



KAIROS

moments

Reflections and Resources for the Journey

FUNDING YOUR MISSION: FIVE THINGS THAT MATTER MOST

Developing the resources needed to live out your mission is perhaps as important as the actual mission itself. Far too often this important work is given very low priority because it can be difficult and require significant energy. Leaders need to take this work seriously and develop thoughtful and intentional habits that allow for quality time to be given to these efforts. A good place to start is with some foundational understandings, or practices, that can set the table for even greater opportunities to develop deep and lasting resources. The following are starting points. Five important things that really matter in developing financial resources that enable your mission to be as effective as possible.

DON'T ASSUME YOU'RE ENTITLED TO FINANCIAL SUPPORT

It's about opportunity, not obligation. The days are gone when the church can expect financial support from its membership base, and it could be argued it never should have been in play in the first place. There does exist in some of our older generations that sense of duty to share resources to support their church. However, one of the more damaging things churches can do in developing deeper financial support is to give a message that feels like they are owed, or deserve, their people's money. This isn't very helpful in trying to grow generous disciples. It's an all too common story where church leaders stand before their congregation and say, *"You approved this budget, now you need to fund it."* The fact is, no matter what budget was approved, it isn't about obligation or duty to support it. Instead, it is about opportunity, privilege and blessing. The invitation to help fund your mission should be more about inviting people into meaningful partnership with your shared ministry, not about the need to meet your budget expenses. It's not a transaction that you are looking for, but an act of ownership to help bring about the great work that you do together.

MISSIONAL IMPACT

People want to be a part of something that is making a difference. A foundational piece to funding your mission is to take advantage of every opportunity available to tell your story. How are you making a difference in people's lives? How is the life of your local community being made better? Strong missional funding is possible when people hear and experience the real impact you are making. Remember, these stories need to be real, not imagined. If you can't find them, then you need to start redefining your mission and ministry so that it can become a story of real impact and effectiveness.

BE PROUD OF YOUR MISSION

People give generously to mission when they trust the leaders and feel that those leaders care deeply about that ministry. When a leader can project a sense of deep confidence and passion for the work that is being done those connected to that ministry will in turn be inspired to share their resources. Believe that the work of your mission is important, that it is making a huge difference in people's lives! When that is in place the invitation to share resources can be done boldly and confidently.

BE MINDFUL OF THE STAGES OF GENEROSITY

Not everyone is in the exact same place on the generosity journey. Everybody has their own unique back story that influences their understanding and behavior around being generous. It is important to pay attention to this reality. Generic messaging around growing financial supporters for your mission is counterproductive. It doesn't acknowledge, or honor, the fact that people are in different places with their giving habits and for very different reasons. You can't start talking about tithing to the whole when there are individuals who simply struggle to balance a checkbook. Some people have grown up in family systems where money was never talked about and always seen as a stress point for relationships. Some have experienced profound generosity as they watched their parents, or grandparents, live out of a real sense of abundance. Finding a variety of touch points to talk about generosity and share different ways to grow in that habit can often be transformative for people. Be that place where money is talked about and people are made to feel good about that experience.

DON'T MISS MAJOR FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Big visions require major resources. Church leaders tend to believe that doing major funding initiatives outside of their annual budgets are only for building and facility needs. This is often the case, but they can also be a time of developing significant resources to help launch new dreams and plans for expanded mission and ministry. This should never be done as a way to offset operational expenses that never seem to get met. Instead, it should be done for those newly developed missional opportunities that could otherwise not be launched. If the vision is inspiring and directly connects to your overall sense of missional purpose, conducting a major funding initiative can be very effective and impactful. One church recently launched a \$2.5 million appeal for the sole purpose of expanding mission capacity. They raised the whole amount because the vision was right and it embodied their missional DNA.

CONCLUSION

There are certainly other areas that need to be attended to in developing financial resources for mission. These five are foundational and can put you in a stronger position to go even deeper in this work. The ministries of Kairos and The Joshua Group are designed to engage faith communities for this very purpose. If you would like to discover more ways to grow that culture of generosity and realize greater resources for mission, please don't hesitate to connect with us. We would love to walk with you on this journey.