

the GATHERING

AUTUMN 2006

The Gathering serves individuals, families and foundations in expanding their vision and effectiveness in giving to Christian ministries.

www.thegathering.com

3 brave women

and how God is using them to change the world

By Leigh Vickery

Women in The Gathering have set the bar high for others to follow. This issue of the newsletter features three women whose lives tell the story of faithfully following God to unknown places. People all across the world have been changed for the better because women like Joyce Williams, Karol Emmerich and Adella Thompson were willing to leave their comfort zones and really see what God was trying to teach them. Adella and Joyce both went to Africa this summer and both came home completely changed. Joyce also shared the trip with her two daughters, opening their hearts and eyes to God's work in Africa and the great needs there. Karol Emmerich left the position of being one of the highest-paid female executives in the country, knowing only that God was calling her and she should follow. We hope you read these stories and are inspired. But more importantly, we hope their stories lead you to listen and live for the glory of God.

See Pages 2-7

what's inside >>

8

■ **PASSION IN ACTION:** Louie Giglio awakens campuses to the Gospel.



■ **BEING MORE PROFITABLE TO GOD:** Wise how-to advice from Fred Smith Sr.

12

■ **WORLD VIEW:** Sign up with The Gathering to take a trip of a lifetime.



A fortunate friendship

I know there are legitimate concerns about the news of the Gates Foundation being the recipient of much of Warren Buffett's fortune. There has been much said about the dangers of so much concentration of wealth in the hands of so few. Many have talked about the seeming

Thoughts on giving (...but not "directives")

By Warren Buffett

- Focus the new funds and your energy on a relatively few activities in which Susan A. Buffett Foundation can make an important difference.
- Concentrate your resources on needs that would not be met without your efforts.
- Conversely, avoid making small contributions to the multitude of worthwhile activities that have many possible funders and that would likely proceed without your help.
- Consider working with your siblings on important projects.
- Pay attention to your home community but favor a broader view.
- Judge programs by how they fit with your goals and their chances for success, not by who makes the request.
- Expect to make some mistakes; nothing important will be accomplished if you make only "safe" decisions."

inevitability of the corrupting of the foundation with its expanded access to power, political clout, ability to direct public and private money away from other worthy issues, and the institutional hubris that is as infectious and deadly as the physical diseases the foundation is fighting. As well, causes and initiatives many of us find disturbing will receive significant funding. However, I've also discovered there are some elements in this that are not so dire and I've been thinking about those as well.

The King James version of Romans 12:8 says those who give are to do so "with simplicity" and that is exactly what Warren Buffett has done. He's not been drawn by his ego or greed to complicate his giving but has simply done what he does best — made an investment in good management. He has an appropriate respect for his responsibility to give even as he recognizes his inability to give.

There is obvious mutual respect for competence and not social climbing or the desire to impress or use. These are three people –

Warren, Bill and Melinda – who bring their strengths to the table, and it is not one of them trying to exploit the vanities of the others. It is not about money except as it strengthens the likelihood of getting results that matter to all of them.

This is a story of friendship in a time when genuine friendship is so rare. The money is secondary to the relationship of trust that has built up over time and includes very simple things (bridge and travel) as well as complex business relationships.

This is a story of a younger man and older man finding ways to add to each other's lives in substantive ways. They have become mentors to each other.

We could learn some things from them.

By blessings, Dad



Mission

BY JOYCE WILLIAMS

The plane ride over

I have thought about organizing a mother/daughter trip to Africa for several years. Two of our daughters, Courtney and Paige, graduated this year and were available to travel. So this was the summer to make the dream trip happen. I wanted to spend quality time with the girls before they moved into their next phases of life.

So here I am, on a plane with my two daughters and 22 other women, headed for Africa. These women are friends of mine with daughters who are seniors in high school or older. We also asked Kay and Joe Harding from Serving In Mission (SIM) to be our guides.

Why are we here? I invited everyone to be a part of this vision trip in order for us to see the world through a larger lens. Our goal was to begin to grasp some of the big issues in Africa such as HIV/AIDS. We desired to see, feel and smell poverty and how it affects the Africans we meet. As a group we wanted to know how God fits into the picture and how He wants each of us to respond.



Courtney Williams visited with African children whose lives are better through the work of Serving in Mission.

Ethiopia

During our travels we saw both the city and the countryside. In Addis Ababa we visited Sisters of Charity, an offshoot of Mother Teresa's work that cares for the physical and spiritual needs of the poorest of the poor.

We also visited Women at Risk, a very successful and impressive small program that is getting women out of prostitution and teaching them a skill to help them survive. They have amazing results: 95 percent of the women are staying off the streets, and 95 percent of the women are meeting Christ.

Before leaving Addis Ababa, we toured The Fistula Hospital, the Leprosy Center and made some incredible home visits through the Medan HIV/AIDS Center. This SIM project tests, trains, educates and cares for those infected with HIV and AIDS. We visited people that lived in tin coffin-shaped boxes. It was difficult to realize that people existed in these living environments.

In the Lake Langan region, hundreds of Muslim children are coming to Sports Friends, a SIM project that has begun to build the first overnight camp in Ethiopia. Football (soccer) is the big attraction; the spreading of the gospel is the goal. SIM is making a difference in the community by offering a medical clinic, a small school and clean water.

Mom



Joyce and Paige Williams visit with children who benefit from a Serving in Mission school in Ethiopia.



Joyce Williams — with daughters Paige and Courtney — seized the opportunity to travel this summer to Africa.

