

A young tree with large, dark green, glossy leaves is growing out of a light-colored, woven basket. The tree's trunk is thin and brown. The basket is made of thick, light-colored rope or twill. The background is a plain, light gray wall.

# FUND- RAISING

101

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Seven Principles to  
Cultivating Generosity

## FUNDRAISING 101

# Seven Principles to Cultivating Generosity

Many leaders balk at having the money talk, yet everyone needs it to fund their programs. We need to get comfortable opening a healthy dialogue about cultivating those individuals God has blessed with the gift of generosity.

**We have all been given a spiritual gift;** some to preach, run a calm yet organized nursery, keep a building in good repair, recruit and retain amazing staff, listen well and provide good counsel, or a hundred other things.

But how many of us really know what to do with the people who just know how to make money, and are

**passionate about giving**  
it away for the good and benefit of others?



Historically, the Church has been great at helping nurture people with certain gifts like preaching, leading worship or administration. But let's face it, we typically don't disciple those whose spiritual gift is the ability to give extravagantly.

Maybe it's **fear of being nosy** or maybe we too quickly assume they don't need our help. When we isolate those with the gift of generosity, we are--in essence--forcing them to navigate the realm of finance and personal investment on their own. In my experience, these givers actually appreciate a relationship with healthy council - not to have their gift abused, but instead to have it developed.



Big givers already **know how to make money**; we don't need to coach them on that.

But we can help them have a firm grasp on the biblical principles of stewardship and generosity. We need to present them with opportunities to exercise their spiritual muscle of discernment in giving rather than treating them like a debit card expecting them to keep filling their account so we can keep tapping into it.

In the same way that you would **cultivate any other spiritual gift**, you should have a plan to disciple your major partners and donors.



Here are my **seven principles** to cultivate those with the gift of generosity:

1. Biblically affirm where their gift came from, whom it belongs to, and how it is to be used to bless God and others with it
2. Help them understand biblical principles of stewardship
3. Challenge them to grow their gift of discernment in spiritual giving
4. Give them opportunities to practice using their gift
5. Journey with them in setting goals and measuring achievement
6. Make disciples—encourage generosity veterans to identify and cultivate the next generation of givers/donors
7. Don't keep it a secret—let them model their gift and inspire others!



“When **God gives the vision**, He also provides the provision.” - Bob Hoskins

Here's the thing, these principles don't only apply to our biggest donors. The elderly woman with a five dollar check or the child that has collected pocket change can still be discipled and encouraged in their giving. I remember the huge checks partners wrote without batting an eyelash just as much as the handful of African coins from some of the poorest churches in West Africa that had taken an offering to give back to our ministry. We could all use a reminder from spiritual leaders to remember and honor generosity in an age of so much comfort and wealth.

### C.S. Lewis puts it like this,



“I do not believe one can settle how much we ought to give. I am afraid the only safe rule is to give more than we can spare. In other words, if our expenditure on comforts, luxuries, amusements, etc, is up to the standard common among those with the same income as our own, we are probably giving away too little. **If our charities do not at all pinch or hamper us**, I should say they are too small. There ought to be things we should like to do and cannot do because our charitable expenditure excludes them.”



When we ourselves recognize that **generosity is a gift God** has given to all of His children, we can go forward confident as we cultivate generous givers, and become more generous ourselves. At the end of the day, it is not about the amount we raise or sacrifice, but about the chance to see God work. Our money and efforts accomplish nothing without His blessing and guidance. With God's help, however, the impact of our giving is endless.

**Remember -**

**“So neither he who plants  
nor he who waters is  
anything, but only God  
who gives the growth.”**  
1 Corinthians 3:7