



# LEVERAGING GENEROSITY VS. WEAPONIZED GIVING

MOVING FROM CHECKBOOK TO CHANGE AGENT

# WARNING:



**This workshop  
will boldly and  
unapologetically  
be focused on  
MONEY**

- Isn't that unspiritual?
- Doesn't the Bible say that **MONEY** is the root of all evil?
- Isn't a major criticism of the church that we are too focused on money?



## What the Bible says:

But those who want to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For **the love of money** is a root of all kinds of evil, and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains.

1 Timothy 6:9-10



## **This workshop is...**

- ...not focused on teaching you how to MAKE money.
- ...focused on teaching you how to GIVE money in the best way possible.
- ...not for those who simply want to be a checkbook.
- ...for those who want to be change agents

**But, I don't have much. I'm not rich. How can I make a difference?**



# **God can do a lot with just a little.**

~The poor widow and her two coins (Mark 12:41-43)

~Jesus with 5 loaves and 2 fishes (Luke 9:12-17)

~One young girl in Stillwater, Oklahoma raised enough to pay off \$750,000 in medical debt for 488 Oklahomans.

~Purchasing one share of stock gives you the right to be heard at a corporation's annual stockholder meeting.

# Money is a tool...

Two general rules of thumb for the use of tools:

~The skill of the person wielding the tool determines how effective it is.

~The intent of the person wielding the tool determines if it will be used in a constructive or destructive manner. It can be used to build up or tear down.

# **Money is a very potent and powerful tool - capable of great good or great harm.**

~Properly leveraged money can be used to create new things and re-shape and expand old ones.

~Money can also be weaponized and used destructively to achieve a purpose.



# Weaponized Giving and Its Impact

Definition: Adapting an object (in this case money) into a weapon of war. Achieving your goal through destructive rather than constructive means. Being willing to tear down without concern for collateral damage.

# **Weaponized Giving and Its Impact**

The World Vision Debacle of 2014



**World Vision**



# Weaponized Giving and Its Impact

- ~An estimated 19,000 sponsorships were cancelled resulting in broken relationships.
  - ~Millions of dollars in lost revenue (donations).
  - ~The world saw that Christians were willing to use poor children as pawns to achieve a culture war victory.
  - ~Devastation among LGBTQIA+ individuals.
- 

# A Better Way: Leveraging Generosity

## Biblical View of Generosity:

- ~More than 2300 verses in the Bible that reference the concept of giving money and possessions. That's more than twice as many as any other subject.
- ~Generosity is the quality of being kind and unselfish, especially as it pertains to sharing money and other valuables with others.
- ~Biblical generosity is much more than a financial transaction. It's a spiritual discipline that has the power to transform every major area in our lives. When our giving is rooted in Scripture and responsive to God, we draw closer to God's purpose for our life: bearing the image of Christ.

# A Better Way: Leveraging Generosity

What does it mean to leverage?

~Financial leverage involves using borrowed money to build capital, expecting the income to be more than the debt.

~Leveraging generosity would involve giving or donating funds that can be used for growth

~Using resources you have that may seem small to yield a bigger result.

~Example: matching funds



# A Better Way: Leveraging Generosity

Practical ways you can leverage your generosity.

~Take a closer look at your pension plan.

How is the money being invested?

PCUSA: MRTI (Mission Responsibility Through Investment)

[www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/mrti](http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/mrti)

~Engage in shareholder activism by purchasing stock

Ownership of a **single share** of stock allows the opportunity to join other stockholders in effecting corporate change on issues such as pay, climate, diversity and more.

Organizations such as ShareAction can provide information and help you coordinate with other shareholders to effect change.

<https://shareaction.org/>

# A Better Way: Leveraging Generosity

Practical ways you can leverage your generosity.

~Boycotts

Avoid weaponizing - remember the damage caused by the World Vision boycott.

Boycotts are a tool for holding companies accountable for actions against workers, consumers, communities, minorities, animals, or the environment.

Boycotts can be marketplace democracy in action - consumers voting with their money for social and economic change.

# A Better Way: Leveraging Generosity

Practical ways you can leverage your generosity.

~Boycotts cont'd

~Before you start:

- Set objectives and goals - make them clear, realistic and measurable
- Have clear and realistic demands (stop selling cigarettes to kids). This gives the company an action it can take to resolve the issue.
- Get the facts - do not rely on rumors
- Try to meet with the company before launching an action and give them the opportunity to respond and/or negotiate.
- Consider the collateral damage of your actions - is it worth it?

# A Better Way: Leveraging Generosity

Practical ways you can leverage your generosity.

~Other means...

- Retiring medical debt

  - Medical debt can be purchased for pennies on the dollar - huge impact with small dollars

  - <https://ripmedicaldebt.org/>

- Follow your money with time and talents

  - Get involved in a local service organization

  - Serve on their board

  - Participate in fund-raising activities

- Get involved with your church's charitable giving

  - Join the committee that disperses funds

  - Encourage leveraged generosity

# **Questions? Thoughts? Other ideas?**

**Tim Haworth  
Parish Chaplain  
First Presbyterian Church  
Springfield IL**

**[timcow1@yahoo.com](mailto:timcow1@yahoo.com)**