Home to America

This has been a trip of great contrasts. In many ways I feel like we have seen it all. We have seen poverty (it is everywhere) and wealth, despair and hope, Christians and Muslims, people with dignity and those that feel worthless. We have seen people stuck in bad situations and other people that are changing their communities. We have seen people making it on their own and others that cannot exist without help. Our minds and hearts have been deeply challenged.

It seems like everywhere we turn we see strong contrasts. Yet we have seen the hand and love of God in every situation. He is not less present in the difficult environments. He is at work in the hearts of the poor, the needy, the healthy, the leaders, the children, and the sick.

This trip has come to a close. The challenge now is to respond. We want to let these two weeks touch our lives, to take what we have learned and let it shape our thinking as we go about our business in America. Our travels in Africa have made an incredible impact on our group. There is a new excitement about the Lord and His mighty hand. I cannot wait to see the results of this trip in the year to come.

I believe we have stumbled on something special. Mothers and daughters traveling together with a mission.

Kenya

In Kenya we visited the work of International Justice Mission. IJM showed us their work and future plans in Nairobi. My small group visited people in the Kibera Slums. We delivered food to a family whose daughter had been raped by the landlord. Eight people live

in a 10x10-foot room, and three of them have AIDS. The husband cannot find work, and the wife sells coconuts on the side of the road. While we were in their home, a rat ran across the rafter. Our eyes and hearts were opened in new ways.

We ended our trip with a three-day safari. It was a great time to debrief and relax.

A Life in Full Bloom

At 22 years of age, as part of a career and life planning class at Stanford Business School, Karol Emmerich was asked to write her eulogy. She wrote: “Karol gave up a promising business career to spend her life doing God’s will, devoting herself to mankind, giving away all of her money and all of herself to help others.” This simple exercise shaped how Karol decided to spend her life.

Her rise in corporate America

Karol rose through the ranks to become the top financial officer of the Dayton Hudson Corporation (now known as Target Corporation). She held the keys to most people’s definition of success — money, power and respect — and was living “the American Dream.”

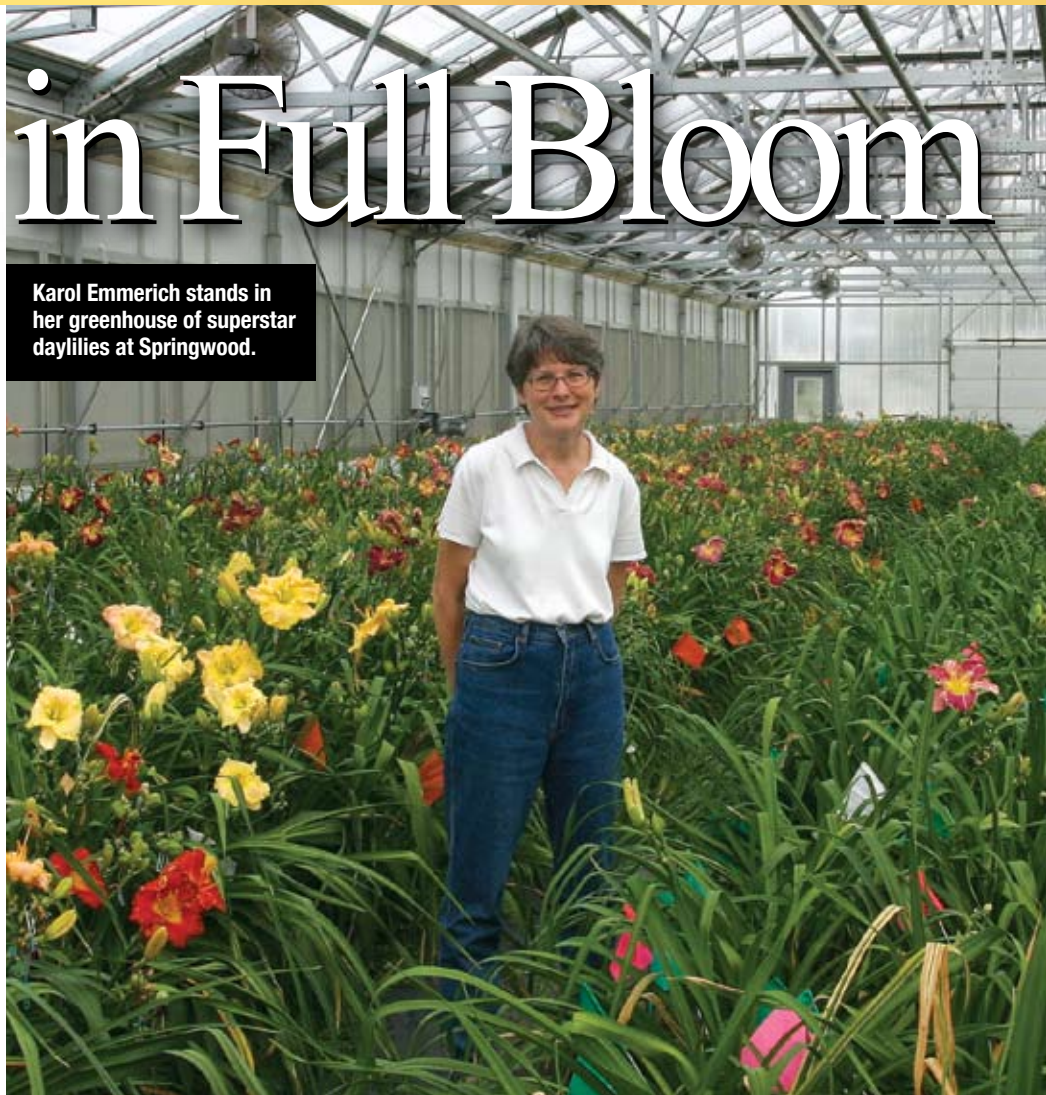
“I always thought the main thing I was good at for God was making money and giving to His work,” Karol said. “My husband and I gave away an amount about equal to my take-home pay. But I knew something was missing in my life. I realized that a successful business career — even one that allowed us to give away a great deal of money — was not how God wanted me to serve Him. Instead, I wanted to become more involved in several nonprofit projects (including The Gathering) that needed my full-time attention, and I wanted to convert our large yard into a garden — to “paint” the end of our cul-de-sac with flowers. However, I was concerned that leaving my job would mean we could no longer give in a sizeable way, and that I would lose my “platform” to speak to different groups of people (where I was able to share my spiritual commitment). When I decided to leave I felt like I was jumping off a cliff, but I knew I was jumping into God’s arms.”

