

Growing Givers' Hearts : Treating Fundraising As A Ministry

by Thomas H. Jeavons & Rebekah Burch Basinger

Do Christian organizations and development officers fundraise in a way that appeals to motives "at odds with the teachings of their faith"? Are they simply interested in getting a dollar or equally interested in nurturing the spiritual life of donors? These questions are important since, as the authors assert, "Some fundraising appeal or another is quite likely to be the first-and may be the only-contact of the unchurched with Christianity today." Does this fundraising reflect the Gospel?

Jesus warned us, "No one can serve two masters...You cannot serve both God and Money." *Growing Givers' Hearts* begins by surveying the theology of giving in the Hebrew Scriptures, the New Testament, and throughout the history of the Church. This initial section alone is worth the price of the book.

The largest part of *Growing Givers' Hearts* is based on a three-year study funded by the Lilly Endowment. Jeavons and Basinger explored six organizations that are successful at both raising funds and encouraging the spiritual growth of their donors and identified six "necessary conditions" for such a program. These organizations are: Compassion International, Union Gospel Mission of Seattle, the Catholic Charities of Cleveland, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Tucson, San Francisco Theological Seminary, Fuller Theological Seminary, and Biola University. The six conditions are the chapter headings for "Part Two" listed below.

The final section moves from the organizational perspective to that of the individual. These chapters are a challenge and an invitation to the ministry of fundraising. Jeavons and Basinger offer specific insights into how the "necessary conditions" flow out of our daily lives.

Written for a decidedly Christian audience, Jeavons and Basinger have tried to be inclusive of the Roman Catholic, Protestant, and Evangelical traditions and vocabulary. The book is filled with concrete, but not formulaic, suggestions and practices of those that treat fundraising as ministry. These well-placed, compelling examples ground the principles in real life and make the *Growing Givers' Hearts* approach even more believable.

I highly recommend *Growing Givers' Hearts*! It a challenge and an encouragement for Christians but would probably be compelling to anyone interested in the spirituality of fundraising.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction: Fundraising and the Expression of Faith

Part One: What is Christian Fundraising?

1. Creating Resources for God's Work
2. What the Bible Says About Giving and Asking
3. A Brief History of Christian Fundraising

Part Two: Six Essential Characteristics of Fundraising as a Ministry

4. Confidence in God's Abundance
5. A Holistic Perspective on "Kingdom Work"
6. Clarity About Core Theological Beliefs
7. Giving Donors Opportunities for Participation
8. Integrated Organizational Planning
9. Spiritually Mature Leadership

Part Three: The Fundraiser's Ministry

10. Fundraising as a Calling
11. Fundraising as an Invitation to Cooperate with God's Grace

