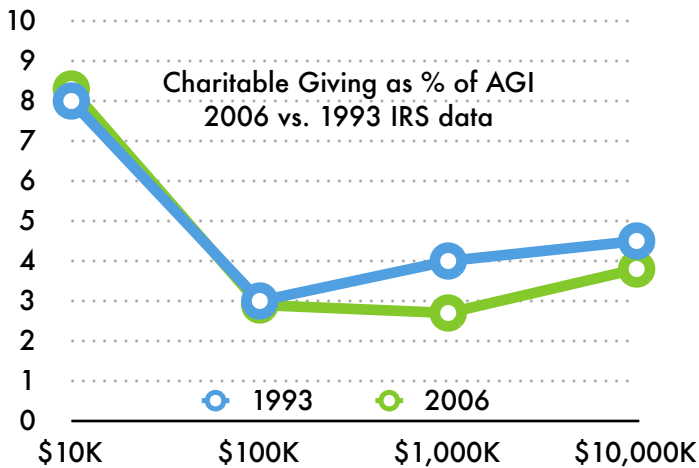


Journey of Generosity Where Are You On Your Journey?

The Generous Giving (GG) organization based out of Chattanooga, TN in recent years has successfully grown generosity through leading weekend experiences called Journeys of Generosity. Usually held over a weekend hosted by an individual or couple, these gatherings are guided by a trained facilitator and expose participants to the life changing message of generosity while engaging the heart around the topic of giving.

HOPE recently partnered with GG and took a handful of donors and board members through various talks, videos and Scripture centrally focused on Christian giving. One immediate result that rose to the surface is that in our isolated culture and lack of community, we often measure where we are in line with the Biblical mandate to “be cheerful givers” based on those around us. Drawing close helped us understand we are in this together and that God has blessed everyone differently, but all for His common glory. We wrestled through several short giving testimonies (via video) and a passage from Richard Foster’s *Celebration of Discipline* before examining Randy Alcorn’s *40 Questions to Ask God*.

The feedback after the all day gathering was overwhelmingly positive and Hope plans on encouraging more local Journeys of Generosity. If you are interested in joining in for a similar discussion or would like to host a similar event, please contact HOPE for more information. If you would like more information on Generous Giving, including attending the upcoming Generous Giving conference this October 22-24 in Austin, TX please view www.generousgiving.org.



Giving Declines as Income Increases

Two unexpected conclusions resulted from a recent study by the Tijeras Foundation of the 60 largest metropolitan areas on charitable giving. Giving as a percent of income dramatically declines as income increases. Persons earning less than \$100,000 were more generous in 2006 than in 1993 while those earning more than \$100,000 were less generous.

The study also found that on average charitable giving accounted for about 2.7% of adjusted gross income (AGI). IRS data for 2006 suggests this percentage is 3.2% for those who itemize their deductions. Memphis ranked #2 of the 60 (Birmingham was highest) with giving equaling 3.4% of AGI.

Kingdom Advisors Growing In Memphis

In the fast changing regulatory and economic climate, wouldn't it be nice to find a financial advisor whose advice is tested, relevant and sound? Recently, a group of Memphis financial professionals – financial planners, trust officers, estate attorneys – began meeting on a monthly basis to receive just that type of advice. It is part of Kingdom Advisors Community and Small Group model. Kingdom Advisors was formed to engage, equip and empower Christian financial professionals to embrace and implement the life-changing principles of Biblical stewardship.

Kingdom Advisors' roots were planted in 1997, when Larry Burkett, co-founder of Crown Financial Ministries, brought together 16 close friends and fellow professionals with a commitment to incorporating Biblical wisdom into their advice and counsel who formed the Christian Financial Planning Institute. They began to prayerfully consider and plan for the creation of an organization that would help Christian financial professionals become passionate about experiencing purpose in their work, and also draw upon their faith when counseling clients. This core group shared a common vision: to create a network of Christian financial professionals. Kingdom Advisors, under the leadership of Ron Blue, is now the largest national network of Christian financial professionals.

When one chooses a financial advisor of any discipline, they are looking for several things, most importantly that their advisor is interested in their needs first and foremost. They want someone who is competent, performs their work with excellence, and has humility and integrity. Many advisors, Christian and non-Christian, can meet these requirements. So, what is the difference? I believe that there are at least three primary differences between any advisor and a Kingdom Advisor.

First of all, God's word says "The mind of man plans his way but the Lord directs his steps," Proverbs 16:3. Additionally it says that "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," Psalm 111:10. Ultimately you should expect and desire your advisor to give advice that is consistent with God's word. There is a higher standard for a Christian than for a non-Christian in making their financial decisions because they are handling God's resources. God's word is a light that should guide every area of our lives and very significantly the financial area of our lives.

Second, a Kingdom Advisor is going to have a worldview or a perspective that is different from someone outside the Christian faith. It is eternal in its nature and consequently for the client it helps him or her to actually be stewards of God's resources. The advisor facilitates helping a client make financial decisions that have eternal consequences.

The third reason is that the character of a believer in Jesus Christ should be of a higher standard than an outsider. As you read scripture and see what God's standards are, the character qualities of that advisor should be reflected.

We believe that you have a right to expect a difference in dealing with a Kingdom Advisor, someone who is a disciple of Christ, has been equipped, and is motivated to assist others to grow in their relationship with our Savior. These are men and women who, in all humility, have committed their lives to serving the Lord Jesus for kingdom purposes. They find their fulfillment in their calling to be of service to you. They understand that they are dealing with the resources that God has entrusted to you, the goals that God has given to you, and the desire that you have to be a good steward with all that God has entrusted to you.

To find out more about Kingdom Advisors or get involved please view the Hope Foundation website or contact David Lenoir at 901.766.9393.

The above article was submitted by David Lenoir, area director of Kingdom Advisors. HOPE welcomes unique initiatives that will grow Biblical Christian stewardship in the city.

40 Questions to Ask God by Randy Alcorn

Randy Alcorn, author of The Treasure Principle, penned some questions Christians to ask God concerning their financial matters. Recently a group of Hope Board members and donors got together to discuss thoughts on generosity and the following profound questions rose to the surface:

“What am I holding on to that’s robbing me of present joy and future reward? What am I keeping that’s preventing me from having to depend on You? What am I clinging to that makes me feel like I don’t have to depend on You to provide, like I used to before I had so much? What do You want me to release that could restore me to a walk of faith?”

“What specifically am I hanging onto that You want me to give away? I want to submit everything to your review and ask You to guide me as to what I should do with your money and possessions.”

“What am I doing to train my children to be generous givers - and not just donors but disciples?”

“What handful of people in my unique sphere of influence do You want me to pray for and talk with about generous giving?”

“Five minutes after I die, what will I wish I would have given away while I still had the chance?”



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