Making the leap

“I fully expected to pay a high price for walking away, but once I became a ‘nobody,’ God gave me far more opportunities to talk about Him, to many more people and in a much deeper, more meaningful way, adds Karol. “Opportunities for giving and for ministry have grown beyond anything I could have ever imagined. What was important to God was my willingness and obedience.”

Karol’s passion for gardening took on a whole new dimension after a fellow gardener told her that if she bred plants, she could name them. She dreamed of people across the country being able to buy beautiful, northern hardy daylilies named after things in the Bible. She

Karol Emmerich stands in her greenhouse of superstar daylilies at Springwood.



Karol’s creations include (from left) “Robed in Majesty,” “Magnify the Lord” and “Rock of Salvation.”

approached breeding with the same intensity as she does everything else, and has developed daylily superstars with names like Light of the World, Intelligent Design, No More Tears, Fear Not and Heartbeat of Heaven. They can be seen — along with thousands of others in the testing process — at Springwood Gardens, a large new garden Karol and her husband have created in an historic area of rural Minnesota.

A different pace and purpose

Following many years in the hustle and stress of the corporate world, Karol finds that her daylily business gives her the joy of bringing smiles to people’s faces. “The flowers are simply a wonderful, miraculous gift,”

said Karol. “I am awed by the beauty of God’s creation and just grateful to be one of His bumblebees. For the foreseeable future, we hope Springwood will be a place which provides unexpected experiences, giving visitors a sense of adventure, joy and wonder. We want it to be a place to be inspired—to have one’s imagination stretched, and a place where the weary can find rest and new energy. Our gardens have always been a safe place for all kinds of people to come, and more often than not, they are open to discussing spiritual things.”

For more information about ordering Springwood’s daylilies or planning a tour, visit Karol’s website at www.springwoodgardens.com.



Karol Emmerich's love for gardening blossomed into "painting" the world with flowers.

Growing wise givers



As the former financial whiz for Dayton Hudson Corporation, as well as a woman committed to philanthropy, **Karol Emmerich's** life is planted with seeds of wisdom on how to be a Godly giver, especially helping women becoming more

effective givers. We've included a few highlights here in the newsletter, but visit www.thegathering.com to read Karol's complete talk on "What I've Learned about Giving." Also included online is a thorough appendix addressing "Questions to Ask Before Giving to a Specific Organization" and "Questions to Ask in Doing Due Diligence."

Karol's research uncovered the work of **Sondra Shaw** and **Martha Taylor**, cofounders of the National Network on Women as Philanthropists. This interesting research is compiled in a book titled "Reinventing Fundraising: Realizing the Potential of Women's Philanthropy." Full of interviews, focus groups and discussions, the book suggests that women are motivated entirely differently as givers than men. **Women are mostly motivated by:**

- 1 The ability to bring about change and make a difference. Causes which help others or make the world a better place are popular.
- 2 The ability to create something. Many women regard their projects as they would their children in terms of long-term commitment and responsibility.
- 3 The ability to feel connected to the organization to which they are giving.
- 4 The ability to celebrate what's been accomplished.

Karol's List of Five Simple Things to Remember about Giving:

- 1 All that we are and all that we have has been given to us by God.
- 2 Everything we have belongs to God.
- 3 Treasure sent to heaven lasts forever.
- 4 God doesn't need our money.
- 5 Our willingness and our obedience are what matter to God.

Africa in her heart

Adella Thompson had been to Africa many times, but never to Rwanda and Uganda. What started as a quick trip to Ethiopia with a good friend turned into an eye-opening two weeks touring Rwanda, Uganda and Kenya with International Justice Mission (IJM), a human rights agency that rescues victims of violence, sexual exploitation, slavery and oppression.

In many ways, Rwanda is where IJM began. In 1994, a genocide took place where the Hutus massacred one million Tutsis and their supporters. Gary Haugen, who is now president and CEO of IJM, worked for the United States Department of Justice and was sent to Rwanda as part of the United Nations team to investigate the genocide. In his words he “was the crime scene investigator for the murder of one million people.” He came home and after consulting with his wife and close friends, he realized he needed to move from his experience in Rwanda of death to giving people life through the means of justice.

To experience Adella’s Africa trip in its entirety and view the incredible images she captured along the way, visit www.thegathering.com.

June 11

Addis Ababa is ...noisy, loud, hectic, full of crazy drivers—gotta see it to believe it. There are beggars on street corners, shacks besides nice houses, nice houses next to shacks. Cemeteries are short cuts, polluted rivers are swimming pools and HIV babies fill the orphanages. Addis is full of life as much as it is full of death.

Yesterday we drove to Mother Teresa’s Missionary of Charity, an orphanage that houses 300 children and infants infected with HIV. I held the hands of two little girls who seemed to only want to walk around or be spun around. One little boy was upset, screaming and inconsolable. One little girl was propped up in her crib. One small girl just laid still and stared into nothingness.

