

**North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists  
Planned Giving and Trust Services Conference**

**“CREATING A CULTURE OF GIVING”**

**Presenter:**

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**SOUTHWEST REGION  
CONFERENCE**  
OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

# CREATING A CULTURE OF GIVING

## Definition

"The transfer of something without the expectation of receiving something in return." — *Wikipedia*

*God's motivation for giving is love. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." - John 3:16, KJV*

Our motivation for giving should also be love.

# CREATING A CULTURE OF GIVING

## Three Types of Givers

- Grudge Givers – “I hate to give.”
- Duty Givers – “I’m forced to give.”
- Thanks Givers – “I want to give.”

# CREATING A CULTURE OF GIVING

We can no longer take it for granted that people will give to the church.

This giving includes:

- Time
- Talents
- Treasury (Money)



# CREATING A CULTURE OF GIVING



*"Giving is an expression of obedience, yes, but also of gratitude, trust, and increasing giving." – National Christian Foundation*

*Investment comes with trust.*

*Younger people, in particular, have major challenges with trust, and will no longer give, just to give (in terms of money).*

# A WORLD OF CHANGE

**We live in an ever-changing society, and COVID-19 has accelerated this change. Given this, we must:**

- Change the way we look at things including people's views on giving.
- Change the way we minister.
- Change the way we evangelize.

**We're living in a "new normal."**

# A WORLD OF CHANGE

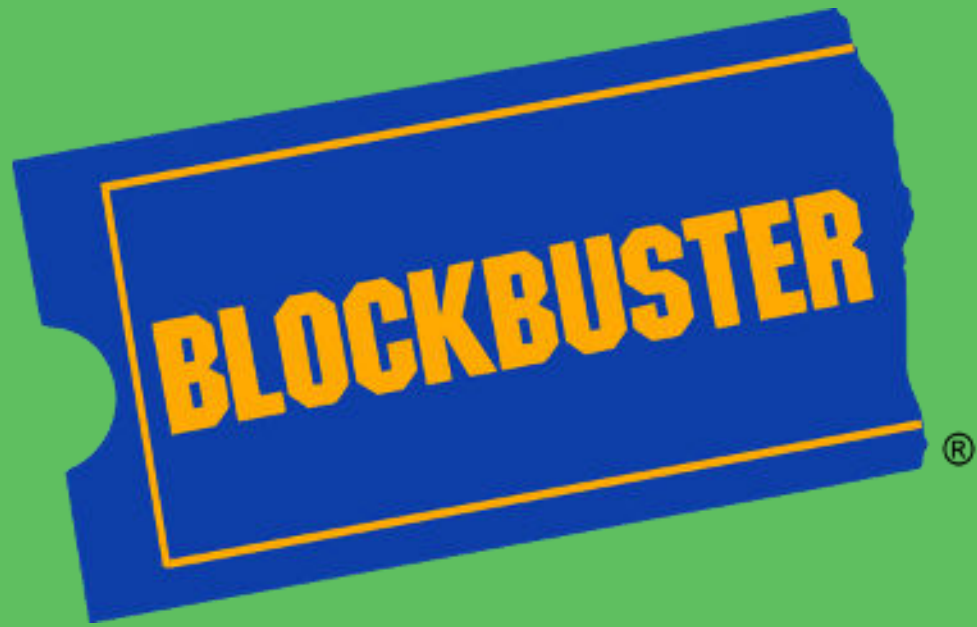
- **Change is inevitable. Change is constant.**  
- *Benjamin Disraeli*
- **When you're finished changing, you're finished.**  
- *Benjamin Franklin*
- **If we don't change, we don't grow. If we don't grow, we aren't really living.** - *Gail Sheehy*

# A WORLD OF CHANGE

- Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future. - *John F. Kennedy*
- There is nothing wrong with change, if it is in the right direction. - *Winston Churchill*
- He who rejects change is the architect of decay. The only human institution which rejects progress is the cemetery.  
- *Harold Wilson*



# A WORLD OF CHANGE



# A WORLD OF CHANGE



JCPenney

# **A WORLD OF CHANGE**

**Just like society is changing, “giving” to churches  
in the United States, Canada, Bermuda, and  
Guam (the NAD) is changing.**

# A WORLD OF CHANGE

The Method of Giving to the Church Has Changed.

- In Person
- By Mail
- Online Giving
- Drop Off Box
- Cash App
- Zelle
- Planned Giving



# A WORLD OF CHANGE

## 1. The Perspective of Giving to the Church Has Changed.

There was a time when giving to the work of the church was more frequently modeled in the home and regularly taught in Sabbath School, discipleship programs, evangelistic campaigns, and from the pulpit.

In 1980, the church received over 60% of all charitable giving, but since this time, giving to religion has experienced a rapid decline, hitting a new low of just 29% in 2020. *(Pew Research Center)*

# A WORLD OF CHANGE

## 1. The Perspective of Giving to the Church Has Changed. - continued

- Many people don't see it as a Biblical mandate.
- They don't give out of obedience and love, but give out of feelings.
- The church is not seen as God's appointed agency on earth.
- Perceived corruption, mismanagement, lack of vision, lack of advancement, etc. have impacted giving to the church.
- As opposed to systematic benevolence to the church, many give to special, charitable projects and causes.

