



hope

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

WHEN IS THE LAST TIME YOU HUGGED YOUR MAILMAN?

GENEROUS GIVER OR OBEDIENT COURIER BY JAY LINK

Over the past few years, I have become increasingly uncomfortable with the term *generous giving*. In spite of that, I personally like the term. Both the words *generous* and *giving* are used in Scripture, albeit not in the same place very often (Psalm 37:21, James 1:5). However, as I continue to try to personally embrace and consistently apply the concept of biblical stewardship in my own thinking and life, the use of the term *generous giving* has been creating in me more and more uneasiness. Here's why.

If someone labels a man a *generous giver*, it seems to imply two things about that man; (1) what he gives is *his* to give and (2) *he* decides how much to give [making him *generous*]. Within the context of biblical stewardship, however, both of these implications would be, at the least, misleading if not patently incorrect.

Consider this hypothetical scenario. Imagine a very rich man decides to give his nephew \$1,000,000 in cash. He calls his nephew and informs him that he is mailing him a certified letter with a cashier's check in it for \$1,000,000 and the check will be arriving tomorrow. The next day the door bell rings and there before the nephew stands the postman. The postman then hands the young man the envelope. The young man burst forward grabbing the postman in an enthusiastic embrace, gushing with thanks at how generous he is and how much the nephew appreciates his kindness for giving him such a generous gift.

What is wrong with this picture? The truth is the postman *did* indeed give the nephew a cashier's check for \$1,000,000. What is wrong is that the postman is getting all the acknowledgment and appreciation for making a gift that he merely delivered for someone else. He was in reality nothing more than the individual charged with the responsibility of delivering the gift to the proper person. I suspect the postman would have likely been quite surprised by the nephew's overflowing gratitude for simply making a normal delivery as part of his routine duties.

Do you see my point? If we are merely stewards (managers) of our Master's property and not the owners, then nothing is ours to give away in any amount. And if our Master, the Owner, instructs us to deliver someone a gift from His abundance of which we are caretakers, then we are really being nothing more than obedient stewards commissioned to make the delivery to the designated recipient as instructed by the Owner.

It seems to me, this is the way it should be with us and our giving. We have been entrusted with assets for the purpose of delivering them to the intended recipient as per the directive of the Benefactor.

No matter how much we ultimately deliver of God's resources to the intended recipients, would the description of *generous giver* ever be appropriately applied to us because, "*we have done only that which we ought to have done?*" Maybe instead of using the term *generous giver*, it would be more appropriate to use the term *obedient courier*. This term, I believe, more accurately describes the proper stewardship mindset we should have in delivering generous gifts from the one and only *Generous Giver*.

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NEWSLETTER
SPRING 2011

Hope Christian Community Foundation exists to serve donors and ministries in order to facilitate the building of God's kingdom in our community and throughout the world.

GENEROUS TESTIMONIES SHARE YOUR STORY

Filming has begun for our fall Generous Memphis lunch event. Each year one of the highlights of the event includes personal testimonies given by members of the Hope family. In the past, David Montague and Tom Phillips sat in front of the camera. This year we are continuing to share stories of generosity in order to inspire the city to give.

If you would like to share your story or know of a story of generosity, please contact us. We would like to shine the light on what God is doing through our donors and around Memphis to influence generosity.



VISIBLE MUSIC COLLEGE MINISTRY SPOTLIGHT

While touring worldwide as a performer with the Grammy-nominated Christian rock band Skillet, Ken Steorts observed a disturbing number of young musicians with great promise yet seemingly little guidance, instruction, or purpose. In response, Ken founded the only independent, accredited music and worship arts college in the world, Visible Music College, whose name was inspired by the writings of Dietrich Bonhoeffer and his challenge for Christians to be the “visible community” in Nazi Germany.

Beginning with 21 students in 2000, Visible Music College has carried out its mission to train and equip recording artists, technicians, music ministers, and music business professionals in skill and character development for effective service in the music industry and in the church. Visible Music College students can earn a Bachelor of Ministry degree or a one-year certificate in one of three concentrations: music, music production or music business. Enrollment, which is currently at 120 students, is limited to ensure a supportive, experiential education that fosters a seamless transition both from high school to college and from student to professional. Drawing from both traditional and vocational educational models, as well as Christian ministry training, this non-denominational Christian college has pioneered a holistic program that is equally academically challenging, vocationally practical, and spiritually empowering.

Visible Music College has already purchased the iconic glass-front building at 200 Madison and plans to renovate the facility to include a concert hall, library, recording studios, classrooms, rehearsal spaces, and an atrium performance space. This 44,000-square foot “green” complex, which will be accessible by bus, car, or trolley, will support enrollment up to 180 full and part-time students. Visible Music College will also secure a nearby eco-friendly condo project at 670 Madison Avenue in The Edge district with a trolley stop literally at the front door. In addition to housing 72 students, this residence will also include rehearsal and recording facilities.

Visible Music College’s presence in the heart of downtown Memphis will provide accessibility to key partners including STAX Academy, Memphis Music Foundation, Neighborhood Christian Center, KIPP Academy, and many others. Their new urban campus will allow them to offer enhanced educational and community service programs for both children and adults including music worship workshops, summer youth programs, a public concert series, and Visible Community Music School, which will provide affordable lessons to 150 children per week. Visible Music College is more than a college campus--it is a community of artists, technicians, ministers, and business people serving the church and society with their collective energy and talents through worship and innovation in all artistic endeavors for the glory of God and for the benefit of all people.

Find out more at visible.edu or call 901.381.3939. If you are a local ministry interested in being in the Hope Ministry Spotlight, please contact Hope.

didyouknow?

You can view your fund online.

All fees from new funds are given to local ministries.

In 2010 Hope was the largest granting organization in Memphis.

donortrends

Did you know that you can gift money to a friend to help start a donor advised fund?



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