

How Can A Church Raise Funds?

The church is a divinely ordained organization with a divinely ordained purpose. The local church is authorized to spread and defend the gospel (1 Timothy 3:15), to teach and edify its members (Ephesians 4:11-16) and to relieve its needy members (Romans 15:26). Just like any other organization, the church needs money to do this work.

The question of how a church can raise its funds is not a trivial one. If God's word was silent on this subject, we would be free to use any means we deemed necessary and expedient. Some churches obviously use this freedom in fund raising. They use activities like carnivals, car washes, pancake breakfasts, bake sales, calendar sales, rummage sales, etc., without giving a thought to whether or not God approves.

However, we do not find churches in the Bible raising funds in this manner, even though these fund raising opportunities would have been available in the first century. The church in Joppa had a member named Dorcas who made clothes for some of their members (Acts 9:36-39). Why did not she and some of the other ladies make clothes for a church sale? Silver shrines were a hot item in Ephesus (Acts 19:24-25). Why do not we read of the church there selling silver "JESUS" fish decals to put on the back of chariots?

The only means of fund raising we find the church of the Bible using is the freewill offerings of its members (1 Corinthians 16:2; Acts 4:34-37). Not everything we call good is authorized or accepted by God (Matthew 7:21-23). Everything done by the church that belongs to Jesus Christ must be authorized by Him and must glorify Him.

Adapted From Heath Rogers