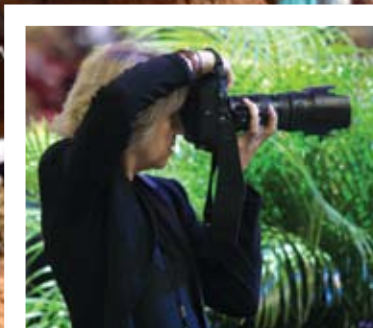
All are infected with full-blown AIDS.

What do I do with that? How do I enter a room full of dying babies? How do I exit? I think it’s best just to go, to be, to enter in, to listen, to watch, to learn to trust, to breathe, to laugh, to smile...

Will I go back? Absolutely. The orphanage is wonderful, full of happy eyes and joy, in spite of sickness, weakness, tears and dirty diapers.

June 12

Ganet is a Golden Girl. She used to be a



Adella Thompson, with her trusty camera (above), captured the beauty of African schoolchildren in Jinja, Uganda (right)."



prostitute, but was welcomed into this group of other former prostitutes by Linda and Chuck Reinhold who founded the group several years ago.

Ganet is in the hospital. She’s dying of AIDS. She has a small child who lives far away from Addis with Ganet’s mother.

Ganet will die soon.

When my friend Jess first met Ganet 18 months ago, Ganet was a patient at Mother Teresa’s House of Dying, and she hated it—everyone around her was dying. After two months, Ganet’s health had improved and she was strong enough to be released. She’s been okay, until now. She doesn’t look good. Her eyes are flat. She can’t get comfortable. Her knee is inflamed from chronic arthritis, which causes her a lot of pain.

Ganet is 23 years old. I don’t think Ganet will live much longer...

June 13

They clean dirty tires with muddy water. They sit on metal handrails and chew on raw sugar cane. Donkeys have the right of way. Welcome to Mercado—the biggest market in all of Africa—even the government doesn’t know how large it is.

Stuff is everywhere.

Alex’s mom’s house is anything but.

Alex ate lunch with us a couple of days ago, and described his mother as “his everything.” I had to know why, so he explained there were 17 (including him) children in his family...“all from different mothers...” My face betrayed the obvious, unspoken question (How can that



children, children cradling infants, children climbing over one another to have their photos taken or to touch the white mizingas. Finally we are with the children, and it's just fun and glorious. Finally, they were able to share their story with us, and we were able to share our lives.

Finally is so fulfilling. This is Africa. A place where people wait to share themselves and where the people are truly alive.

June 17

We came to Ntarama today, a small Catholic church an hour or so from Kigali. It's the place where 5,000 people — women, men, children were massacred during 100 days of terror against the Tutsis by the Hutu. All that's left in the church are skulls, fragments of clothing, femur bones, jaw bones and coffee beans...

This is why I came to Africa, and more specifically to Rwanda. I wanted to see what it is we failed to do to stop the murder of over one million innocent people in 100 days— that's a level that far surpassed the number killed in the Holocaust.

The red dust of Rwanda covers my feet, is stuck beneath my toes, and is ground beneath my toenails, and I don't care. I love Rwanda. May God's Spirit bless, strengthen, build, redeem, anoint Rwanda...the people of Rwanda need an anointing from the Lord Christ.

Come, Lord Jesus, Come...

June 21

Waybaka — Home of the Kikuyu. Home of smiling children. Home of narrow streets, zipper-sized alleyways, the bumpiest of bumpy roads...

Crosses which mark graves are stolen for fire wood. For some reason, the thieves only take the cross-piece, leaving the upright part. It's a sad place, an empty place, but there are children everywhere. The children in Africa cover their faces with smiles — even in a cemetery filled with shallow graves stripped of their wooden markers.

Africa's so different from America in so many ways, and in others it's very similar.

Will I go back? Absolutely.

be?), which he easily answered by telling us his dad would “go out,” then return with a child who he'd turn over for Alex's mother to raise. Alex and his older brother are the only children born to his mom and dad. The remaining 15 are the result of his father's “going out,” raised by an extraordinary woman who graciously has become “everything” to children she didn't birth. Amazing.

June 15

I'm in Kampala, Uganda, and have just spent the day with friends from the International Justice Mission, hearing about their work here. Property grabbing, defilement and rape are just some of the examples. I can't say much more without compromising their work, so I'll just stop.... It's good to know there's

a group of people who are in the midst of disturbances, seeking ways to give justice, show mercy, and to love deeply...

There are no street lights in this part of Africa, so when the sun goes down, it gets really dark...as in dark. Life doesn't really slow down much in the darkness. Noises are more noticeable — cicadas, audio from a World Cup game, voices, mopeds, reggae music.

June 16

Bugoyba Preparatory School sits away from the city of Jinja. It is remote, and the roads are paved with potholes. Many of the children have never seen a “mizinga” before—a white person.

Finally we see children holding smaller



Crosses which mark shallow graves in Waybaka are stolen for firewood.

Q&A with Louie Giglio

The Gathering recently sat down with visionary leader Louie Giglio for a preconcert conversation about what's happening with college kids and their relationships with Christ. Louie, Chris Tomlin and Matt Redman were finishing their Indescribable tour, an amazing combination of incredible music from Chris and Matt, followed by a message from Louie on the greatness of God.

According to the website, the Passion conferences exist "to glorify God—uniting students in worship and prayer for spiritual awakening in this generation. Passion is committed to spreading the fame of Jesus Christ to the 16+ million college students of the nation and countless others around the globe."

