

THE CORNERSTONE

One of the central themes of the Bible is cooperation and unity to achieve the common goal of gospel proclamation.

A good biblical example is when Barnabas, coming from the church at Jerusalem, went to Antioch because he recognized a need. He recruited Saul/Paul and the church at Antioch strengthened and ultimately provided financial support to other churches, including the church in Jerusalem. The church continued developing, expanding into mission and kingdom replication. This is clearly seen in the journeys of Paul, Barnabas, Silas, and many others as God expanded the footprint of His kingdom, a process that is continuing to this day.

As individuals, we are all unique and special to God but the work to which He calls us requires a cooperative spirit and sense of community. This, too, is depicted throughout Scripture in both a general and specific way when identifying the mission of the Church.

When applying these concepts to financial stewardship we begin to see a broader picture develop.

One individual believer may have an annual income of \$70,000 a year and an average estate value of \$500,000 (house, investments, personal property). Following the basic principle of tithing this would represent \$7000 a year in income

to a church, and \$50,000 in legacy giving at time of passing. A local church of 40 members could establish a L.I.G.H.T. (Legacy Inspired God Honoring Trust) fund. This fund could consist of one or multiple ministry objectives for which the congregation of the church, would come together to further God's Kingdom. This way of working together helps generate economics of scale and investment synergy producing greater financial impact.

For example, if a church was passionate about community evangelism and benevolence, using the LIGHT fund concept, if 50 percent of the 40 member congregation gave a tithe (10 percent) of their estate this would generate \$1,000,000 in the fund. That's enough to generate close to \$50,000 as a perpetual annuity. Wow, what a way to continue to be a "light to the world" even after we've gone to be with the Lord.

The above description is but one example of how the application of the stewardship and unity principles taught in Scripture can be used by God to generate multiples of present and future harvest for His Kingdom.

The above example is for illustrative purposes only actual returns would depend on the amount contributed and the success of selected investments.

