



**Anglican Global Mission Partners**  
**North America**  
 The Anglican Mission-Mobilizing Network

**Funding Principles**

The Apostle John wrote, if anyone of you has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in you? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth (1 John 3:17-18). The answer to the question is clearly that the love of God cannot be in a person who has the ability to help and is aware of acute human need, particularly within the Christian community, but refuses to act in any way whatsoever. These passages ought to be enough to guide us, but there is more, much more, in the Scriptures. The following charts identify twenty principles that can help us think biblically about the giving and receiving of money. Organized into two categories, ten laws of receiving and ten laws of giving, they are admittedly cursory lists. For a comprehensive study the work of Craig Blomberg, *Neither Poverty Nor Riches: A Biblical Theology of Material Possessions* (1) is recommended.

In these categories there is a tension between generosity and responsibility, between what we should do for others and what they should do for themselves. This tension is epitomized in Galatians 6 with regard to spiritual matters. On the one hand, believers are admonished to carry each other's burden and so fulfill the law of Christ (vs. 2). On the other hand, it is said that each one should carry his own load (vs. 5). What appears to be a contradiction intentionally sets up the tension between doing for others and others doing for themselves. Those who would share resources in the work of the Gospel must learn to navigate between the need to care for others and the need of others to care for themselves.

**Ten Laws of Receiving: General Principles with Supporting Biblical Text**

It is better to trust in God than in money.	Psalms 34:9-10; 107:9; 111:5; 127:2; Matthew 6:24; Hebrews 13:5
It is more blessed to give than to receive.	Acts 20:34-35
Christians are to work to provide for themselves and their families and to have something to share.	Ephesians 4:28; 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12; 1 Timothy 5:8
Christians are to manage their resources as stewards of what belongs to God.	14:28-30; 16:10-12; Acts 17:24-28; Romans 14:12; 24:1-2; Matthew 25:14-30; Luke 12:48; 1 Corinthians 4:2; 2 Corinthians 5:9-10; 1 Peter 4:10
Christian workers have the right of support.	1 Corinthians 9:3-14; 1 Timothy 5:18
Christian workers should be grateful for financial support but not depend on it.	Acts 18:3; 20:33-35; 1 Corinthians 9:15-18; 2 Corinthians 11:7-10; 1 Thessalonians 2:7-9; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-9
It is important not only to keep financial integrity before God but also to be perceived as doing so by others.	Deuteronomy 25:13-15; 2 Corinthians 8:16-24
Christians can be content and thankful for God's supply.	Philippians 4:10-19
Some Christians may be more impoverished than others, but that gives them no right to be idle and depend solely on "welfare" from others.	1 Thessalonians 5:14; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15; Titus 3:14
Improper motives for getting money can lead to all sorts of trouble.	1 Timothy 6:9-10

**Ten Laws of Giving: General Principles with Supporting Biblical Text**

The Lord honors the generous and withholds from the miserly.	Deuteronomy 15:10-11; Proverbs 19:17; 22:9; Isaiah 58:7, 10-11
Christians should beware of giving with mixed motives.	Luke 14:12-14
Christians should give according to what they have, and not according to what they do not have.	2 Corinthians 8:12
The surplus that some Christians have should be used to make up for the deficiency of others.	2 Corinthians 8:13-15
Whoever sows generously will also reap generously.	2 Corinthians 9:6-11
Christians are to do good to all people, especially to fellow believers.	Galatians 6:10
Christians are to have Christ's attitude of self-sacrificing humility and love for others.	Philippians 2:1-5
Inappropriate giving can excuse others from taking responsibility.	1 Timothy 5:4, 8, 11-13, 16
Christians should beware of favoritism in their giving.	James 2:1-10
Love demands that a Christian never deny a brother in need when it is in his power to help.	1 John 3:16-20

This quick survey reveals that the giving and receiving of money in ministry is full of hazards. Whenever the tension between generosity and responsibility is ignored, there will be problems. As often as pride, selfish ambition, or greed, rather than the Holy Spirit is in control, there will be problems. If we err let us err on the side of generosity. Let it be said that we are too loving, not controlling; too generous, not stingy; too sacrificial, not self-serving. Let it be said by the people of the world, "Look how they love one another."

**Learn from History and Experience**

Should local ministry be funded from the outside? History and experience answer with a definite maybe. It all depends. In some cases it might be the right thing to do. In other cases it might be the wrong thing to do. There is no formula that will work in every situation. One thing is clear, giving and receiving foreign funds in the work of the Gospel requires careful attention and much prayer.

