

# The Stewardship JOURNAL

November 1, 2021

**From the Desk of Our  
Executive Director**

**Missouri Baptist Pastors Speak  
Up About The Cooperative Program**

**Lessons From The Red Cross**

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**A Christmas Reminder**

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## From the Desk of Our Executive Director

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Every year at our state convention, I am reminded of the power of many to accomplish much. It was good to be with our leaders from across the state as we celebrated all that God has allowed us to accomplish in the past year and look forward to an even better year ahead.

Last week in the Journal, we shared an interview I had with Dr. Ronnie Floyd about the good Cooperative Program results from the past year. In this edition of the Journal, we reached out to MBC pastors of leading CP giving churches. We call posts like this, "Missouri Pastors Speak Up." This week, we continue our emphasis on the value of cooperation as exhibited through Cooperative Program giving in the first of a two-part series entitled, *Missouri Baptist Pastors Speak Up About The Cooperative Program*.

**Here is a preview of what you can expect in the pages that follow:**

Mark Brooks, The Stewardship Coach, in his section shares lessons from how the Red Cross and other nonprofit charities respond to donors. His post shares practical helps for how your church can utilize the power of saying thank you to donors.

The **Bonus Section** adds tips on how to use social media to tell the story of what your church is doing for the kingdom.

This week's Mission and Ministry Moment is entitled **A Christmas Reminder**. As crazy as it sounds, we are beginning to see Christmas lights. This week's talk helps remind people of why we celebrate this season.

Remember, if you know of someone that would like to receive the *Journal*, please send them this link for easy signup <https://mobaptist.org/stewardship/stewardship-journal/>.

We would love to hear your stewardship success stories. Let us know your story by emailing Rob Phillips at [rphillips@mobaptist.org](mailto:rphillips@mobaptist.org). Your story can and will inspire others. Let us hear from you!

Advancing the Gospel!



Dr. John Yeats

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## Missouri Baptist Pastors Speak Up About The Cooperative Program

How do Missouri Baptist pastors feel about the Cooperative Program? As we do from time to time, we thought it would be informative to get the perspective of a few MBC pastors. So, our team recently reached out to pastors of the top-giving CP churches in the state about their views of the Cooperative Program. We received great responses and decided to make this a two-part series beginning with this issue.

We asked for a statement, a story, and finally advice to other pastors. Here is what we sent out:

1. Give a sentence or two statements of the value of the Cooperative Program from your perspective.
2. How can pastors use CP giving and our other missions offerings to encourage people to give more?
3. Tell us a personal story (if you have one) of the Cooperative Program's benefit to your church or yourself.

Here are a few of the short statements of the value of the Cooperative Program from each pastor's perspective.

**Michael Atherton, Pastor of First O'Fallon**, said, "First Baptist Church of O'Fallon proudly supports the Cooperative Program as we see it as one of the numerous avenues to be a part of a broader Kingdom initiative. We are grateful that we can do alongside others what we could never do on our own. Because of our partnership with NAMB and IMB missionaries, we have seen hundreds of our folks go on a mission, and some even answer the call to vocational missions."

**Chris Williams, Pastor of Fellowship Church, Greenwood**, stated, "We know that our mandate is to reach every person for Jesus Christ. A tall order! However, as a local church concentrates, focuses, and does its part to fulfill the Great Commission, there is this partnership of 50,000 like-minded churches doing the same; our cooperative efforts magnify our work exponentially. Our part, added to their parts, funds ministry in our state, nation, and the world that we could never do on our own."

**Mitchell Jackson, Pastor of Miner Baptist, Sikeston**, has a unique perspective adding, "Two of my adult children are active in great independent churches which are fundamentally sound but are not SBC churches and therefore not part of the cooperative program. I have shared with them what a great blessing they are missing by not being a part of the greatest mission organization in the world!"

**Randy Shipman, Pastor of First Clinton**, said, "We have used Co-Op program giving as a way for our church to tithe corporately. So, we have always challenged the church that the minimum we will give as a church body is 10% of our budget receipts. We also challenge the church to support our local association at 5%. Then we do 2-1/2% as a minimum for local mission benevolence. We also budget for church planting. This is a good example to give our people in their personal giving. We teach them that working together with other churches, we can do more."

**Dennis Gard, Pastor of Central Eureka**, stated, "The missionary effort through the Cooperative Program is what separates the SBC from all other religious organizations. The CP ensures missions are conducted throughout the world, which makes our cooperative efforts much more powerful than any one individual church can provide."

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## Missouri Baptist Pastors Speak Up About The Cooperative Program

**Scott Gilbert, Pastor of Frederick Boulevard in Saint Joseph**, said, "The Cooperative Program is an invaluable resource and aid for the furtherance of gospel ministry among Southern Baptists. As a pastor, I have benefited from receiving all my graduate education from Cooperative Program-funded SBC seminaries. I currently have the opportunity to invest in students at one of our seminaries. But beyond my education, my church and I have been blessed to partner with SBC churches to reach people in North America and beyond. From little children who bring their offerings to senior saints who have faithfully given for decades, thousands of people at Frederick Boulevard Baptist Church over the decades have supported missions through the Cooperative Program.

