and to sacrifice.

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