
WHAT TO DO WHEN ... OFFERINGS ARE DOWN

Episode Description

No church ever has enough money to fund the ministries it wants to do or to meet the needs of the community. However, most churches can increase their offerings significantly by employing some simple practices. In this episode, Drs. Bill and Kris offer suggestions for raising your weekly offerings.

Episode Outline

There are a number of reasons why offerings may be down – and some may be out of your direct control. If your top two benefactors have died, obviously the church will likely see a dip in the offerings.

On the other hand, one of the most common reasons churches see their offerings decline is conflict. If your church is in conflict, none of the following reasons will bring either significant or lasting relief to your budget woes. In case of conflict, job #1 is to bring either reconciliation or resolution. (Church-Talk has several episodes on how to deal with conflict.)

Top Three Offering Fixes

1. Provide a Reason to Give

- Guilt and obligation are poor motivators to those born after 1945
- The budget shortfall is a poor motivator for everyone
- People give to people and projects (projects that will help people)
- Replace your offering meditations
 - Good: Highlight a ministry the offerings underwrite
 - Better: Provide a weekly testimony of someone whose life has been changed by one of the church's ministries
 - Best: Create a video testimony and montage of a ministry that is changing lives

2. Provide an Opportunity to Give

The younger the adult, the less likely they are to carry a checkbook or significant cash

- Emphasize e-banking (automatic bill pay to the church)
- Provide online giving
- Provide a "giving kiosk"
- Generate a QR code
- Provide a debit card reader (SquareUp, etc.)

3. Talk About Money/Wealth Only as Often as Jesus Did

- Money issues and consumerism are the two most prominent “idols” in the US
- Jesus was unafraid to confront the issue in his day ... and spoke on the subject more than any other with the exception of the Kingdom of God
- Teaching financial responsibility isn't the same as asking for money every week.

Epilogue: The most effective way to grow your finances is to embrace the dual strategies of growing your church and growing those in your church. Most churches hope the first will happen and teach more information to those who attend in the belief that “knowing more” leads to changed behaviors. However, hope is not a strategy – growing a church today is hard work that only happens through intentional efforts. And “knowing” more doesn't translate into “doing” differently. Growing disciples necessitates accountability for behaviors. Without it, there will be no growth of any sort.

Discussion Questions

1. What are some “causes” that you have supported in the past? Why did you offer support for them?
2. The average church graduate gives more money to their alum than they do to their church. Why do you think that is?
3. Why do you think your church's offerings are “down”?
4. What can you do that will turn around this trend?