

THE HERALD'S HURDLES

OBSTACLES TO FRANK SPEAKING ABOUT MONEY AND HOW WE OVERCOME THEM

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INTRODUCTION

- God's primary, foundational characteristic is generosity.
- "Where your money is, there your heart will be also."

WHY IS STEWARDSHIP SUCH A TOUCHY SUBJECT? IN THE SECULAR WORLD ...

- It's in our nature.
- We're products of our time.
 - The New Gilded Age
 - Globalism and the new materialism
 - Declining happiness
 - Life cycle of the empire and the redefining of the American Dream
 - Anti-authoritarian age

WHY IS STEWARDSHIP SUCH A TOUCHY SUBJECT? IN THE CHURCH WORLD ...

- Seminaries can only teach so much
- Pastors carry heavy education debt
- Pastors excel at caregiving and creativity, but money management isn't always a front burner skill.
- We have sacralized money.

WHICH ADDS UP TO...

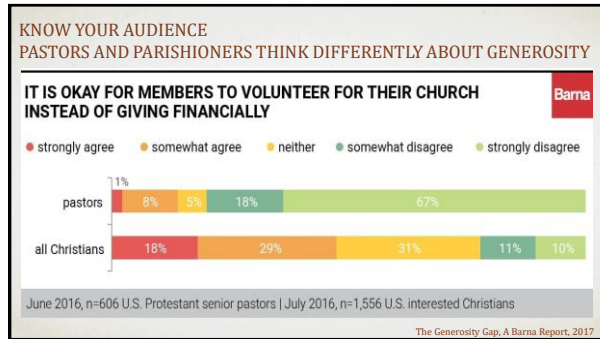
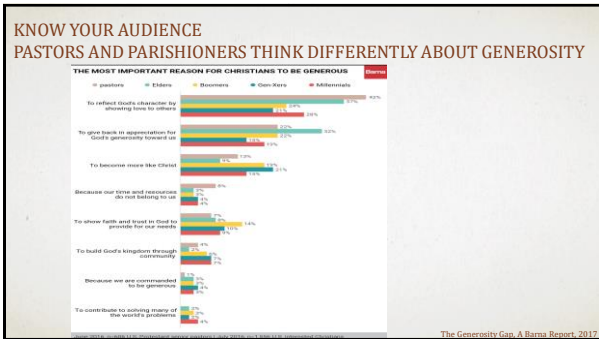
- The Elder's Reticence
- The Pastor's Reticence
 - Money (dis)comfort rooted in our family life, and family of origin
 - General discomfort with the church's financial life
 - Fear of appearing self-interested
 - Embarrassment over the high percent of the church's budget necessary to sustain the pastor
 - Personal finances sometimes in disarray
 - Feeling hypocritical

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE PASTORS AND PARISHIONERS THINK DIFFERENTLY ABOUT GENEROSITY

GENEROSITY IS "ALWAYS"

Reason	pastors (%)	all Christians (%)
A response to Christ's love	64%	47%
An attitude	58%	38%
A discipline	36%	22%
Sacrificial	32%	22%
Driven by compassion	40%	32%
Planned	13%	9%
Driven by duty	18%	3%
Spir-of-the-moments	11%	2%

Source: 2014, n=406 U.S. Protestant parishioners | July 2016, n=1,058 U.S. interden. Christians | The Generosity Gap: A Barna Report, 2017



LET'S GET PERSONAL

- Does this describe your ministry context?
- What additional dynamics make talking about money and generosity uncomfortable in the church?

WHAT'S YOUR HURDLE?

LEAPING THE HURDLES

- "The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it" (Psalm 24).
- "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want" (Psalm 23).

LEAPING THE HURDLES LET'S GET PRACTICAL ... FOR PASTORS

- Authenticity is the antidote. Share your resistances.
- Give. Share that you give. Share why you give. Share the benefits of your giving.
- Should they know what you give?
- Should you know what they give?

LEAPING THE HURDLES LET'S GET PRACTICAL ... FOR STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEES

- ~~Stewardship Committee~~ Generosity Committee
- Generosity not about the church's need to receive. It's about the disciple's need to give.
- Refine and focus the committee's task description.
- Re-sequence the generosity conversation.

God, *THEN* the Giver, *THEN* the church's budget

**LEAPING THE HURDLES
LET'S GET PRACTICAL ...
FOR STEWARDSHIP GENEROSITY COMMITTEES**

- Begin with narrative budgets.
Set the number budget AFTER commitments are made.
- Choose committee members with demonstrated histories of generosity.
- Generosity about more than financial giving: treasure, time, talent, and terra firma, but it includes treasure!

**LEAPING THE HURDLES
LET'S GET PRACTICAL ...
FOR STEWARDSHIP GENEROSITY COMMITTEES**

- Target the message: two possible ways
- By financial context of members and member families
 - Those not getting by
 - Those just getting by
 - Those getting ahead

**LEAPING THE HURDLES
LET'S GET PRACTICAL ...
FOR STEWARDSHIP GENEROSITY COMMITTEES**

- Target the message: the second way, by generation
 - GIs, 1901-1924
 - Silents, 1925-1942
 - Boomers, 1943-1960
 - Xers, 1961-1981
 - Millennials, 1982-2004

THE STEWARDSHIP PREACHER'S ANTHEM

Don't really have the courage To stand where I must stand	For the innermost decision That we cannot but obey
Don't really have the temperament To lend a helping hand	For what's left of our religion I lift my voice and pray
Don't really know who sent me To raise my voice and say 'May the lights in 'The Land of Plenty' Shine on the truth some day.	I know I said I'd meet you I'd meet you at the store But I can't buy it, baby I can't buy it anymore
I don't know why I've come here Knowing as I do What you really think of me What I really think of you	And I don't really know who sent me To raise my voice and say 'May the lights in 'The Land of Plenty' Shine on the truth some day
For the millions in the prison That wealth has set apart For the Christ who has not risen From the caverns of the heart	May the lights in 'The Land of Plenty' May the lights in 'The Land of Plenty' May the lights in 'The Land of Plenty' Shine on the truth some day

The Land of Plenty
Leonard Cohen

**QUESTIONS,
REFLECTIONS,
AND
REBUTTALS**