

FROM THE DIRECTOR



All too often, we as Christians shy away from discussing, teaching, and studying generosity. This is truly unfortunate because God desires all of us to be generous for His glory. We discover that II Corinthians 9:13 tells us:

“...others will praise God for your obedience that accompanies your confession of the Gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else.”

Since our giving is an expression of praise and thanksgiving to God, we must strive to live a lifestyle of generosity. Making a financial gift to our church on Sunday is only the beginning. To model biblical generosity effectively we should do our best to balance giving time, talents and treasure. This will help us lead that lifestyle of Christian generosity that will impact the world for Christ in amazing ways.

In this issue of *Stewardship Spotlight*, we look at the blessing of giving time which we pray will inspire you to excel in the grace of giving in every area of your life.

Serving the Lord with you,



James Bakke J.D.
Executive Director

The Gift of Time

Our time on earth is finite, so it's important that we use our time effectively for the Lord. Some of us become so consumed with tithing 10% of our income that we can accidentally neglect the more important things of justice, mercy, and faithfulness that can be associated with giving time (see Matthew 23:23).

Which do you think is more pleasing to God—giving our time or giving our money? Truthfully, this is a trick question because it's different for everyone. For example, it might be easy for a wealthy business person to write a check to their church for \$3,000 each month. But, it might be very difficult for that same person to cancel a few business meetings and take their widowed neighbor to the doctor. It's quite possible that God would view their gift of time to the widow as a much more beautiful and sacrificial gift than their monthly cash gift. Only God knows.

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GENEROSITY OF TIME

In his book *A Generous Life*, Kevin Stirrat discusses how we can be more generous in our everyday lives. One aspect that he highlights is the number of hours of service given by church volunteers. He notes that there are millions of Christians giving countless hours every week to their church. But he adds an interesting twist.

Stirrat surprisingly states that giving that time does not make it generosity. Our giving only becomes generosity when we give our time without expecting anyone to give us recognition. It becomes generosity when our time is given out of a deep love and gratitude for what God did in us. It becomes generosity when we keep giving our time even when others do not.

As Corrie Ten Boom reminds us, “The measure of a life, after all is not its duration but its donation.” Giving of our time may well be the greatest gift for many of us.

The Gift of Time *Continued from front*

It's not that giving cash is less pleasing or important to God. Whether we are giving time, talents, or treasure, it's the sacrifice and the heart of the giver that pleases God, not necessarily the monetary value. Consider Jesus' parable of The Good Samaritan in Luke 10:30-36. In this story Jesus emphasizes the importance of investing in other people's lives through our time. The Samaritan took pity on the man who was attacked by robbers. He bandaged his wounds and brought him to an inn and took care of him.

Then the Good Samaritan gave the innkeeper money and asked him to look after the man until he returned. He really went above and beyond to show God's love. We're not told in the story where the Good Samaritan was headed or how pressed he was for time, but he obviously went out of his way to have pity on the man and be a good neighbor. This is the kind of generosity that points others to Christ. This is a wonderful example of being the hands and feet of Jesus to others. In this parable, Jesus was expressing the importance of the two greatest commandments.

Would you do this? When was the last time you mowed your neighbor's lawn or shoveled the snow from their sidewalk? When was the last time you stopped to help a stranger in need? When was the last time you canceled something important to serve someone else in need? If you're struggling to remember the last time you gave of your time outside the church, please take a moment to pray and ask God to provide you with opportunities.

ASK BARNABAS FOUNDATION

Q: Is this a good time to gift stock to the Stewards Fund?

A. With the bump in the US equity market recently, this is an opportune time to gift appreciated stock. The benefits of giving appreciated stock:

- Avoid paying capital gain tax
- Receive a significant tax deduction
- Make one gift and distribute it to several ministries
- Ability to contribute more net dollars to ministry than with an outright cash gift

Contact Cindi Riemersma at 1.888.448.3040 if you would like to learn more about our Stewards Fund or explore this gifting opportunity.

MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR TIME WITH BARNABAS FOUNDATION

Many of our friends have worked with Barnabas Foundation but are not aware of all the ways we can assist them. You may have used us to:

- Set up a Stewards fund account to simplify your giving
- Give stock, real estate or other assets to reduce your tax burden
- Update your Will to reflect your family and charitable goals
- Make a gift that provides you retirement income for life
- Assist your church with stewardship education

If one of these areas is an additional way we can serve you, email us at info@barnabasfoundation.com or call 888-448-3040.

BARNABAS FOUNDATION ON THE MOVE

Barnabas Foundation is relocating both its Illinois and Michigan offices in the next few weeks.

The Illinois office will move in June 2017 to:

3801 Eagle Nest Drive, Suite B
Crete, IL 60417
708.532.3444

As of April 1, 2017, the new Michigan office will be:

601 3 Mile Road NW, Suite 200
Grand Rapids, MI 49544
616.956.1232



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