

## Generous Churches

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**Gunnar Johnson**, Gateway Church, Southlake, TX ([www.gatewaypeople.com](http://www.gatewaypeople.com))

### 3 Big Questions Every Church Has to Answer about Stewardship

1. Why teach on stewardship?

God has given us a narrow window of opportunity in America today. No society has ever survived prosperity. It's important that we seize the opportunity while it lasts.

2. What do we teach?

Teach boldly the biblical principals of giving. Teach about the kingdom of heaven, lordship stewardship, spending wisely, avoiding debt, giving the first fruits, saving money, creating margin, materialism as adultery. If all else fails, teach 1 Tim. 6:17-19.

3. How do we teach stewardship?

Teach it, preach it, celebrate it (tell stories), apply it, make sure leaders are living it. Leaders are the litmus test. Teach the Financial phases pyramid: struggling--stable--solid—surplus. Giving: It's not what we want *from* you, it's what we want *for* you.

**Scott Ridout**, Sun Valley Community Church, Gilbert, AZ ([www.sunvalleycc.com](http://www.sunvalleycc.com))

### Defining a Culture of Generosity

5 Big Thoughts on generosity:

1. Stewardship is like a boat, generosity is the open seat.
2. It's counterintuitive: the more we have, the less we want to give away.
3. It's contagious—but only up close and over time; generosity is a heart style.
4. The church's needs can put pressure on transformation process.
5. Leaders create cultures, not systems. The church is not about behavior modification

*Motivate* – Weave generosity into every weekend service. Guilt doesn't work.

*Educate* -- Americans spent 4X more on pizza than Katrina relief.

*Celebrate*- Link generosity to life change.

*Model* – Lead by example.

**Ron Jones**, Immanuel Bible Church, Springfield, VA ([www.immanuelbible.net](http://www.immanuelbible.net))

### What They Don't Teach in Seminary about Raising Money

How do we speak into people's real financial struggles?

There is a disconnect: pastors may preach on stewardship but don't really understand the depth of people's financial struggles.

There is risk: Senior pastors are easily misunderstood when they speak on money.

Paul is the model: the Jerusalem Offering.

We must be intentional & passionate about raising money for the kingdom.

Our church's path:

- Preach--teach--model--celebrate – ask.
- Preach at a time when you are NOT raising money.
- 100% participation at the leadership level. All must be in the game.
- Generosity isn't just money in the collection plate. It could be a liver donation to a dying member.
- Ask: There are people sitting in the pew every day who can do more if asked.