**Jeff Anderson, Pastor of Calvary Hannibal**, gave this reply, "I firmly believe that the gospel has been more effectively spread around the world over the last several generations because of the Cooperative Program. There are other good gospel options, but no other human endeavor has accomplished more in sharing the gospel worldwide than CP. We can and should do more for world evangelism than simply give to CP, but to fail to give to CP is to drastically decrease gospel outreach."

**Dwight Blankenship, Pastor of Parkway Saint Louis**, summed it up well when he said, "Southern Baptists do our best work when we cooperate in a God-sized task. The Cooperative Program provides the funding needed to reach the world with the Gospel."

Since these pastors lead our state in CP giving, we wanted to know what advice they might give on how to use CP giving and our other missions offerings to encourage people to give more? So here are a few of their responses.

**Dennis Gard** gave this advice, "We teach our people that the more we give, the more people we can reach through MBC and SBC missions. Also, both of these depend on our giving to resources, not only our church but all churches, with help as we plant new work here and around the world. Also, the information that we receive from MBC and SBC points us in a direction as we partner in doing missions. When people realize how giving facilitates your job, they feel a need in their heart to give more."

**Dwight Blankenship** gave this practical advice, "We have found that our people are encouraged to give when I invite a seminary professor, IMB or NAMB missionary, or a Missouri Baptist leader to speak on a Sunday morning."

**Ernie Cecil, Pastor of Antioch Harrisonville**, said, "I showed, over a five-to-six-week period, the Cooperative Program (AAEO & LMCO) videos in our worship service at offering time. These videos showed the results of the offerings that have been given."

**Michael Atherton** said this, "For us, it is about recognizing the need to be a part of a kingdom objective before advancing our local objective."

**Mark Anderson, Pastor of Lynwood Cape Girardeau**, had this to say, "I try to emphasize the fact that CP giving and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering allows Southern Baptist missionaries to be fully funded while they serve on the field."

**Brad Delaughter, Pastor of First DeSoto**, gave this advice, "Pastors can use CP giving and other missions offerings to encourage people to give more by highlighting the various ministries of the SBC. Pastors can tell stories of ministries, missions, and outreach, using pictures when available, to paint a portrait of the work of the church and the blessing that faithful, generous giving is to the others."

**Jeff Anderson** said this, "For us, it is about recognizing the need to be a part of a kingdom objective before advancing our local objective."

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**Chris Williams, Pastor of Fellowship Greenwood**, had great advice, saying, "Each Sunday in our stewardship moment, we share a biblical principle on giving, or share a story of what has been accomplished through the giving of the church. On many Sundays, we tell stories of what Jesus is doing through our greater reach through cooperative ministries. This enables me to cast vision for doing our part to fulfill the Great Commission, highlight their giving investment, and that we can do more together."

Thanks, pastors, for your input on this crucial topic! We will continue next week by hearing personal stories of the impact of the Cooperative Program. If you would like to be on our contact list, email Rob Phillips at [rphillips@mobaptist.org](mailto:rphillips@mobaptist.org).

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# THE STEWARDSHIP JOURNAL

Current Events and Relevant Thoughts From:

## The Stewardship Coach

Mark Brooks

### Lessons from The Red Cross



Every time you donate blood at the Red Cross they send you an email not only thanking you for your donation but telling you where it was sent. Here is my latest from them:

Dear Mark,

Thank you for giving blood with the American Red Cross on September 1, 2021. After first ensuring that local needs were met, your blood donation was sent to Emory University Hospital in Atlanta, GA to help a patient in need. Your donation is on its way to change lives!

Below the text is a big Schedule Now box that links to their website, making it easy to give blood again. I have long contended that we in the Church can learn a thing or two from non-profits. So, this edition of *The*

*Stewardship Coach* is entitled, **Lessons From the Red Cross**. Here are some lessons I think we can learn from this that you can apply to your end-of-year appeal process.

**First, it shows the value of saying thank you.** Getting this thank you reminded me of the Red Cross and the work they do. As I always say, a thank you is the most non-threatening reminder of giving there is. This email came less than 30 days after my donation. Are you sending out thank you notes to your donors in a timely manner?

**Most importantly it put my gift in context.** Right at the top is the line, “Your donation is on its way to change lives.” While I don’t have the name of the patient that received my blood I nonetheless know where it went. What if we told our members where their dollars went? One of my long time Brooks’ mantras is...

**Get a story, work your story, tell your story and people will give to support your story.** A great way to tell your story is to show your members where their gift went and what difference it made. Start showing your work in action.

**Practical Tip:** My end-of-year plan lays out what I call warming your donor base in early November. I recommend heavily using social media as a means to share the life changing work you are doing. Tell donors their gift is mattering *before* you ask them to give. This is one reason I push to have someone taking pictures of every event and missions outreach you do. You have to first have the pictures in order to share the pictures.

The Red Cross did a great job of thanking me by stating how much my blood can make a difference. Do the same for your donors and it will be much easier to meet your end-of-year giving objectives.