Louie is one of the fortunate who has successfully linked his God-given gifts with his vision to bring the love of Christ to college campuses. His easy-going, unaffected style makes him instantly likeable, and his eyes exude trustworthiness. Over chai tea, we talked about his take on twentysomethings, his success with his record label — sixsteps records — and what he sees happening with college kids across the world.

Q: How are college kids different now than when you first started teaching a Bible Study at Baylor University in the 80s?

A: We were coming out of the prosperity age. Kids' parents were starting to make more money, and a lot of emphasis was placed on getting the right job, making the right salary, and attending the right church.

Today, the youth are starting to live out what Jesus said in Matthew 6:34 — today has enough troubles of its own, so let's not worry so much about tomorrow. I don't think it's a negligence of this age to just not worrying about the future. I think it's more of an attitude of going for it today — trusting God for today.

Heather Mercer is the epitome of this attitude today. Not only was she arrested by the Taliban and put in a most difficult situation, she comes back and tries to stop the publicity — Oprah, Larry King, *Time Magazine* — to lower her profile so she can get back to the Muslim world as fast as she can. This mentality did not exist among college students in the 80s.

Now you have people like Heather who stood up at one of our conferences in 2003, told her story, and said, "I'm going back. And I want to know how many of you are going with me?" 22,000 college students were there. 9,000 stood with Heather to say they were willing to go. But then what?

We had a mobilization area with 50 organizations involved, such as Gospel for Asia and Campus Crusade for Christ. We asked them to come under the condition that not only did they man their booths, they had to know everything about every organization in the mobilization



Passion in action

area, so that when a student walked in, they could answer any question and direct the student to any booth that might fit with the student's interests and passions.

This requirement started breaking down what is killing the sending process right now. First, a lack of vision exists in mission organizations. Second, there's a lot of competition. We're all fighting over the same people. We should be helping each other.

We also have partnered with RightNow, an organization that connects passionate 20- and 30-somethings to specific ministries around the world. RightNow comes along at our back door and follows up with the students who say they want to take part in a mission of some kind. Reaching these kids is all relational now. We follow up with them for a long time, usually 12 to 18 months.

Q: Who is sending the kids these days?

A: A lot of boutique senders are emerging and are gaining momentum because they see there are too many hurdles for these kids to jump over in big organizations.

The dilemma for us now is that it is hard

to figure out which boutique senders actually have horsepower, actually have the capacity to match their vision. Your capacity and anointing have to merge.

Q: Is the Passion movement global yet?

A: Just barely, but that is our vision now. We did our first gathering in Toronto in November 2005. Toronto has a great spiritual heritage but is now probably the breeding ground of pluralism. There are so many hungry kids who love Jesus there, with at least 130,000 college kids in Toronto proper. Approximately 4500 college students came as a result of a lot of networking and grass roots efforts with help from Campus Crusade and InterVarsity. This movement is targeted to college students who are not necessarily watching mainstream Christian networks or listening to Christian radio stations.

One interesting fact to note is that there is a lot of momentum among Asian college students for Christ. In fact, 80 percent of the kids who came were Asian.

We were thrilled to be able to tell these kids, as well as the college ministers who had always been isolated from one another, to look around and see that there are college Christian students in Toronto. Look around and see that you can start a revolution on your campus. There are plenty of you here for God to turn the tide in this city.

Toronto was a seed for what we want to do in more cities around the world. We are thinking in the summer of 2008 we are going to do an around the world tour. It's a crazy thought, but if you read our guestbook over the last two weeks, you would see hits from Kiev, Johannesburg, Finland, England, Malaysia and so on. People have linked to Passion because of the music. They like the music, they get hooked.

Q: The music of Passion seems to be the initial draw for a lot of kids. Tell me about your label, sixsteps records.

A: The name comes from the Bible when David desired with his heart to bring the ark of God, the glory of God, the presence of God back to the city, where it had been missing for 20 years and 3 months. Finally they did it right and they put it on poles; it hadn't been working for the guys that had tried it already. They took six steps, set it down, killed a fatted calf, and had a worship service because they were so grateful to be alive in the presence of God. That is the mission of sixsteps — try to remember often and connect the presence and glory of God with the people of God.

All that to say, God has shown great favor on sixsteps, and the money we make in our part of the label goes back into Passion.

Q: What's your next step?

A: Passion is God's idea, not mine. It belongs to God. We just want to be the fuse to see an explosion happen in the college generation. We just want to be the catalytic spark that awakens college students and campuses to the gospel.

A Godly profit, an eternal perspective

Fred Smith Sr. on giving, living and leaving a legacy

By Leigh Vickery

He has been called “the best and wisest teacher I have ever met...a confidant...an encourager.” His website, breakfastwithfred.com, does feel as if you could sit down with a cup of coffee and really talk with him. You can ask Fred questions about anything (believe me), and he answers! You can read weekly thoughts, listen to his incredibly inspiring voice, and learn from his never-ending lists of one-liners and worthwhile quotations. He is entertaining and yet completely honest. His transparency creates a trustworthiness that leaves you wanting to talk to him again, and I hope to do that soon. In the meantime, I want to share a few of Fred’s thoughts on giving and living in the spirit of Jesus.

Q: What place should money have in your life?

A: Having money does not mean you are responsible enough to handle the money. Money just simply means you have options. If you practice ownership of what you have been given, then you will think you have rights to your money. But if you practice good stewardship, then you will be responsible. Your attitude should be that your money is given to you and through you to accomplish worthwhile goals. Joy comes when your giving is done for the right reasons. Money should be seen as a means, not an end.