**Know the Warning Signs**

When is it wrong for outsiders to fund local ministry? It might be wrong when a few of the following questions are answered in the affirmative. It is almost certainly wrong when several of the questions are answered affirmatively. A "yes" answer to any of the questions may indicate a problem. To evaluate a particular situation, a local ministry should work through Checklist A, while an outside agency should work through Checklist B. Having identified potential problems or uncertainties, find a culturally appropriate manner in which to address identified issues.

**Checklist A: Local Ministry**

	Yes	No	Don't Know
Does the outsider set up programs without consulting or relying upon the local Christian community?			
Does the outsider insist that he knows best what needs to be done and expects local Christians to follow his lead?			
Is the outsider's ministry strategy characterized by dependence upon expensive technology and ended for hand-off to local Christians?			
Does the outsider's relative affluence tend to distort the effective communications of the Gospel?			
Does the outsider exploit the local situation to promote his own ministry?			
Does the outsider launch funding programs without establishing the trustworthiness and capability of a local ministry to receive and handle outside funds?			
Is the outsider unaware of the potential of outside support to destroy the selfhood of the recipients?			
Does the outside support dampen reliance on local funding?			
Does the outsider recruit local Christians and pay them salaries far above local standards?			
Has the outsider taken on too many projects to provide satisfactory attention and accountability?			

## Checklist B: Outside Agency

	Yes	No	Don't Know
Are local Christian leaders generally opposed to the idea?			
Does the outside support undermine or hinder the recipient's capacity to make its own decisions and chart its own course?			
Does the outside support limit the recipient's ability to collaborate with other local Christian communities?			
Does the outside support chip away at the recipients' sense of selfhood and dignity as co laborers in the work of the Gospel?			
Does the recipient ministry constantly act as if the only thing they need is more money?			
Does the proportion of outside support far exceed the support level from within the region?			
Does the recipient ministry show partiality in their stewardship of outside support? Do they favor certain ethnic groups, churches, or individuals?			
Does the alliance implied by the outside support alienate Christians from their local community?			
Does the recipient insist on sending money directly to an individual rather than to the overseeing body of a church of mission?			
Are the program and the money for the program both from outside? To put it another way, if the outside program were not in use would the flow of outside money stop?			
Does your church entity support other partnerships? Will adding this ministry compromise other ministries either financially, physically and/or spiritually?			
Do we have the resources to do this without AGMP or other mission agencies?			
Will the program continue if outside funding stops?			

Good partners use the resources of other partners. The giving and receiving of money in missions partnerships requires judgment in changing circumstances. But there are constants, such as the doctrine of love, the unity of all believers, the fact that we are members of the same household of God and of the one Body of Christ, and that we share a common call to glorify God and make him known. In Christ we have all we need to build relationships of mutual respect and trust. The Body of Christ is designed so that each part has something to give and something to receive. When we respect the giftedness of each part and the responsibility of every believer to steward what God has given, we will have partnerships that are complementary and mutually beneficial in proclaiming Christ, growing up in faith, hope and love, and putting God on display.

### Serve One Another

As those who share in God's grace with each other (Philippians 1:7), who have been qualified to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light (Colossians 1:12), who share in the heavenly calling (Hebrews 3:1), who share in his holiness (Hebrews 12:10), and who will share in the glory to be revealed (1 Peter 5:1), we as partners in the work of God affirm:

- We are called to invest our lives and resources in Christ's ministry of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:18)
- God has given his church a variety of gifts to complement each other in the ministry of equipping it to fulfill its mandate for the glory of Christ (Ephesians 4:11-13)
- In seeking to fulfill this mandate, we recognize that our ability does not depend on human criteria such as wealth, education, experience, and so on, but on the Holy Spirit (Zechariah 4:6)
- It is both an honor and an obligation for Christians to assist one another in the work of Christ (2 Corinthians 8:1-15)
- Any God-honoring service should be carried out in a spirit of mutual respect, trust and submission in the Lord (Colossians 3:23-24; Galatians 5:13)
- Mutual accountability is an integral aspect of Christian stewardship (1 Corinthians 4:2; Romans 14:12) and
- Our motivation should be that of a servant in keeping with the example of Christ (Philippians 2:1-11)

If in our partnering relationships we take the time to pray and reflect together on our standing in Christ and on our common call to the work of the Gospel, we will have the discernment and the courage to act like true brothers and sisters. Let us be done with the debate over dependency. Let us instead give our time and energy to advancing the Gospel while also being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose (Philippians 2:2). Let us pledge to serve one another.

*The above principles are borrowed with permission from: Building Strategic Relationships: A Practical Guide to Partnering With Non-Western Missions (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition), Daniel Rickett, STEM, 2008, 96 pages.*