

The Stewardship Journal

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**From My Desk
to Your Inbox**



**It's Not Fund Raising
It's Faith Raising**



**Pray the
Money in!**



**How to Integrate Prayer
in a Capital Campaign**

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From My Desk to Your Inbox

This issue of *The Stewardship Journal* focuses on the relationship between prayer and capital fundraising. First, Mark Brooks, the Stewardship Coach, shares that when raising capital funds, ***It's Not Fund Raising, It's Faith Raising***. Then in the bonus section, Mark approaches the relationship between prayer and fundraising in his article ***Pray the Money In!***

Drawing on his years of pastoral experience, Dr. Ronnie Floyd writes the final post for this week's issue, ***How to Integrate Prayer in a Capital Campaign***.

As a reminder, all past issues of *The Stewardship Journal* can be found at stewardshipjournal.com or LouisianaBaptists.org/Stewardship.

Keep Looking Up,



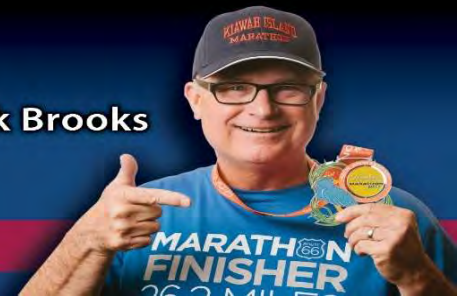
Dr. Steve How

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THE STEWARDSHIP COACH
REVERSING THE DECLINE IN GIVING

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Mark Brooks



It's Not Fund Raising It's Faith Raising



Last week, I told a story of a pastor I once worked with who explained to his leaders that the upcoming capital campaign wasn't a fund-raising campaign but a faith-raising campaign. I want to further flesh that out in this Coach, entitled ***It's Not Fund Raising It's Faith Raising***.

Last week, I defined fundraising versus faith raising: "In a fundraising campaign, I look at what I can afford to give. Faith is seldom a factor. A commitment to a church capital campaign should be an act of faith in response to God's prompting." Non-profit campaigns fundraise. Churches raise faith and, in doing so, raise dollars.

One of your goals in a capital campaign is to use the process to teach the importance of walking by faith. You begin by communicating a vision that helps your members be able to say, "They're proposing building X." You want to move them to ownership where they say, "We are building X." Finally, you want them to arrive personally at a place where they are asking, "Lord, based on what my church is doing, what do you want *my* part to be?" You pour all your communication, preaching, and effort to get your members to that place. One thing is still required. You must utilize what I call **Spiritual Connectivity**.

Spiritual Connectivity is essential for members to understand what you believe God wants to do through your campaign. Your members' hearts must be inspired. They must see the link between the project, why we are raising dollars, and the church's vision. You must spiritually connect the members to the vision you believe comes from God's heart. How?

Prayer is not just a practice; it's the lifeline of your campaign. It's what links our heart to the heart of God. Prayer is the vehicle that helps us link this project back to the God-given purpose of your church. You will want to plan events that will call the church family to ask for God's overall blessing upon the campaign and what God wants each of them to do to support this vision. These could include prayer walks, twenty-four-hour prayer vigils, concerts of prayer, periods of prayer such as a Forty Days of Prayer and Fasting approach, and other prayer-related events.

One of the most overlooked aspects of fundraising is prayer. In our rush to create programs and catchy themes, we often forget our greatest resource: prayer. One reason for this oversight might be that we often overlook the importance of prayer in many of our endeavors in church.

"I have a problem." That was a comment a lay leader made to me a few years ago after our team meeting. The man with the problem was the Prayer Coordinator on the team. I asked what his problem was. He said, "I've been asked to get people to pray for our church, but after hearing you, it sounds like what we really are interested in is their money."

He feared that members would feel that the prayer call was a disguised call for giving. I responded, "You are not asking them to pray when you are asking them to give. You are asking them to pray in order that they might know what God wants them to give. You are asking them to pray everyone in the church would respond to God's prompting as to what He would have them commit and give."