One of our culture’s biggest fallacies is believing that a man’s worth is what he has accumulated.

Q: Can you teach someone to be generous?

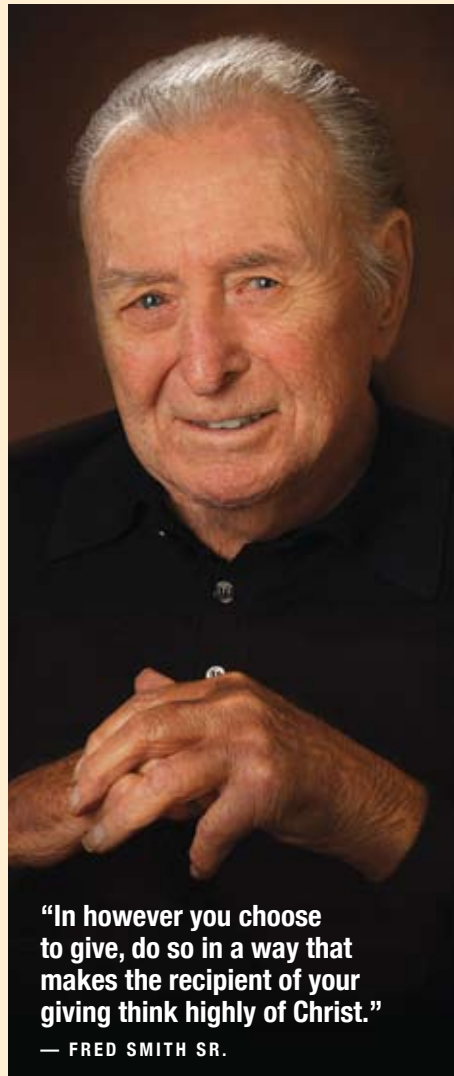
A: Generosity is a spiritual quality but it does not necessarily come naturally. And the only cure for greed is to give. Giving is a privilege—not a duty. If you are generous, you will ask, “How much can I give?” You will not ask how little can I give.

Q: How do you teach your children about giving?

A: The best way to teach your child to give is simply to be a role model. Great parents teach the joy of giving by being great givers. Parents should try to always personify what is right. We personify the spirit of Christ, and He is the greatest example of generosity. We can never teach our children to give if we don’t.

Q: How did you become a mentor?

A: When I was a young man, I sat on a tombstone, and asked myself what I wanted the top of it to say when I was underneath it rather than sitting on top of it. I decided that the



three words “he stretched others” were what I wanted it to say. So I adopted those three words as my life’s mission. I never lost that primary interest throughout my career and my life: defining and developing talent. I enjoy seeing people succeed, especially people who would not have had the same opportunity had they not worked with me.

Q: What are you grateful for?

A: I woke up in the middle of the night the other night having a real pity party. I believe that you cannot be depressed and grateful to God at the same time, so I started thinking about what I can be grateful for in my life. I spent an entire day having a personal day of thanksgiving, thinking about all the elements of my life. I realized that even though I am flat on my back 24/7, I am covered up with blessings. I am so well cared for in my life.

Q: What should be our legacy to the next generation?

A: Many times we confuse inheritance with legacy. The poorest person can leave a legacy. I consider my three children my greatest legacy because they are doing so much more than I ever could.

You have to ask yourself how you can be most profitable to God. In however you choose to give, do so in a way that makes the recipient of your giving think highly of Christ. If you are digging a well to provide clean water for people, then not only are you meeting their human needs, you let them know you are doing this because you love Christ and are following His example.

First, you have to find where your gifts are, and then see where your passions line up with these gifts. We honor our Creator the most by maximizing his creation.

Q: How did you determine your gifts?

A: It was a simple process really. I asked myself some questions:

1. When is it that I feel good when God is using me?
2. When do I feel that I am doing a good job?
3. What do I thoroughly enjoy?
4. What do I learn quickly? Remember well? Remember in detail?
5. When do people compliment me and what do they say?

Analyze these answers honestly and objectively and see how they line up with your passions. Once you get the idea you are serving the Lord, then what you are doing should be your passion.

Q: Do the generous always give without seeking a reward?

A: Anyone who expects a reward is making an investment, not giving a gift. If you tithe believing that God will make you richer, then you are not recognizing God’s ownership of your money in the first place. You do not give expecting prosperity to follow. Peter Marshall once told me about a man he knew who said that he simply couldn’t tithe because he made too much money. The man was able to tithe when he was poor, but 10 percent of his wealth now would be too much to give. Peter simply prayed with the man that God would reduce his income back to a place where he could give again. This is not what the man had in mind!

Anonymity is a good test for your attitude about giving without expecting a reward. Ask yourself, “Why do I give? Is it to have a good reputation? To leave a legacy? Or is it simply to do good in this world?”

The ultimate reward for the profitable steward is to hear the Master say, “Well done, enter into my joy.” When we fulfill our purpose completely, we can expect the joy of the Lord.

Unitrusts: The win/win tool among split-interest trusts

By Terry Parker, retired attorney at law

In recent months I have been asked many times about the use of chari-



Terry Parker

table trusts in the planning process. I consulted with Greg Sperry, executive vice president of gift services at The National Christian Foundation and one of the leading experts in this sub-

ject, to obtain good information that Gathering participants need to know.

