



Plugging the funding gap

In our consultations we note a wide and growing gap when funding ministry. Attention is given to analyzing financial reports. Even greater emphasis is given to raising money. Almost no emphasis is given to building communities and congregations that teach generosity, however. If this gap is not attended to, CFO's and development officers will have far less to work with in the future.

You can find this gap by returning to the increased emphases in fundraising and analysis. There is no corresponding surge in innovating at the congregational level. Any emphasis one does find is simply older fundraising methods applied more stridently and with ever diminishing return.

On the rare occasion that innovation arises, it must be approved and implemented by those who analyze expenditures and those who raise funds from individuals. These people, by definition of their job descriptions, are not attentive to congregational needs. Their jobs require them to push in other directions and to

consider congregational emphasis hardly worth the effort. With no one left with the power to innovate in developing congregational generosity, the gap appears and grows.

There is but one solution to plug the gap: a return to the theological core. This core proclaims the people of God do not work every possible moment, do not earn every possible dollar, live well within their means, and believe in giving as an act of reverence to God. Such people then have time, inclination and resource to care for widows, orphans, strangers, strange, and those who have not yet experienced the gospel.

Those who raise funding and those who analyze must personally return to this practice. Out of their life well-lived, they give permission to teach it in congregations yet again.

-mark

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