How you raise funds must be consistent with how you do all missions and ministry. I always tell pastors that a capital campaign is a teachable moment. Capital campaigns challenge our faith and our view of ownership of our lives. One of our

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goals in discipleship should be to teach biblical stewardship. If all we possess is God's, why should we not pray about what to give? If we are truly trying to walk by faith, how can we do that apart from through prayer? So, be unapologetic in calling your church to pray about their giving.

By making prayer a key element of your campaign strategy, you teach your members to walk by faith and trust God. Small victories give us the confidence to pray for larger needs. The more we pray, the more our faith increases. The more our faith increases, the more generous we become. The more generous we are, the more your church has to do missions and ministry.

So, make prayer a key element of your capital campaign giving strategy because a successful church capital campaign is not fund-raising but faith-raising!



Mark Brooks – The Stewardship Coach

mark@acts17generosity.com



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Bonus Section

Pray the Money In!

Several years ago, I wrote the following blog post on praying in money. While the thrust was for the weekly offering, the principles I laid out will also work for praying for a capital campaign.

Do you regularly pray for a full offering plate each Sunday? Isn't it amazing how little we pray for some of the most crucial things? We know we need a fully funded budget, but do we really earnestly pray for the offering plates to be full? I fear that most don't.

Here are some simple steps for praying for your church's giving. Try these for the next few weeks and see if your giving does not increase.

First, give up the worry and anxiety you are having about making a budget by placing the results of every offering into God's hands. God will provide a way for His Church. Our mantra should be to work hard and pray harder! Begin by thanking Him for what comes in, knowing He will not fail you!

Pray that all your God-given dreams will be fully funded through the generosity of your members. I always say we don't fund God's work by playing the lottery. God's work gets funded by His people responding to the vision of what we are doing. Pray that your members "get" the importance of your ministry and thus willingly and cheerfully give to support it.

Pray that God will bless every gift. Years ago, when I worked for John Maxwell, he had a nationwide round table of key pastors. Tommy Barnett told us how he would lay hands on the offering envelopes every Monday and pray for God's blessings for those who gave. What amazed many pastors was that Tommy told people he would do that from the platform before the offering! Not every church culture will allow that, and some things one pastor can do are not what we all should do. However, it should be our consistent prayer that God bless those who give.

Pray for all your businesspeople, that their businesses will thrive. I believe in trickle-down economics. When your business owners see an increase in revenue, they can be more generous. What would happen if your businesspeople knew you were praying for increased revenues? It could just change the way they view their business.

Pray for all those who give a gift for the first time. I believe in first-time giver strategies. What if one part of that strategy was praying for each first-time gift that God would bless them as a result of their gift and thus show them the wonders of generosity? My goal for first-time givers is to get them to give again. What better way than to pray with that in mind?

Pray for those on fixed incomes or low budgets that their gift would be multiplied. Every gift matters! Some cannot give as others, but all can and should give. Pray that those with the least to give will experience the blessings of God and thus be encouraged to continue to give.

A Prayer Challenge – Start today praying for this week's offering. Then, encourage your staff and lay leadership to take up the challenge. Finally, encourage the whole congregation to make meeting budget a prayer challenge. Along the way, record the blessings and miracles that God provides.

Let's start where we need to start and pray the money in!

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How To Integrate Prayer In A Capital Campaign

Dr. Ronnie Floyd

We are thrilled to have Dr. Ronnie Floyd write on the importance of prayer in a capital campaign. Dr. Floyd has recently published a new devotional for leaders called *Day by Day and Night by Night: 365 Morning & Evening Devotions for Leaders*. You can find the devotional at all major booksellers.

Integrating the ministry of prayer in a capital campaign is not just important; it's essential. Prayer is not just one aspect of a capital campaign; it's the thread that can weave the campaign into a unified and whole experience, connecting everyone involved.

When a church launches a capital campaign, it raises funds to achieve its vision. It's important to acknowledge that people may have concerns or feel troubled by the very announcement of a campaign. Understanding these feelings is crucial in guiding the campaign effectively. God can use prayer to make this campaign an authentic spiritual experience for the entire church.

In this article, I want to answer two major questions that will help you integrate the ministry of prayer into a capital campaign; the two questions are:

- How Should a Pastor Pray Personally?
- How Should the Pastor Lead the Church to Pray?

