

Provocations

Folks have asked me for this list. These are things I've uttered frequently in workshops. A couple of people have called them "Craft-isms," but that suggests that I made them up all by myself, which is untrue. My teachers are many, and wonderful. That name persists as folks have heard something in a workshop and have said, "Add that to your Craft-isms list." So this is a work in progress. I offer these thoughts here so you can think about them, discuss them, argue with them if you want to. They're in no particular order. I hope they're helpful! - Dick

There is no fundamental distinction between giving and praying; and the most basic prayer is "Thank you."

I love using "money" and "faith" in the same sentence. It's so ... so ... well, so *biblical!*

Somebody said, "I wish I were rich enough to be a philanthropist." I said, "You are."

The offering is potentially the most profoundly spiritual moment in the entire service.

I don't think God gives a rip whether or not your church makes its budget.

People who give – willingly, to a cause they believe in – *like* to give. They enjoy it. Why, then, is the church so reluctant to ask people to give?

There are the two Great Commandments – love the Lord your God ... and love your neighbor as yourself. There are also only two fundamental reasons to give money to the church – and they are very much like those two commandments. First, God is generous and we are grateful. Second, we want to support faithful ministries. Everything else is either commentary or barnacles.

Fundraising is only one tree in the forest of stewardship.

My checkbook is really a prayer book.

Affluenza is the most serious, widespread, and destructive *spiritual disease* afflicting the people of the United States. (It's rampant elsewhere, too.) It is especially virulent among Presbyterians. It's baffling, then, that the church gives people almost no help in their struggle with this crippling addiction.

The cure for *Affluenza* is *sacrificial giving*. (I stole that sentence from Karl Travis.) As far as I know, it's the *only* cure. But we don't want to hear that. At least I don't!

When we think of reducing our possessions, of giving things away, we usually think of the garage-sale items. What if God is calling me to get rid of my most cherished possessions?

The question is, do I possess them, or do they possess me?

Who says you should stop giving when you die? (I stole this question from Bob Sheldon)

It's true that "the Lord loveth a cheerful giver," but it's *not* true that "God also accepteth from a grouch."

When a financial commitment campaign is held in the fall, it is almost inevitably driven by anxiety over next year's budget.

What if the answer to *Affluenza* is to give so much away that we *can't afford* extravagant self-indulgence?

This is fun! This is joyful! This isn't saying, "Woe is me, I have to get rid of stuff," but "Hooray, I'm getting healthy!"