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# Depth Perception

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## Basics in Generosity

The Pentecostal community is known for the strength of giving among its church members. Traditions that do not share Pentecostal theology often waste time lamenting the smaller generosity of their church members. They wish they could be as legalistic with their faith so they too could require tithing and receive more money.

Pentecostal Christians sometimes look at other traditions and think they do not fully embrace the gospel. They believe that if the other traditions did so, then generosity would surge forward.

In either case, there is significant misperception. These misperceptions are rooted in having no deep relationships with Christians from the other traditions, and from drawing on past hurts rather than looking forward to future mutual ministry opportunities.

Having worked nearly A-Z among Christian traditions and their practices of giving and management of finances for ministry, I find that giving practices and giving opportunities are virtually the same, regardless of the tradition. It doesn't matter whether you are Episcopalian or Church of God Cleveland, Tennessee; Baptist; or Methodist.

Sure, some traditions encourage these practices that others expect. Still, it does not change the benefit of instilling them deeply among ourselves, our children and those we reach for the cause of Christ.

How refreshing, then, to read an editorial from George O. Wood in the Pentecostal Evangel (30 March 2008, p. 3). He lists the principles of financial stewardship by which he lives (please note his non-legalistic choice of words).

- Believing everything he has is the Lord's.
- Considering 10% of his income the minimum he would give.
- Giving offerings well beyond 10% for specific ministry causes.
- Giving without calling attention to himself, while also giving substantially rather than token amounts.
- Planning to give through his estate.

Are these your basic practices as well?

— mark l. vincent

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