As we discuss these questions and I address each one, I hope you will feel empowered and responsible for leading your church to pray. You may answer them better than I do because you know your context better. However, before I answer these questions, I want to share with you from my heart about the ministry of prayer.

Your church may or may not have an organized prayer ministry and may or may not take prayer seriously in its Sunday worship services. However, this capital campaign and how you integrate prayer into it can significantly strengthen your prayer ministry and empower your future worship services.

Followers of Jesus and local churches must genuinely believe in the power of prayer. Here is the reality relating to both. When you pray, you depend on God. When you do not pray, you depend on yourselves.

Pastors, laypersons, and churches must recapture a deep belief in prayer and God's power. I believe God can do anything anytime, with anyone, anywhere. Do you believe this? Furthermore, I believe God can do more in a moment than you can do in a lifetime. Do you believe this?

If we believe these things, we must pray like we believe them and expect God to do great things in our lives and churches. Let these Scriptures remind you today about the power of prayer and the power of God. Read them aloud.

- ***"Call to Me and I will answer you, and I will tell you great and mighty things, which you do not know." Jeremiah 33:3***
- ***"For nothing will be impossible with God." Luke 1:37***
- ***"Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, ²¹ to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen." Ephesians 3:20-21***

Our faith grows when we read the Bible and stand on God's Word. Prayer *is* faith! The Scripture says, ***"So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Romans 10:17***

Pastors, laypersons, and churches must recapture a deep belief in prayer and God's power.

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Now, let's proceed and provide a few thoughts on the two questions I said I would answer earlier. This will help you integrate prayer into your capital campaign.

How Should a Pastor Pray Personally?

When a pastor senses that he will soon need to lead his church through a financial campaign, he will begin to feel its gravity. This is when he must begin to focus personally on these matters through prayer, fasting, and seeking God about it all. With great focus and a teachable spirit, he needs to listen to God. I would encourage any pastor to pray about these things:

- The strategy for the campaign.
- The timing for the campaign.
- The theme for the campaign.
- The Scripture for the campaign.
- The financial need of the campaign.
- The visionary sermon he will preach that will introduce these things to the church.
- The stewardship series he preaches during the campaign must be biblical, visionary, compelling, clear, and bold.
- The financial commitment he and his family will make to the campaign.
- The plan for meeting with the key givers in the church and his presentation to them.
- The list of these key givers so he can pray for them daily.
- The way God wants him to involve all persons in the church in this campaign.

There are others I could list and share, but these are vital matters I would encourage the pastor to pray about and through when he senses God wants him to lead his church through a financial campaign.

How Should the Pastor Lead the Church to Pray?

The pastor must do everything he can to pray for the church throughout this campaign, from its launch to completion. Leading them to pray is vital to the campaign's success. The more spiritual this experience is for the church, the more successful it will be in every way. So, how should the pastor lead the church in praying throughout this campaign?

- In the initial vision sermon, the pastor needs to talk about the strategy to pray and how it will be integrated into this campaign.
- In this service, he must call the people to dedicate all to the Lord. He can also request those who can please join him on his knees in prayer as he leads this prayer of dedication to the Lord.
- In the sermon series during the campaign, each worship service involves a three- to five-minute time for prayer. This can be creative and done differently each Sunday.
- In every meeting with people about the campaign, make prayer meaningful in it.
- If the campaign lasts six weeks, the pastor should develop a 40-Day Prayer emphasis with one or two items a day and one Scripture for each day so that the people can pray together about the campaign.
- Call the church to a one-day fast during the campaign, asking God for clarity on their own and the entire church's financial commitment and for God to meet the needs of the financial campaign.
- Depending on the technology capacity, it can help ascend prayer throughout the campaign by texting, Facebook Live, and multiple other ways.

These are just a few ways a pastor can lead the church to pray during a campaign.

Finally, please remember that prayer and vision will move people's hearts to support your campaign. When you integrate prayer into your campaign, you are building greater faith and belief in what God can do. Oh yes, God can do anything anytime, with anyone, anywhere. God can do more in a moment than you can do in a lifetime.