If you have a heart to give charitably and have been blessed of God to have multiple dollars of value in various assets, then you need to know the fundamentals of split-interest trusts. These trusts are of substantial importance to those who are not yet ready to “give it all away” as did the widow in Luke 21. Split-interest trusts enable people who are going to give it away at some point between now and at their death to maximize the impact of that gift by minimizing tax burdens both during life and at the end of life. This strategy has generally been available in the United States throughout most of the last century but particularly was effective after 1969 when tax rules were put in place that govern the creation and operation of these kinds of trusts for tax benefit purposes. There are basically two types of tax-beneficial split-interest trusts: Charitable Remainder Trust and Charitable Lead Trust.

The Charitable Remainder Trust

The Charitable Remainder Trust provides benefit to non-charitable beneficiaries (such as you and your spouse and/or family) during the term of the trust while giving benefit of the remainder of the trust to charity at the end of that term. Usually, this type of trust is set up for the lives of the donor and his or her spouse after which it goes to the charities of their choice. There are two types of Charitable Remainder Trusts: the Charitable Remainder Unitrust (Unitrust or CRUT) and the Charitable Remainder Annuity Trust (Annuity Trust or CRAT). Typically, the use of the Unitrust is far greater than the Annuity Trust (perhaps 10 times or more) because of the superior flexibility of the Unitrust to meet a donor’s objectives

One of the last best tax breaks



for his family and charity.

The Unitrust typically provides payments to the non-charitable beneficiaries during their lives or a term of years that is a percentage of the value of the trust as valued yearly, meaning that the trust payments can grow with or ahead of inflation, if well managed. The Annuity Trust is a fixed payment that does not vary during the term of the trust. Thus, the family beneficiaries receive the same payment year after year for the trust term.

The Charitable Lead Trust

The Charitable Lead Trust provides a lead income benefit to charity during the term of the trust while benefiting the family with the remainder interest in the trust at the end of the term. This trust is often used in connection with estate planning. It has been less utilized in recent years due to uncertainties in the area of estate tax application. It is possible the estate tax may be eliminated or exemptions increased over present amounts. As those issues are resolved, the Lead Trust will likely become much more attractive. I will address the Lead Trust and its two varieties (Charitable Lead Annuity Trust and Charitable Lead Unitrust) in a future article.

The Unitrust Protection

When you sell a business and/or property, you almost always have a tax to pay. Many people think that the capital gain tax at 15 percent is not such a bad deal; however, the two other taxes that accompany the capital gain tax are often overlooked. One is the state tax, often at 5 or 6 percent or even more. The second tax is the capital gain tax on appreciation due to the depreciation of capital assets over time. The rate for that tax is 25 percent. Thus, many business and property owners upon selling these assets are confronted with taxes that are similar to a “depression level loss” on the value of their investment. In addition, often after they have struck the deal, they learn that the use of a Unitrust may have enabled them to avoid some or all of these taxes while creating additional benefits for them and their charitable causes.

Of course, most of us would agree that the best thing we can do is to give outright to charity now. This allows us to invest in the Kingdom of God right away and enjoy the unending fruit of that now and forever. Giving now also happens to give us a full charitable deduction of the value of what we give which we can use to reduce tax on other income as well as allow us to avoid paying any capital gain on the property or business interest we give away.

However, many people are not ready to do make this decision. Often they will give away only some of the value—outright to charity—at this time. Usually, there is a large amount of the business or property that they want to keep, and on this part they end up paying the tax. The Unitrust is a tremendous tool to consider,

Split-interest trusts enable people who are going to give it away at some point between now and at their death to maximize the impact of that gift by minimizing tax burdens both during life and at the end of life.



as it seems that the government is offering a deal with the use of the Unitrust. The government is basically saying that “you can give us 20 to 30 percent of the value of your appreciated asset now or you can promise to give 10 percent of its present value to charity at a later time.” Which would you prefer? This “no-brainer” situation is very close to reality.

Funding a Unitrust with interest in your business or your property offers the following benefits:

■ No capital gains tax on appreciation in the value of the assets upon their sale. The Unitrust is a tax-exempt trust, very much like an IRA. It does not pay tax if rightly funded and managed. Only the beneficiary pays tax on what they receive from the trust.

■ A charitable tax deduction is created for you for the present value of the future gift, actuarially, to charity that will result when the trust is ended. This deduction is at least 10 percent or more of the value of what is placed in the trust. It is a deduction you therefore can use now against income from other sources outside the trust. Remember that such deductions first reduce ordinary income (in the higher tax brackets) even though the deduction is created by a gift of a capital gain asset.

■ Often, the income to you or other beneficiaries of the trust is “tax favored.” That means that much of it may be federally taxed at capital gain rates of 15 percent.

■ Often, you can structure the trust so that there is a “faucet” on the distribution of income from the trust to you and even to

charity. This can be very advantageous if you have excessive income in light of your lifestyle and don’t need all of the income from the trust.

■ Finally, you are able to control the trust in several different ways because you control who is trustee and you control who the charitable beneficiaries will be at the end of the trust term. In fact, if you don’t want to be locked into naming ministries that you might later wish you had not named or if you want to be free to change the charitable beneficiaries at a later date, you can name a Donor Advised Fund as the beneficiary, and thus anytime you wish to change a ministry, you do not need to amend the trust (which you can’t do anyway in some states), you need only notify the DAF Sponsor of the change.

When should I consider a Unitrust?

There are three situations in which I would suggest you carefully consider a Unitrust as you and your advisors think through options. They are as follows:

1 “I’m selling my appreciated property, my business interest or my publicly traded stock.” When you have perspective sales of, generally, \$500,000 or more and there is no debt against the asset (or the debt can easily be moved to another asset), then you really must consider the impact of a Unitrust in advancing your objectives, both short and long term. The trust must be created and funded before the sale contract is executed for the asset to be sold.