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## Lessons From The Red Cross

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Get my end-of-year playbook here - <https://acts17generosity.com/shop/the-2-minute-drill/>

**I'm now in Oklahoma!** What does that mean for you? Nothing! We do have the Internet here and phone lines so please feel free to reach out to me. Let me know how your end-of-year plans are going and how I can be of assistance to you.



Mark Brooks – The Stewardship Coach  
[mark@acts17generosity.com](mailto:mark@acts17generosity.com)

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## Bonus Material

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### Using Social Media Successfully

Here is my challenge for the next few weeks before Thanksgiving. Show your members where their gifts are going and how they matter. Here are thoughts I wrote a few years back for OnlineGiving.Org.

**Key pointers for social media success** – When it comes to helping my clients use social media in giving initiatives or building out giving awareness, here are the keys I stress.

- **Build out your social media platform.** Determine what platforms are used most predominantly by your members and guests. Don't try to be everywhere; be where your community is. At the same time, your story needs to spread across all your channels, including each of your social media sites.
- **Establish the purpose behind social media.** Most church social media sites I visit lack any plan or focus for posts. What are you trying to accomplish with your social media platforms? What is the message behind the posts? Having a clear, well thought out purpose will better ensure success.

When it comes to increasing giving through social media, I have developed for my clients what I call the three A's of social media strategy. We use social media to...

**Raise awareness of what your church is doing.** We start telling the story of what we are attempting to raise funds for weeks in advance. We post pictures of the ministry or mission endeavor for which we will be asking donations. For instance, we might post, "Zambian medical missionary Sal Marini shares that many women in Zambia die in childbirth due to unsanitary conditions." We post that with a picture of Sal in Zambia or a Zambian mother holding a child. We are helping your people become aware of the need for which you are going to ask for donations.

**Call to action** – During the period of our offering push, we post more pictures with captions like, "Your generous gift now will enable us to build birthing centers for the women of Zambia. Please donate at..." We then put the link to our online giving page, making it easy for them to give it immediately.

**Appreciation** – Take the time to report back on how the generosity of your members allowed you to meet the need of the appeal. We try to have pictures of the result of the appeal. Simple text attached to those pictures says in essence, "Thanks to your generosity, mothers in Zambia are surviving childbirth. Thank you, church!" Thanking your donors and showing them the results of their gift with pictures helps you set the stage for the next appeal.

I use social media to provide education, inspiration, and especially a call to action.

- **Develop your social media plan.** The vast majority of churches don't have an overall plan on how to use social media, let alone think of using it to increase giving. I recommend to my clients that they post at least twice a day, seven days a week. I recommend that no fewer than two to four of those weekly posts be about some aspect of generosity.
- **Work your plan!** Perhaps the most important point of all, work your plan. Start posting. Post regularly. The more you post, the more people will access your site to see and hear about the stories of life change your church is accomplishing.
- **Drive people to your sites.** Advertise your social media sites regularly across all your platforms. People will not magically appear on your site.

Raising money is all about telling your story and getting people to give to support your story. Compelling stories motivate people to give. Your church has a compelling story. Social media allows you to show and tell that story.

<https://www.onlinegiving.org/support/how-show-and-tell-can-increase-your-offerings>

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## Missions and Ministry Moment: Setting Up Your Offering

Every week we provide what are called offering talks. We have found that the easiest way to see an increase in giving is to improve how you approach the offering time. Instead of telling people they don't have to give, we like to show them what giving to a church accomplishes. By showing people your mission and ministry focus, you create a desire in your attendees to *want* to give to support that life change. That's why we call them Missions and Ministry Moments.

You can read them exactly how we write them or use them as idea starters for how the message would fit your culture and context. Our goal is to develop lifetime stewards, but we must get the first gift to begin them on the journey. Here is this week's offering talk.

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### A Christmas Reminder

**How many of you already have your Christmas decorations up?** How many of you are already listening to Christmas music? Now let me ask you this, how many of you have already started Christmas gift shopping? Is anyone through yet? With all the supply chain issues if you are not done by now you might not get that present.

We haven't even gotten past Thanksgiving and we are inundated with Christmas. In fact, Thanksgiving has almost lost its meaning as now we are focused on Black Friday sales, getting the best deal online and shopping till we drop.

It seems that every year Christmas gets started earlier and earlier. Retail stores drive that I think. Sadly, Christmas is so overly commercialized that we forget the true meaning of the season. Someone a few years back coined the term, "Jesus is the reason for the season." Then someone else commercialized that statement and it is on T-shirts, bumper stickers, and all other kinds of stuff for a price of course!

This morning I want to give us all a Christmas reminder. It's found in a very familiar passage John 3:16. Let's quote that together. As we approach Thanksgiving THAT is truly something to be thankful for.

To me that verse also sums up Christmas. For God so loved that He gave. Jesus is the first and best Christmas gift. Occasionally, we need a Christmas reminder.

This morning as we focus on the act of worship through giving our offerings, I want us to give, motivated by love, knowing that our gifts will impact scores of people, not just here in our church or even locally but around the world. Let's show our love by giving today, being mindful of the real reason for Christmas!

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