



Depth Perception™

Commentary from Design For Ministry™

Los Angeles • Milwaukee • Philadelphia

**Want prosperity? Go to church.
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In my recent book *Money Mania*, a key theme was that a complete and prosperous life grows from a commitment to the covenants of family, church and community. Money does not provide friends and family beside a bed of suffering. A life of giving does.

More evidence of the truth of this concept recently came to light in the 24 December 2005 issue of *The Economist* (p. 100). It reported on a series of quantitative studies demonstrating that social capital develops among those who promise themselves to each other in some way—especially among those committed to their congregations.

When they do, money recirculates. Expenses are reduced through shared risk and multiple uses of a resource. Mutual assistance is offered during difficult times. The ratios of expense to income noticeably improve.

So often people think that their giving becomes a resource entirely lost to them. Not so. Social capital grows from giving. The gift that benefits

others returns to the giver—pressed down, shaken together and running over (Luke 6:38). The gift becomes its own investment—interest paid back in rich, supportive relationships and shared resources.

One wag put it this way: Don't give and you gain no friends. Give and you might make a friend. The key is to truly give of course—to completely release the gift to the one who receives. Perhaps they will use it for the full benefit. Perhaps they will misuse it. No matter. It is a gift.

The release experienced in giving in love and without strings ultimately

becomes the sweet experience of becoming one who receives in the moments of great need.

"Don't give and you gain no friends. Give and you might make a friend."

—mark l. vincent