

June 2015 – (dot)Stewardship



More than Enough

By Jerry Hoffman

Paul asks the Christians at Corinth to give an offering for the Christian people in Jerusalem who are living in extreme poverty. In this portion of the appeal he makes a case for a generous response. I invite you to read the following passage as a personal letter from God through Paul to you and to everyone in your congregation:

2 Corinthians 9:6-9 (CAV) "Remember that the person who sows few seeds will have a small crop; the one who sows many seeds will have a large crop. You should each give, then, as you have decided, not with regret or out of a sense of duty; for God loves the one who gives gladly. And God is able to give you more than you need, so that you will always have all you need for yourselves and more than enough for every good cause. As the scripture says: "He gives generously to the needy; his kindness lasts forever."

How well do you think your congregation at the present time will receive this appeal to give above your present giving level? How will you?

I was on a basketball team in Junior High. During one game, Howard Anderson who at 5'5" (our big man) was in the game as our center. During a timeout the coach said, "Strock, you take Howard's place." Duane Strock, 4'4", was astonished and said, "Who me, take Howard's place?"

When people are asked to stretch in their giving, there are voices that cry out:

"Who, me?"

"Who, us?"

"We are not talented enough."

"We are too poor."

"We do not have the leadership."

"We are too old or too young."

"We can't meet the budget we have."

"If only we had more people."

"If only we have more youth."

"If only we had could get some rich and talented members in our congregation."

I have heard these responses and many similar ones in congregations that have 30 and in those who have 5,000. These are the voices of those whose mindset has bought into the myth of scarcity. This myth generates fear and defines people as deficient.

In response to this, here is what I believe. First, regardless of your size or your context, God has given you and your church opportunities to join Jesus in loving the world. You are called to continue the work that Jesus began. God expects that the church will love mercy, do justly and walk humbly. Jesus states that we are to "love God" and to "love our neighbor" as ourselves and Jesus commissions us to make disciples.

Every congregation and every person is called by God to enter into mission locally and globally. If you don't know what that might be for your congregation, you need to prayerfully identify it, write it down, pray about it, talk about it and intentionally commit yourselves to meet it. In Paul's letter to your congregation, Paul offers the opportunity to respond to the needs of the impoverished Christians in Jerusalem.

Second, God provides all you need to do what God calls you to do. You have more than enough talent, leadership, imagination and money available. Make an effort to encourage, discover and identify the assets God has entrusted to your care. God is extravagant with you. You can do far more than you ask or imagine.

A more than enough perspective is biblical. It is rooted in the confidence that God will provide. A missional congregation trusts God and generously sows seeds of love in the world.

Recall what Paul wrote:

1. The more seeds you sow the greater the harvest. That is common sense.
2. God desires you to be a joyful giver. How do you know the joy of giving unless you give? God who is the ultimate giver finds great joy in giving.
3. And here is the clincher: "God is able to give you more than you need, so that you will always have all you need for yourselves and more than enough for every good cause".

I invite you to live in God's promises. I invite you to choose a ministry which calls upon the use of the gifts that have been entrusted to your congregation. See yourselves from God's perspective not your own.

When the coach put Duane Strock into the game, the coach was confident that Duane had the ability to do what needed to be done. The more you trust God and join Jesus in being the hands, feet and voice that God employs to bring God's love, hope, joy, peace and justice to the world, the more you will be living into the church you are called to be.

Jerry Hoffman is a gifted leader, administrator, preacher, teacher and presenter. He specializes in Stewardship Education and Leadership.

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*2015 Winners
From left to right:
Andra Kee,
Phillip Antilla,
David Filsinger*



Stewardship Ministries Announce 2015 Scholarship Winning Sermons

Each year, Stewardship Ministries invests in students by awarding scholarships for excellent sermons about stewardship. We challenged ministry students to write and submit a sermon in hopes that they will learn to teach the blessing of generosity in their congregations. We are proud to

announce the 2015 winners of this award: Andra Kee, Phillip Antilla, and David Filsinger, all students of Nazarene Theological Seminary. You are free to use these sermons in your church this year.

[Read the Winning Sermons Here](#)

Quotes:

Hudson Taylor



"Difficulties provide a platform on which the Lord can display his power."