



Treasure Transplant

By: *Daryl Heald*

Q: How did stewardship become your passion?

A: I grew up in a missionary home. I watched my parents raise funds in order for them to work full time with The Navigators. I remember times when there was no money in the bank, so we would pray, and a gift would come in. Then I met my wife, who's from the Maclellan family. Before then I didn't even know what a foundation was. I began to realize that there were people like the Maclellans who had been blessed with great wealth. So I've seen both sides of the giving equation - the receiving side and the giving side. That experience is a big part of God's calling for me.

Generous Giving itself has emanated from the Maclellan Foundation's discovery that there's incredible wealth in evangelical hands, and that God has poised His Church for explosive, exponential growth worldwide. Coming from a Reformed perspective, we know this is not by accident. Where He has His Church poised, He has also orchestrated wealth creation so we can be faithful to help advance His Kingdom. So we expect a revolution of generosity like never seen before - not because of what we're doing, but because of what God is doing.

Q: How would you describe your theology of stewardship?

A: There are two sides to the giving coin. Most of us understand the law perspective - we're commanded to give. But many don't understand the other side: the grace perspective. Our slogan at Generous Giving is "Experience the Joy," and people often tell us, "I'm giving, but I can't say I'm experiencing joy with it."

Part of the fruit of giving should be joy; if you're not experiencing that, you have to ask yourself, "Are you really giving?"

For true biblical giving, our heart has to be in the right place. Second Corinthians 9 tells us that God loves a cheerful giver, not one who gives grudgingly. Often we mistakenly think that just because we're putting money in the offering plate or writing a check to some ministry, we're actually giving.

When I talk to people about giving, there's a box that most people have drawn. Usually that box is called the 10 percent - it's all about the tithe - in other words, the law side. But tithing is only one aspect of giving; once we understand that it's not about the 10 percent but about the 100 percent, then there's a much better conversation about the other 90 percent.

Q: What are some other misconceptions about giving?

A: For one, that it's easier to give it than to make it. Andrew Carnegie addressed this in the early 1900s, and many others recently, including Bill Gates and Ted Turner, have been quoted as saying that it's a lot harder to give it and to give it well.

Because the Foundation is officially "asked" several thousand times a year for funds by various ministries, we often hear this disclaimer from those asking: "Well, I don't want to ask for myself." And therein lies a big misconception about asking for ministry funds: If you think you're asking for yourself, you're thinking too small. The larger context is that if you are following the Lord's calling, are you really asking for yourself? No, you're asking on behalf of God, for His Kingdom, not your work.

As Paul told the Philippians, "Not that I am looking for a gift, but I am looking for what may be credited to your account" [4: 17]. Unfortunately, many pastors and Christian workers feel a tension - "Oh no, here comes the ask" - instead of seeing it as a Kingdom-investment opportunity for God's people. And if the receiver has the freedom to simply present the opportunity where God has called them, then the giver has the freedom to be obedient to give. Or if they're not called to give, that's fine too, because it's all His - it's at His discretion.

Q: How would you evaluate the condition of the Body of Christ when it comes to giving?

A: When you look at the raw numbers, I wouldn't call it giving - I call it tipping. We have perpetuated a culture of tipping by the way we ask and the way we respond. We perpetuate this culture when the only time we talk about giving is when we need something. We've created a response in givers where they ask, "How much do I have to give this person for him not to feel bummed out and to feel OK about me?" instead of asking, "Lord, what do I need to do to help advance Your Kingdom?"

People need to understand the full truth of why God says to give. Many people don't understand why they give in the first place. You might think, "Isn't that a rhetorical question? I'm a Christian; I've got to give, don't I?" Well, yes, you're commanded to give. Yet when you look at the statistics, there's no other way around it - people are not giving like they should. And I contend that it's because people have not dealt with the heart issue.

If you believe what Jesus says is true, what leads - your heart or your treasure? Most fund developers would say the heart - if you get someone's heart, you'll get their pocketbook. But that's not what Jesus said. He said, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Therefore, lay up treasure in heaven." Your treasure leads, and your heart follows. When you give with an eternal attitude, you won't be enamored with what's temporal, but instead have more expectancy toward eternity. It will be more of a spiritual discipline and less an obligation.

Q: How do you encourage the mindset that giving isn't just a concern of wealthy people?

A: As I mentioned earlier, I've been on both sides of the fence. I've sat there at the dining-room table when my father said, "We have nothing in the bank." Now I'm in a family with financial margin. But I've seen from both sides the same joyful approach to giving. The principles are true regardless of how much you make. In the Bible, King David's estimated \$30 billion gift to the temple is at one end of the spectrum, and the widow's mite is at the other end. But they were both commended as generous, sacrificial givers.

Consider the Macedonians. They were slaves. But they not only gave generously, but in Kingdom math, which belies the tangible laws of nature, Scripture says they even gave beyond their ability. Because of their heart response to the Lord, they urgently pleaded for the opportunity to give. In effect they said, "Paul, you've got to ask us. Don't just ask the Corinthians. Give us a chance to give." Why? Because they

recognized that Paul wasn't asking for his own sake but for theirs. The Macedonians acted out of recognition of who they were in Christ. Giving is a discipleship issue.

Q: How do we effectively model generous giving without making it a show?

A: This brings up another misconception: Most people wrongly interpret Matthew 6, where Jesus says, "Don't let the left hand know what the right hand is doing." For example, what's our evangelical terminology for people with extraordinary prayer lives? We call them prayer warriors. Likewise, how many "giving warriors" do you know? When we publicly acknowledge those who excel in prayer, is it wrong, then, to lift up someone excelling in giving for the glory of Christ? I say it's a sin not to edify the body of Christ on this issue.

I've been the Stewardship Chairman for the last two years at Lookout Mountain Presbyterian Church, which most people would classify as a wealthy church. Now in most churches, who gets put up front to talk about giving? The wealthiest people. But I've done something totally different. All the testimonies on giving have come from college students, single moms, elderly couples, widowers, etc. There isn't one wealthy, professional business type up there.

Everyone has the privilege of giving, just as we all have the privilege of prayer. From the widow's mite to David's \$30 billion gift, we all need to understand that giving is part of who we are in Christ, that it's a major characteristic of who God is, and that when we give it's for our sake.