2 “I have no plans to sell now but I do plan to give significantly to charity at the end of my life.” Often folks, particularly as they get into their later years (70s to 80s+), are thinking of their gifts at the end of life and set them forth in their will. These folks should consider the substantial advantages they can enjoy from funding those gifts through a Unitrust. This then creates wonderful tax savings for them from year to year during life while continuing to allow them to benefit from the income of the asset and essentially set up the gifts they intend to make at the end of life.

3 “I have income well exceeding my life style and am paying taxes quite disproportionate to what I need to live on”. People who are blessed with substantial income often find that taxes can even exceed what they use to live on. Charitably inclined folks would quite likely benefit significantly from the use of a Unitrust, particularly with the “faucet” provision to lower the tax significantly to substantially on income they receive from year to year.

Many of us would find that the use of a Unitrust allows us to invest far more than we thought possible in the Kingdom that will never end. It is a “win/win” tool that should be far better known to many of His servants for the good of His people and the building of His Kingdom. May He grant you joy in your journey of investing for His Glory!



Fascinating India

- Second fastest-growing economy in the world.
- Home of Hindus, Muslims and Buddhists. And a few Christians.
- Home to more major motion picture productions each year than Hollywood.
- Where your computer tech call is most likely routed.
- Destination for The Gathering Vision Trip, Nov. 8-17, 2006.
- Take a journey you'll never forget and see India as you've only imagined. For more information, contact Melea Edwards at 903.509.9911 or e-mail her at meleaedwards@thegathering.com.



Circle of Light

- John Coors cordially invites you to travel with Circle of Light to Kenya, Africa, Feb. 17-26, 2007.
- COL will be traveling to personally see and experience the COL program. These spring trips take on a special flavor of their own. COL not only visits the homes and communities that have been transformed by Circle of Light cooking and lighting kits, they will also be having a huge celebration called "Circle of Light Day." John Coors and Circle of Light invite you to come and see God at work.
- Special events include three-day safari, new community launch, Circle of Light Day.



What is God Doing in Iran?

- A Gathering Conference Special Session
- More Iranians have come to Christ in the last 20 years than in the last 14 centuries.
- Dr. Lazarus Yeghnazar is an Iranian believer who found 222 Ministries and Iranian Christian Broadcasting and ministers to Iranian Christians worldwide. He will inspire us with the electrifying story of what God is currently doing in Iran and of the spiritual tidalwave that is about to sweep across this amazing land. His passion is contagious, and the story is almost impossible to believe. The session is hosted by Gathering board members Todd and Karen Hendricks.

YOUR ON-LINE LINK

Visit these sites for more about the organizations and people mentioned in this issue.

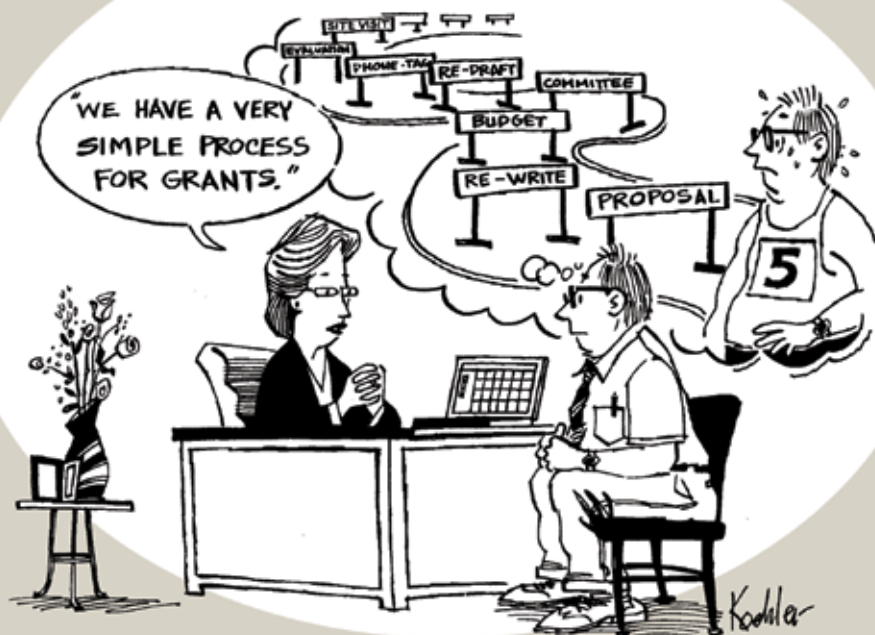
- > www.222ministries.com
- > www.268generation.com
- > www.breakfastwithfred.com
- > www.ccci.org
- > www.icbtv.org
- > www.gatesfoundation.org
- > www.gfa.org
- > www.ijm.org
- > www.intervarsity.org
- > www.light4africa.org
- > www.nationalchristian.com
- > www.rightnow.org
- > www.sim.org
- > www.springwoodgardens.org
- > www.thegathering.com

Visit www.thegathering.com to sign up for The Gathering Update, our biweekly email of information important to people like you.

parting shot

BY ED KOEHLER

What She Said/What He Heard



Join us for the

2006 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Sept. 21-24, 2006

THE PHOENICIAN SCOTTSDALE ARIZONA

For more information or to register on-line, visit www.thegathering.com or contact Melea Edwards at 903-509-9911.

the GATHERING

The Gathering newsletter is published quarterly for the benefit of our participants. Views and opinions expressed may not always reflect those of the staff. The Gathering suggests that you seek qualified, professional counsel regarding investment and other financial matters. For more information or to make comments or suggestions, please contact us at editor@thegathering.com or 903-509-9911.

© 2006, The Gathering