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Biblical Principles for Stewardship and Fundraising: ***Trusting God to Resource our Schools***

Over the past two decades, the fund development profession has grown and matured in response to the increased demand by non-profit organizations for contributed support for operations, endowments, and capital improvements. Organizations such as the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA), the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP), and Christian Stewardship Association (CSA), along with a growing number of graduate programs in philanthropy, have raised the bar for professional policy and practice for development professionals (also referred to as stewardship or advancement professionals). As Christian school leaders we must not only meet or exceed professional standards, we have a higher responsibility to honor God by meeting biblical requirements.

ACSI, along with ECFA, CSA, and other Christian non-profit organizations, has adopted the following *Biblical Principles for Stewardship and Fundraising* as a guide for how we pursue kingdom values as well as seek sacred kingdom resources for our organizations. I encourage you and your school leadership to prayerfully study the following principles and consider adopting them as a guide for your development practices. As we follow God's direction for our schools we will have the profound privilege of watching Him connect His people and His resources with His Work

1. God, the creator (Gen. 1) and sustainer of all things (Col. 1:17) and the One "who works within us to accomplish far more than we can ask or imagine" (Eph. 3:20), is a God of infinite abundance (Ps. 50:10-11) and grace (2 Cor. 9:8).
2. Acknowledging the primacy of the Gospel (Rom. 1:16) as our chief treasure (Mt. 13:44), Christians are called to lives of stewardship, as managers of all that God has entrusted to them (1 Cor. 4:1-2).
3. A Christian's attitude toward possessions on earth is important to God (Mt. 6:24), and there is a vital link between how believers utilize earthly possessions (as investments in God's kingdom) and the eternal rewards that believers receive (Mt. 19:27-30).
4. God entrusts possessions to Christians and holds them accountable for their use, as a tool to grow God's eternal kingdom, as a test of the believer's faithfulness to God, and as a trademark that their lives reflect Christ's values (Lk. 16:1-9).

5. From God's abounding grace, Christians' giving reflects their gratitude for what God has provided and involves growing in an intimate faith relationship with Christ as Lord of their lives (Mk. 12:41-44).
6. Because giving is a worshipful, obedient act of returning to God from what has been provided (Rom. 12:1-2), Christian fundraisers should hold a conviction that, in partnership with the church, they have an important role in the spiritual maturation of believers (Jam. 3:1).
7. The primary role of Christian fundraisers is to advance and facilitate a believer's faith in and worship of God through a Christ-centered understanding of stewardship that is solidly grounded on Scripture (2 Tim. 3:16).
8. Recognizing it is the work of the Holy Spirit that prompts Christians to give (Jn. 15:4-5, Is. 55:8-11) (often in partnership with fundraising techniques), fundraisers and/or organizations must never manipulate or violate their sacred trust with ministry partners.
9. An eternal, God-centered worldview promotes cooperation, rather than competition, among organizations, and places the giver's relationship to God above the ministry's agenda (2 Cor. 4:16-18).
10. In our materialistic, self-centered culture, Christian leaders should acknowledge that there is a great deal of unclear thinking about possessions, even among believers, and that an eternal kingdom perspective will often seem like foolish nonsense (1 Cor. 2:14) to those who rely on earthly kingdom worldview techniques (1 Cor. 2:1-5).

When these principles are implemented, that rely on God changing hearts more than on human methods, the resulting joy-filled generosity of believers will fully fund God's work here on earth (Ex. 36:6-7).

Selected References for Biblical Principles for Stewardship and Fundraising

¹Mt. 6:19-21, 33

²Gen. 1; Ps.24:1; Col 1:17; Eph.3:20; Ps. 50:10-11; Phil 4:19; 2 Cor. 9:8; Jn. 1:14

³Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 9:23; Phil 3:8-11; Mt. 13:44, 25:15-30; 1 Cor. 4:1-2; 1 Pet. 4:10

⁴Mt. 6:24, 22:37; 1Tim. 6:10; Phil. 4:17; Prov. 24:12; Mt. 19:27-30; Luke 14:12-14; 1 Cor. 3; 2 Cor. 5:10; Eph. 2:10; 1 Tim 6:19

⁵Lk. 16:1-9; Rom. 1:1; 2 Cor. 8-9; Gal. 6:10; Col. 3:17; 1 Tim. 6:18

⁶Mk. 12:21-22; Gen 14:20; Ezra 2:69; Mk. 12:41-44; Lk. 7:36-50

⁷1 Chron. 29:10-14; Rom. 12:1; James 3:1

⁸2 Tim. 3:16; Ex. 34:32, 35:21

⁹Jn. 15:4-5; Is. 55:8-11; 2 Cor. 9:7; 1 Chron. 28:6, 29:9; Ps. 90:17; Prov. 21:1; 2 Cor. 3:5

¹⁰2 Cor. 4:16-18; Ps. 90:1-12

¹¹1 Cor. 2:14; 1 Cor. 2:1-5; 1 Cor. 1:17-31

¹²Ex. 36:6-7; Mt. 6:10