

# The Future Funding of Ministry

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# We are at the convergence of two powerful ideas.



The first idea addresses what it means, as Christians, particularly Christian businessmen and women, to be “faithful for a lifetime,” not just for season or two, but for lifetime.

The second idea addresses using unrealized, underutilized, business and entrepreneurial skills to fund ministry - turning God given and developed organizational and money making skills to create one or more sustainable businesses with meaning and for a purpose.

While some elements of Business for Ministry have existed for a long time, now is the time to both understand and explode these realities into a changing world and a society that needs your ministry more than ever.

**Let's examine  
what it truly  
means to be  
“faithful for a  
lifetime.”**



**When we say faithful, we mean faithful to God and His call on your life.**

Yes, the life of every person who claims the name of Jesus and uniquely on the life of every person called to business and ministry.

Understanding God's process for building our relationship with Him is foundational to understanding what “faithful for a lifetime” means.

While the Bible is full of examples and references, **God laid out his process clearly for the Israelites and for us in Isaiah 41 verses 8-10.**

## **ISAIAH 41: 8-10**

**“But you, Israel, my servant,  
Jacob, whom I have chosen,  
you descendants of Abraham my friend,  
I took you from the ends of the earth,  
from its farthest corners I called you.**

**I said, ‘You are my servant’;  
I have chosen you and have not rejected you.  
So do not fear, for I am with you;  
do not be dismayed, for I am your God.  
I will strengthen you and help you;  
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.**

# He Chooses. He Calls. He Strengthens. He Upholds.



## **Quickly notice the following:**

1. That we have a role as servant, builder of the Kingdom, of the most high God.
2. That we are uniquely chosen by God, along with our ability to respond or to reject Him.
3. That we are then called by God to a unique role and with a unique purpose in that Kingdom building process.
4. That we will be strengthened, so that we are able, prepared, and equipped to carry out that unique role and purpose.
5. And finally, that He will uphold us when the times are tough, the days are dark, and the challenges are just short of overwhelming.

# We're called for a lifetime.



All of this so that our unique talents can be uniquely used to build his unique Kingdom in his unique way at this unique time and in this unique place.

We are each called to a special purpose during each and every season of our life. And those seasons extend for how long?

## **For a lifetime.**

We are to be faithful, faithful servants for a lifetime, until the very end and not just until what the world calls retirement. For us that 4th quarter it is not only a reward for past service but a stepping stone to Future Ministry.

## **A Future-Funded Ministry.**

# Let me tell you a story.

A few years ago I was in Toronto meeting with a seasoned businessman in his mid 60s and talking about building new businesses with a Kingdom purpose.

After 15 or 20 minutes attempting to explain a new concept to him, he grabbed my arm, stopped the conversation and said, “You are not here for my money, are you?”

I nodded affirmatively, and he said with eyes growing wide, “ You are here for me, aren’t you?”.

“Yes,” I said, and then tears started pouring down his cheeks. He said, “You know, in 30 years I’ve only been asked for money, never for me.”



## **Built into this story are a couple of profound thoughts:**

1. Men and women with business talents are equipped and desire to serve - not just give and be on committees or boards. Using business talents and the skills of an entrepreneur for Kingdom purposes do not require that someone turns to full time, vocational ministry.
2. God has already equipped them with entrepreneurial skills and talents.
3. There are others, like many of you, who are blessed with organizational skills and talents also needed to build the Kingdom.
4. These men and women when challenged, want to be “Faithful for a Lifetime.”
5. They are willing to use these specific talents for the benefit of His Kingdom in ways unique to God’s preparation of their life and for His Kingdom.

**One big idea is this:** Bring together and challenge your supporters who are businessmen and women, visionaries and entrepreneurs to start new businesses committing the “distributable income” from those businesses to the support of your mission.

## **In 2002 while on a missions trip to Latvia,**

I was introduced to the need and opportunity supporting the development of a Christian camp outside of Urgli. The vision was so create a camp and then develop a sheep ranch alongside that would sustain the infrastructure of the camp.

## **As always, the problem was money.**

Latvia was developing quickly. We funded the purchase of some raw land, developed it into 13 lots, sold them, and created sufficient funds to take Eagles Wings to significance. It now has 1,000 sheep supporting its operating expenses and the investors got their money back.

## **Here are key insights:**

A recognized need, a viable business plan, investment capital, return of capital, perseverance, and qualified leaders.



## **ROMANIA**

A year later, a similar need surfaced in Romania. It was a similar opportunity to develop and rebuild a Christian camp. Land was purchased in Timisoara, Romania, 50 lots developed, and all sold but 6, which we currently own. Similar insights as in Latvia.

## **SOUTHEAST ASIA**

A few years later after the Romania project, a vision to start a business in Southeast Asia began. It was of such significant size that the distributable income would support the infrastructure of an organization that could oversee \$50,000,000 worth of humanitarian and church related projects. There now exists a 1,200 acre coffee plantation and a green bean preprocessing facility, which is the finest in Asia.

## **SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**

In 2008, while sitting on the Board of a local nonprofit that serves at risk-kids and their parents, the need for funding was a constant concern. I suggested that we start a thrift store for this purpose. God provided the store manager/consultant the funding and location. Now, the 10,000 foot store throws off over \$10,000 per month that is donated to the Non-Profit.

# Here are the lessons learned:



1. The project must be big enough so that it can annually contribute \$200,000 or more to the entity.
2. The business must be viable, fill a real need, and its primary objective must be “sustainability”.
3. In order for it to be sustainable, it can not be controlled or managed by the non-profit that will be the beneficiary of its success. There are multiple reasons for this, but it is one of the tenants that cannot be violated. It must be envisioned, developed, and managed by the businessman/ entrepreneur who is committed to sustainability and whose heart is for the mission.
4. Funding for an enterprise of this size is typically between \$500,000 and \$1,000,000. Access to funds

can come from a variety of places. Regardless of source, there must be a commitment to a return of capital, and usually tied to an above market rate of interest. There are models that include an ownership element that can also work. The bottom line is, no donated funds should be used to capitalize the project. The accountability and commitment to return of capital plus is one of the driving forces that support a successful venture. Going and getting more donated funds is not a viable business plan.

5. Distributable income means the net profit of the enterprise less earning retained to sustain and grow the business and the “interest payment” plus return of capital. That then becomes “distributable income”.
6. There needs to be a business champion who grasps the vision, is committed to its success, and has the wisdom and insight and perseverance it takes to make any business venture successful. Those people are rare, but that is who you are looking for. God does provide.

# One last perspective that will challenge all of us.



As I look out at the direction of our country and culture during this increasingly post Christian era, I believe it is reasonable to project a time when there will be less commitment to ministry overall, and that the tax deductibility of donations and property tax relief for building and grounds will be in our rear view mirror.

**God knows all this, and is now starting to prepare The Church for new ways of supporting the building his Kingdom.**

Part of this preparation is the highlighting the priority of being “Faithful for a Lifetime.” Being “Faithful for a Lifetime” and what that means to you, me, and the whole Christian community - including those blessed with business acumen.

The other part of this preparation is the challenge of funding that lifetime of ministry and funding the work of the Church. Envoy Financial’s role is to help ministries and their staff to be fully funded for future ministry.

# What's Next?

It is always right to start with prayer, seeking divine guidance. Second, you might share this ebook with your board. Third, listen carefully to the prompting of the Holy Spirit to you and your team.

I so appreciate your ministry. God's plan for all of us is to praise him, help those in need, and spread the word. Jesus calls it "building the Kingdom." As servants of the Most High, let's do it together.

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*Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful (for a lifetime).*

1 Cor. 4:2

