

# Biblical Stewardship: Christianity's Silent Subject

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## **Seminaries don't teach it.**

A study funded by Lilly Endowment Inc. discovered that the vast majority of seminaries offer no formal course or instruction concerning biblical stewardship issues and funding issues for future pastors.

## **Pastors don't speak on it.**

One national study discovered that 85% of pastors did not feel prepared through their seminary or denomination to adequately address stewardship, funding, and personal financial matters in their local church.

## **Churches don't program for it.**

In many churches, stewardship is the veneer put on "bills, budget, and building" needs. More than 80% of church leaders recently surveyed in a national research project indicated their church has no vision or active plan to advance biblical stewardship teaching in their local church.

## **Denominations don't encourage it.**

A phone survey to National Association of Evangelical (NAE) denominations discovered that 90% of the NAE denominations had no or minimal effective programs or resources to help pastors and churches advance biblical stewardship in their congregations.

## **Ministry leaders and development officers don't understand it.**

In a recent gathering of senior development officers from Christian colleges and universities, most indicated they had never thought through a biblical rationale and plan for their funding programs and methodologies. Christian Stewardship Association (CSA) research indicated that most leaders feel their fundraising skills and average or weak. The vast majority of leaders also felt board members were NOT helping them reach the ministry's funding goals through personal giving, getting, referrals, or solicitation.

## **Christian universities and Bible colleges don't teach it.**

In CSA discussions with higher education institutions across America, there is almost a complete absence of biblical stewardship and financial teaching for today's young people. At one leading Christian university, a recent search in the library discovered that the few books that could be found on biblical stewardship, money management, fundraising, etc. were written between 1899 and 1945. This would indicate a 50-year gap in any stewardship teaching!

## **Christians don't practice it.**

The Empty Tomb Inc. studies have discovered a steady 30-year decline in the percentage that Christians give to their local church. The percentages of income that Christians give to their local church has shrunk to 1 1/2% to 3 1/2%. Church studies by the CSA president indicate that in most evangelical churches, only 1 or 2 out of 10 Christians appear to actively give 10% or more of their income to the Lord's work. Most Christians are completely uninformed about the more than 2000 verses in the Bible that speak about wealth, money, giving and material possessions.

***New and strategic initiatives are vitally needed to reverse the cold winds of stewardship silence that have been blowing across the spiritual landscape for many years.***