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February 25th, 2011

Investors, Not Donors

C. William Pollard

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Recommended Citation

Pollard, C. William, "Investors, Not Donors" (2011). *C. William Pollard Papers*. 90.
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CCCU Conference
Marco Island FL
February 25, 2011
C. William Pollard

“Investors, Not Donors”

Remarks regarding Jim Krall and Mark Dillon

Thank you for the important role that you play in the colleges and universities you represent and for the job you are doing -- not just in raising money but also in building RELATIONSHIPS for the institutions you serve. Without meaningful relationships of trust, there can be no successful capital campaigns or major fund-raising efforts.

You are ADVANCING YOUR SCHOOL by building a constituency of loyal alumni and friends. This involves much more than knowing the size of their pocketbook or whether their so-called POTENTIAL TO GIVE means that they have made that coveted “key donor list”. It is about seeking to know and understand who these people are and their interests, goals, and objectives.

It is about seeking to understand them as STEWARDS NOT JUST DONORS,
INVESTORS NOT JUST GIVERS.

Building relationships is a never-ending task. It involves sensitivity with a personal touch but it also involves the way your institution communicates to that broader audience. It is

not just about your plans and needs – it is also about the investors’ plans and desires. It’s about making a match between these two. It’s about seeking their involvement as they invest and their understanding of the potential for return on their investment.

They are stewards, not just donors. Investors, not just givers. But how does one reach such a conclusion?

Psalms 24 reminds us that God owns everything. He owns the world we live in. He owns our time. He owns our talents. He owns whatever treasures we may have. All these have been entrusted to us for a purpose. In the parable of the talents, Jesus reminds us that God expects a return on what He has entrusted to us. The first servant or steward was given 5 talents and doubled it to 10. The second servant or steward was given 2 talents and doubled it to 4 talents. The third servant or steward was worried about whether he would satisfy the master and buried his talent. He was condemned by his master, not because he hadn’t doubled the talent, but as the master said: you didn’t even put it in the bank for interest. God doesn’t entrust us with time, talent, and treasure for us simply to give it back to Him. He wants more – he wants us to be fruitful, to be productive, to seek a profitable return - and above all to be faithful. I Cor. 4

We are all called to be investors of the resources God has entrusted to us and to contribute to God’s economy of surplus.

The results or returns from our investments will always be measured with eternity in view.

But it is only in this life that the investments can be made.

There is no room for waste or holding back for self. “Where our treasure is, there will our heart be also.”

The return on our investments can be multiplied when the investments are made with organizations of people that are committed to further God’s way and His purposes.

But section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code should never define the boundary limits of responsible stewardship.

I would like to share with you some learning experiences I have had relating to this subject of stewardship. They involve four different people, each of whom have played a significant role in my development as I have learned more about what God expects of me as a steward of what He has entrusted to me.

D.J. DePree

“A view of life with the end in view”

Ken Hansen

1. Don’t let your pride or position get in the way.

Peter Drucker

“Know THE priority and do it.”

Ken Hansen

2. The confidence of knowing where you are headed and the courage to act on it -
always keep eternity in view.”

Billy Graham

“There is a discipline in knowing God and His way.”

So, in conclusion, the steward is an investor, not a donor of a gift.

The steward does not tithe or give back to God what is already His. He is responsible to produce more.

The steward cannot afford to be just generous. He is accountable for a return on what God has entrusted to him.

The steward has the potential to maximize the return on investment if it is made with people or organizations of people committed to do likewise.

The principle of leverage applies and there is a multiplication factor if both the maker of the investment and the receiver of the investment are committed and assume the accountability for the return.

What better place is there to maximize a return on your investment than in a Christian institution of higher education. Such an investment, properly made and accounted for, results in the development and learning of young people – the future leaders and future ambassadors for Christ.

When you embrace this concept of stewardship and investment, you further realize that your role in advancement is not just to raise money, but also to nurture and develop investors who expect returns from their investment **IN THE INSTITUTION YOU SERVE**. As you receive that investment, you and everybody joins in assuming accountability for that return. Everybody in the institution becomes part of the advancement process and they work together to produce a return for the God we love and seek to serve.

Revised February 23, 2011