

Chapter 9

Asking God to Serve on the Stewardship, Finance, and Property Committees

Talking about money makes some church members feel very uncomfortable, whereas others relish the power they wield as keepers of the church purse. Some church members conscientiously pay their stewardship pledges weekly, while others withhold their contributions when they are unhappy about a congregational decision or ministerial "attitude." Many people cringe if they hear the word "tithes" coming from the pulpit; some complain that tithing isn't given enough attention. Decisions about building improvements, staffing, programming, and outreach ministries all hinge on people's presuppositions about money and the spending of money. Therefore, those who serve on stewardship, finance, or property committees face the huge task of mediating congregational conversations about a topic few people want to discuss.

This task is further complicated by the biblical misinformation that people bring to the conversation. Many church members assume that the Bible demands that they "give until it hurts" and that the scriptures portray money as "evil." Yet out of more than two hundred references to money in the Bible, less than a third talk about giving money to religious bodies such as the church, and even fewer identify money as a negative influence. Most of the references talk about using money to meet personal or familial needs or pooling the community's money to take

