

Why every senior pastor should know who gives



Giving might possibly be one of the strongest indicators of life change in the heart of a disciple. Yet when it comes to measuring spiritual growth through generosity, many church leaders are missing it. *Christianity Today* recently printed some sobering statistics on evangelical senior pastors and giving:

- 10 percent of pastors know how much churchgoers give and who in the church is tithing.
- 7 percent of pastors know who in church is tithing but don't know how much they're giving.
- 47 percent of pastors don't know who in the church is giving but know most churchgoers aren't tithing.
- These statistics are sobering, because we can't encourage people to give without having accurate information on who is giving and how much is being given.

Why senior pastors should know giving records

Here are three reasons a senior pastor should know who gives to the church and how much they are giving:

Generosity is a good indicator of spiritual growth. What are you doing to intentionally help people embrace biblical stewardship principles and apply them to their lives? Are you helping people take their next steps in this area, or are you avoiding the issue for fear of how people will react?

Giving more than once is a sign of commitment. Do you know when a person, couple, or family has become a regular giver? If you know this information, you can then know that this family is making an intentional effort to become connected to the congregation.

A sudden stop or increase in giving could indicate a ministry opportunity. If a church member suddenly stops giving or decreases their giving dramatically, it could be a sign of financial hardship or an early warning sign they might be disengaging with your church. How will you know this opportunity is there without being fully cognizant of the giving at your church?

How to follow and apply information about giving

Whether or not your pastor currently knows who gives to your church, there's a big difference between knowing giving records and using them to move people into deeper relationship with God. If you want to effectively leverage giving information for discipleship, here are a few things to keep in mind.

Track and follow up with first-time givers. Be sure to connect with them quickly and say thanks.

Create a 'tell all' giving report. This enables you to take first steps in analyzing your giving and developing a plan to increase it over the next year.

Leverage technology to take donor analysis to a whole new level. Review and refine your processes in order to maximize your 'generosity' strategy.

With the resources we have at our disposal today through technology, there is no excuse not to make informed decisions that will help steward your people and grow your ministry.

posted by Steve Caton on August 19, 2014