A potpourri of practical ideas to help you become a better steward.

WHAT DO MEMBERS THINK?

By Gordon Botting, DrPH, CHES, CFC

For this year’s annual Stewpot quiz, we are focusing on what members think about their church giving and their attitudes to making God their partner as they manage His money. These questions are from a survey commissioned by the North American Division Stewardship Department & Office for Strategic Planning and Assessment. It included a total of nearly 2,000 responses from 46 local churches located in 33 of the 58 conferences in nine unions. Take the quiz and see if you agree with your fellow church members.

(Please note that two or more responses to some questions were received.)

1. What is the most effective method of teaching stewardship?
   a. Sermon by the pastor
   b. Seminars on the topic
   c. Small group Bible studies
   d. A broad concept beyond money

2. What is the least effective method of teaching stewardship?
   a. Teaching children about tithe and offerings
   b. Personal stories by church members
   c. Teaching members they will be blessed
   d. Clear reports on the financial needs of the church

3. What percentage of our members believes we should “forget about money and focus on spiritual nurture?”
   a. 26 percent
   b. 23 percent
   c. 20 percent

Well, did you agree or not? If you were frustrated or confused by what fellow church members stated, remember these two points: Attitudes and motivations often differ based on age, gender, geography, and generation. Secondly, giving is personal and often reflects attitudes passed down from parents and grandparents, influenced by pastors, and members of your local church. The bottom line is to be committed to generosity. Remember that you can never outgive your faith partner—our Heavenly Father.

“Giving is the thermometer of our love.” —Benjamin R. De Jong

“Giving opens the way for receiving.” —Florence Scovel Shinn

References:

If you would like a copy of this 128-page report, which includes the sample questionnaire and focus group summary, please call AdventSource at 1-800-328-0525.

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Stewardship is a total lifestyle. It involves our health, time, talents, environment, relationships, spirituality, and finances.
d. 12 percent
4. What is the best way to motivate giving by our members?
  a. Communicating the needs of the church
  b. Visionary leaders focusing on the mission of the church
  c. Appealing to members to give to specific projects
  d. Getting members more involved in voluntary ministries
5. What percentage of our members calculate tithe on net income?
  a. 48 percent
  b. 36 percent
  c. 30 percent
  d. 17 percent
6. When it comes to giving, which one of the following styles is the most typical among the members surveyed?
  a. Reactive givers
  b. Habitual givers
  c. Intentional givers
  d. Other patterns of givers
7. What is the most important reason for giving?
  a. Because God commands
  b. The mission of the church
  c. Sense of obligation
  d. An act of worship
8. What percentage of Generation X (those born between 1961 and 1981) as a group returns tithe?
  a. 55 percent
  b. 45 percent
  c. 40 percent
  d. 35 percent
9. What was the reason members gave most frequently for returning tithe?
  a. It’s a solid biblical principle
  b. Being honest with God
  c. God means so much to me
  d. It’s a way to compensate ministers
10. What was the top preference to which members wanted their monies to go?
   a. Community development
   b. Public evangelism
   c. Literature distribution
   d. Christian education
11. When asked to indicate how they preferred to give to missions, 38 percent indicated they liked to give...
   a. Special offerings
   b. Direct contributions
   c. World budget
   d. Sabbath School offerings
12. When asked what should be funded from tithe, what percentage said it should go for pastoral salaries and benefits?
   a. 84 percent
   b. 68 percent
   c. 40 percent
   d. 30 percent

ANSWERS

6. c. Baby Boomers were most
   b. Pretax or gross was chosen
   5. c. (Pretax or gross was chosen
   4. a. (an overwhelming 88% were not sure.)

1. d. (Over 60% answered D and
   2. c. (Sermon by the pastor)
   3. a. (A total of 26% said that this
   7. d. (Over 55% of seniors return
   8. c. (About 50% of seniors return
   9. a. (This was the top answer of

“Sacrifice is the only true measure of generosity.” — Jason Hurst