

8 Foundational Truths Of Church Capital Campaigns



Executing a church capital campaign is part science and part art. Some of the techniques that worked well in times past are not as effective today. There have been, and will continue to be, refinements and adaptation in the process of capital fundraising. Part of the art of the campaign is adapting those processes (the science) to a church's unique culture, circumstances, needs, and timeline.

Many of the principles of the modern church capital campaign have their foundation in both Old and New Testament examples. The art of the campaign involves properly bringing to light and **applying the truth of the Scriptures** regarding giving in an effectual and culturally relevant manner.

While some processes and practices have changed or adapted to the times, many remain unchanged and are the **foundational truths for all successful capital campaigns**. Some things just don't change; we call these Foundational Truths. If you approach your capital campaign understanding these truths, you will have a much more spiritually and financially productive campaign.

Foundational Truth #1: A successful church capital campaign should be built upon two things: the unchanging Word of God and proven best practices.

Best practices are those that have withstood the test of time, having been developed by trial and error in countless other churches. They are the basic methods that define successful capital stewardship programs. Best practices are best practices not just because they work, but also because their absence yields poor results. Best practices must be built upon, and in agreement with, the Word of God. Ultimately, giving that is both spiritually rewarding to the giver as well as financially rewarding to the church requires faith, and "faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God."

Foundational Truth #2: Your church program is not entitled to support; it must be earned.

Just because the church is doing a good work does not automatically *entitle* it to financial support in the eyes of those who might give. No matter how important or needed the capital campaign, you must prove several things to those who would financially support it. Every successful church capital campaign will demonstrate a real *Kingdom need*, how the proposed solution will meet that need, and then teach how God provides for His will to be done through the proper stewardship of His people.

Foundational Truth #3: A capital campaign is not magic; it is simply diligent effort on the part of people who are properly equipped – and it takes time.

For a successful capital campaign, there is no shortcut or easy way; there is no magic formula, no silver bullet, and no secret handshake. Wonderful things happen when the church takes the time and effort to clearly communicate need and biblical truth and then follow that up with a clear and unapologetic request for financial support. This process, however, takes time and effort. A capital campaign is fairly simple in concept, but done correctly takes time and much effort! A successful fundraising campaign takes proper planning and execution with attention to detail and a lot of prayer. Time is your friend in a capital campaign.

Foundational Truth #4: A church capital campaign is not about money, it's about people's hearts.

Jesus said, *"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."* A capital campaign is about helping people to understand a Kingdom need exists, God's perfect plan of provision to meet that need through the stewardship of His people, and the prayerful consideration by each person of how God would have them respond to that need. Unless church members can understand the Kingdom need and then personalize it to make it their heartfelt need, the campaign will fall short of its full potential both spiritually and financially. If the campaign produces *spiritual* fruit, the money will take care of itself. One of the main goals of the capital campaign is to stir the hearts of God's people for God's work.

Foundational Truth #5: People have to be asked to give.

Jesus also said, *"You have not because you ask not."* Biblical giving is counter-intuitive to many, so the people need to become spiritually equipped through preaching, teaching and prayer. There will come a point in time, however, when the saints have to be asked clearly, compellingly, and unapologetically to give. The "ask" only comes after a period of communicating need, biblical truths, and much prayer. It is not a time of pressure, guilt trips, or confrontation, but rather a time of asking people to step out in faith to do that which they believe God has called them to do.

Foundational Truth #6: Potential large gift givers need appropriate communications.

God has knit together the body according to His good pleasure. Some of the people in the church have been blessed with an extraordinary ability to give, and may have been placed in the church for such a time as this. Since these people have the ability to make a disproportionately large gift, they should receive more focused communication during the campaign to insure their hearts are stirred and questions answered. The purpose of this enhanced communication is for the church to show its appreciation of past support, to clearly communicate need and future vision, answer their questions, and then to seek the Lord's will for their support as He has prospered them.

Foundational Truth #7: A church capital campaign takes time to do right – don't rush it.

Ideally, the church should make the decision to begin a capital campaign at least 4 to 6 and perhaps as many as 8 to even 12 months before you plan on being in front of the congregation. It takes time to recruit and train a leadership team, build confidence and support, communicate need, teach spiritual truth, and prayerfully seek the Lord. Remember, for many of those in the congregation, you will be combating a lifetime of bad thinking as it applies to "their" money. *You only get one shot at doing it right*, so take the time. The benefits of taking more time are increased spiritual and financial results as well as reduced stress and effort on the part of the staff and campaign team.

Foundational Truth #8: Leaders lead.

Being a leader means setting the example, and in doing so, being an encouragement to others. Leaders must lead the church not only in teaching and in preaching what God says about money, but also by their attitude and actions. Leaders lead by example in their outward support of the program by communicating emotional, intellectual, spiritual, and financial support.