# **A WORLD OF CHANGE**

## **2. The Changing Understanding on the Role of the Church**

In past years, the church was central to the life of the Christian. The church member worshipped there, had family there, had friends there, fellowshiped there, etc. Worship, education, fellowship, recreation, and service all took place at the church. Multiple days during the week were spent at the church. The role and function of the church was paramount to the life of the believer.

# A WORLD OF CHANGE

## 2. The Changing Understanding on the Role of the Church – continued

### Societal Changes:

- Technological
- Geographical (Rural, Urban, etc.)
- Economic (Affluence, Wage Earners, etc.)



# A WORLD OF CHANGE

## 2. The Changing Understanding on the Role of the Church – continued

### Social Changes

- Secularization
- Postmodernism
- Decentralization

All of the aforementioned, coupled with the COVID-19 Pandemic, have changed the understanding of the role of the church, particularly among younger people.

# A WORLD OF CHANGE

## 3. The Rise of Non-profits as a Philanthropic Option for Christians

There are more than 1.5 million nonprofits that exist today, and this number grows each year. Even during the COVID-19 Pandemic, there were over 35,000 new 501(c)3 organizations formed in 2020 alone.

This means that every year, there are more people and causes competing for the attention and wallets of church members. Moreover, the percent of the United States' income and National Gross Domestic Product that is given to charity has not increased, but has remained at about 2% for the past 40 years.

**A WORLD OF  
CHANGE**

**"A crisis is the vortex  
of possibilities."**

**A WORLD OF**

**CHANGE**

**"Means will be devised to reach hearts.**

**Some of the methods used in this work will be different from the methods used in the work in the past; but let no one, because of this, block the way by criticism."**

**— *Ellen G. White, Evangelism, p. 105***

# CREATING A CULTURE OF GIVING

Creating a culture of giving will require a new way of thinking and operating. Churches of all shapes and sizes will have to make changes. The best and most exciting days of local church ministry are ahead of us, but the future will look very different from the past.

In this new culture, giving is not something church members must do, it must be who they are - givers. Giving must become a part of the culture of every local church.

# CREATING A CULTURE OF GIVING

## 1. Education

The message of giving is fundamental to the success of our churches. This message has to be intentionally shared.

We can no longer assume that church members know what “giving” means and their spiritual responsibility associated with the management of God’s property (Stewardship).

It must be stressed that God was “giving” to us with the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ. In return, we must be “giving” to His cause and calling on our lives through loving obedience in the returning of our time, talents, and treasury.

# CREATING A CULTURE OF GIVING



## 1. Education

- Sabbath School
- Church School
- Divine Worship Experience
- Stewardship Seminars and Workshops
- Evangelistic Campaigns
- Bible Study
- Other

# CREATING A CULTURE OF GIVING

## 1. Education

- Proverbs 3:9 – “Honor the Lord with the first fruits of all thine increase.”
- Matthew 25:21 – “You have been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things.”
- Psalm 24:1 – “The earth is the Lord's.”
- Matthew 6:33 – “Seek ye first the kingdom of God.”



# CREATING A CULTURE OF GIVING

## 1. Education

- John 3:16 – “For God so loved the world that He gave.”
- Luke 16:11 – “If you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches?”
- 2 Corinthians 9:6-7 – “He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. The Lord loves a cheerful giver.”

# CREATING A CULTURE OF GIVING

## 2. Engage Young People

A Biblical understanding of Stewardship and giving may have never been instilled in young people at an early age.

According to the Christian Stewardship Network, in churches:

- Baby Boomers (1946-1964) account for nearly **42%** of the giving population (**30%** of the overall population).
- Generation X (1965-1980) account for **19%** of the giving population (**26.6%** of the overall population).
- Generation Y (also known as Millennials, 1981-1996) account for **7%** of the giving population (**30.4%** of the over population).

# CREATING A CULTURE OF GIVING

## 2. Engage Young People

60% of Millennials (Generation Y) do give to non-profits, but only 7% of Millennial consistently give to the church.

If this trend doesn't change, and the Lord delays His coming, what will churches look like in 20 years?



# CREATING A CULTURE OF GIVING

**"Churches in the United States have entered a new season of ministry. Gone are the days when church attendance was a societal norm. For most of our American history, cultural and technological change was gradual, sufficiently paced for churches to lag only five to 10 years. Now churches are lagging 20 and 30 years as the speed of change increases dramatically. To many people, the church seems irrelevant. Several thousand churches close each year. The pace will accelerate unless our congregations make some dramatic changes."**

**- Thom S. Rainer, January 16, 2018**

# **CREATING A CULTURE OF GIVING**

**Between 6,000 and 10,000 churches in the United States are dying each year, which means that around 100 to 200 churches will close per week.**

**- *Thom S. Rainer of Lifeway Research***

# CREATING A CULTURE OF GIVING

## 2. Engage Young People



- Make giving a frequent topic of discussion and study in youth meetings, Sabbath School classes, small groups, etc.
- Educate in church schools (on all levels) on why we are called to be good stewards and "givers" with our money.
- Share the values of giving on your church website.
- Send emails with Stewardship messages to your church members, particularly youth.
- Post Stewardship messages on your social media platforms.

