

2010 Stewardship Conference  
“Telling Your Own Story” Workshop  
Bishop John and Shirley MacNaughton

- A. The power of the Biblical witness
  - a. Parishioners want to know what the Bible says about money and giving – why give anything at all? how to calculate our giving and how much is a responsible gift for me? This is not about what the church needs but about what the Bible says.
  
- B. The power of the personal witness –
  - a. A personal illustration – Use it to recall your own personal experiences.
  
- C. Use the interview technique to construct your own story
  - a. Imagine a newspaper or TV person interviewing you and answer his/her questions for yourself. (For a general framework, think of the hymn “Amazing Grace” and the phrases, “I once was blind but now I see, I once was lost but now am found.” It goes without saying that the major element in your witness is absolute honesty)
    - i. What was your young adult attitude toward money in general and giving in particular? – What do you remember about the giving practices of you family of origin? What were your young adult giving practices? - What was your motive for giving? – What people influenced you to change your attitude and to give more generously? – What passages of Scripture have influenced your giving? - How would you describe your change in giving – gradual or sudden – difficult or easy? What are your giving habits today? What is your motivation for giving today? What is the feeling about giving like for you, i.e., what do you feel when you give? What are your future plans about giving? (Questions are adapted from “Generous Living” magazine)
    - ii. All questions do not apply to everyone. Pick and choose those that facilitate the telling your own unique story.
  
- D. People respond positively to what the Scripture says about giving. They respond at an even deeper level, both positively and negatively, to how their parish leadership responds to giving..
  
- E. Our personal stories - Shirley and John

A Bible Study Exercise for  
Vestries, stewardship committees or adult ed. classes

**PROVERBS 3:7-10**

“Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord, and turn away from evil. It will be healing for your flesh and refreshment for your bones. Honor the Lord with your substance and with the first fruits of your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine.”

**MALACHI 3:7-10**

“From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from my statutes and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you, says the Lord of hosts. But you say, “How shall we return?” Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, “How are we robbing you?” In your tithes and offerings. You are cursed with a curse. For you are robbing me, the whole nation of you. Bring the full tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house, and thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessing.”

**II CORINTHIANS 9:6-12**

“The point is this: he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly; and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must do as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that you may always have enough of everything and may provide in abundance for every good work. As it is written. “He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor; his righteousness endures forever.” He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your resources and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way for your generosity, which through us will provide thanksgiving to God; for the rendering of this service not only supplies the wants of the saints but also overflows with thanksgivings to God.”

**LUKE 6:37-38**

“Judge not and you will not be judged; condemn not and you will not be condemned; forgive and you will be forgiven; give and it will be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over will be put into your lap. For the measure you give will be the measure you get back.”

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THE PROCESS

1. Divide your group into smaller groups of 6 – 8 persons. Provide every participant will a copy of the Bible passages. Assign one passage to each group. Give the small groups 25 minutes (+ or -) to read the passage together and respond to the following four questions. Each group needs to appoint a recorder

- a. What does the passage demand of you?
- b. What does the passage promise to you?
- c. What keeps you from meeting the demand so you can obtain the promise?
- d. If you were to meet the demand so you could obtain the promise, how would that change your giving this fall?

2. Re-gather into the larger group and allow each group about 5 minutes (+ or -) to report their findings back to the larger group. Each group should be encouraged to report on their responses to all four questions. There is no need to keep a written record of the responses from each group.

3. Allow some time in the larger group for a general response including asking the larger group how the participants felt about doing the exercise.

4. OTHER RELATED PASSAGES ON GIVING

Deuteronomy 15:10

Deuteronomy 16:16-17

I Chronicles 29:6-13

Matthew 6:3-4

Mark 12:41-44

Luke 3:10-11

Acts 20:35