## CREATING A CULTURE OF GIVING

“If you’re trying to target the 18 - 49 year old demographic, you should know that **80%** of them watch YouTube every month. YouTube is a great free platform to add your Stewardship videos. This same demographic’s TV watching has dropped by **4%**, but YouTube usage increased by **74%**.”

# CREATING A CULTURE OF GIVING

- Over one billion hours of YouTube videos are watched daily.
- Over 500 million people watch Facebook videos daily.





# CREATING A CULTURE OF GIVING

## 3. Relevance

- Preach practical, interesting, and relevant sermons on the “why” behind Biblical Stewardship and Giving.
- Many individuals (particularly young adults) struggle with the current church culture and system. Budgets must be set and established that are not bureaucratic in nature and/or just perpetuating practices that are irrelevant and antiquated.
- Administrative overhead has to be streamlined. There is a growing distrust that the church is unable to use its giving for worthwhile purposes. Moreover, church leaders’ corporate decisions regarding the use of God’s resources should always reflect the pursuit of the Gospel Commission.

# CREATING A CULTURE OF GIVING

## Money Is Only a Tool!

A lot of how we view “giving” has to do with how we view money. Is money evil? Is money good?

But money is a tool that be used for good or bad purposes.

# CREATING A CULTURE OF GIVING

## Illustration – Bricks

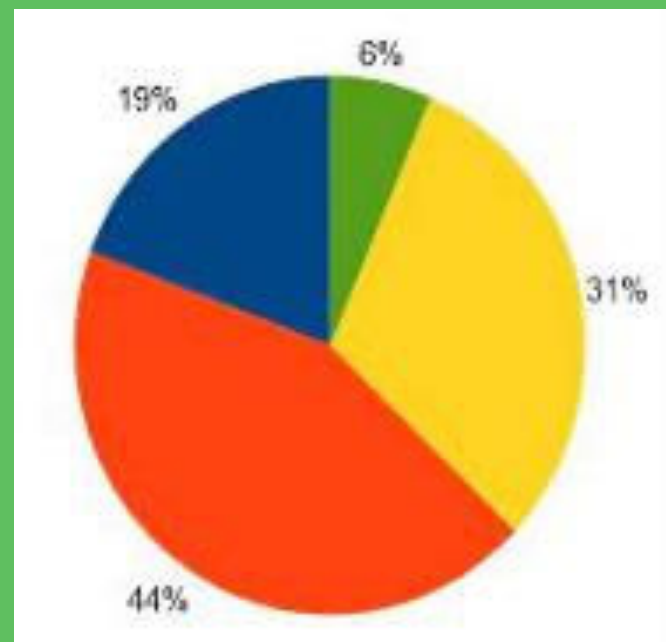
Bricks can be used to build a beautiful building, or they can be used to break windows in an attempt to steal valuable items in a building. Like bricks, money can be used for good or evil.

Money is a tool. It's not inherently good or evil. It's what we do with money that matters.



# CREATING A CULTURE OF GIVING

## 4. Transparency



- Be transparent on where the money given to the church and conference goes and how it helps fund certain activities (including evangelism and outreach), mission programs, and discipleship opportunities.
- Stress to individuals (particularly youth) that "Jesus doesn't need their money. He wants what their money represents. He wants their heart. He wants their heart to long for the things of God and be hungry for them."

# CREATING A CULTURE OF GIVING

## 5. Customer Service

- The familiar cliché is appropriate, "People don't care how much know until they know how much you care."
- Communication (letters, email, social media, telephone, etc.) should be of a "seeking" nature.
- Proper training and hospitable actions of church officers and service personnel (volunteers and remunerated) are critical.
- Physical Plant should reflect the splendor of God.
- Colossians 3:23-24 – "Whatever you do, do it heartily unto the Lord."

# CREATING A CULTURE OF GIVING

## 6. Church Leaders Must Model Giving

- Leaders must not just “talk the talk,” but also “walk the walk.”
- Giving must be reflected and apparent in leaders’ personal Stewardship.
- When their church has a major project, leaders must get involved in a major way. When you give to the Lord’s work, go above and beyond the call of duty.
- “You don’t lead people by what you say to them; you lead them by what they see you do.” – Israelmore Ayivor

# CREATING A CULTURE OF GIVING

## 7. Stress That Giving and Stewardship Impact Our Eternal Destiny.

In a few years, everything you have will either be thrown away or belong to someone else. Your house, your car, your clothing, your most prized possessions are all temporary. You'll spend a few years on earth, but eternity in heaven. The way we manage and support God's entrusted resources will impact where we spend eternity.

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." – Matthew 6:19-21, KJV

# **CREATING A CULTURE OF GIVING**

**"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."**

**- 1 Corinthians 10:31, KJV**





**Dr. Carlton P. Byrd | President – Southwest Region Conference**