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THE PARTNERSHIP CONNECTION

Strong PD in a Weak Economy

by Jeff Townsend, Director of Field Development (DFD)



The traditional definition of recession in the U.S. economy is two consecutive quarters of negative growth in real GDP (Gross Domestic Product, adjusted for inflation). Well, we are there, folks! I'm sure you have noticed (and felt...ouch!) the increased price of everything from food to fuel to furniture due to runaway inflation. About the only prices that are down are the sale prices of houses (due to decreased demand and increased

interest rates). Bottom line: we are all paying more for just about everything. For folks with ample financial resources, perhaps this recession has not hit quite yet. But for most of us, and for most of our supporters, it's beginning to hurt the pocketbook! I don't know about you, but in spite of incredible donors who would do almost anything not to decrease or stop their support, I have seen a softening in my support compared to this time last year. Maybe you have too.

So, what should we do? Here are some practical ideas for your recession PD:

- Pray more, not less. God is not broke, but your supporters may be feeling that way. Ask God to encourage them and to provide in unexpected ways. Ask God to direct you to folks He has prepared to give and give generously in spite of the recession (think of the Macedonians in 2 Corinthians 8).
- Give more attention to PD, not less. Now is not the time to slack off on updating your records, keeping track of all PD activities, and planning future PD contacts. Remember, the holiday season is just around the corner. Plan now for a quality, compassionate year-end appeal.
- Make more contacts, not less. Now is the time to be in regular touch with your support team by whatever means you have discovered works best for each one.
- Be pastoral. Show genuine concern and empathy for your supporters' financial situations. If they need to lower or stop support, show understanding. Be sure to keep them on your contact list and make a note to re-contact them in the future to see how they are doing.
- Some quality PD advisors, such as Steve Shadrach, Author, *The God Ask*, recommend asking potential donors for a specific amount. I usually do not do

that. And I would say now is an especially bad time to be saying how much you would like people to give. We likely do not know all the financial constraints folks may be dealing with at any time, let alone during recession times.

- Don't go through your PD journey alone. Re-connect with or assemble your prayer team who are committed to your well-being and ministry. Meet with them regularly. Keep them informed. Information is the fuel for fervent prayer.
- Remember, all the PD training covered during New Staff Orientation is available to you at:
 - www.talentlms.com
 - Log in
 - Go to Course Catalog
 - Click on PD Training

Advice from Pat Kershaw

Director of Field Development, Retired

In troubled times like these, we can get a little crazy and begin to doubt God's ability to meet our needs with thoughts like "people won't give," or "there's no money out there." How can we ask for support in these circumstances?



Only God's Word can restore us to peace and sanity. Paul told the Thessalonians:

"...we pray for you all the time—pray that our God will make you fit for what he's called you to be, pray that he'll fill your good ideas and acts of faith with His own energy so that it all amounts to something. If your life honors the name of Jesus, he will honor you. Grace is behind and through all of this, our God giving himself freely, the Master, Jesus Christ, giving himself freely" 2 Thessalonians 1: 11-12 (The Message).

Every year I re-read the little book *The Kneeling Christian* by "An Unknown Christian." Referring to Jesus' words in Matthew 6:26, "Look at the birds, your heavenly Father feedeth them...." the author says, "Not a single millionaire in all the world is wealthy enough to feed all the birds of the air, even for one day. Yet, your heavenly Father feeds them every day and is none the poorer for it."

When this author wrote that, millionaires were the richest people one could imagine. He hadn't heard of Bill Gates. Bill could probably feed all the birds for one day, maybe more. How many birds would you guess there are just in North America? Are we up to gazillions yet? God has made perpetual provision for birds. Jesus said, "Are you not much more valuable than they?" And God is none the poorer for it day after day, year after year. He doesn't need Bill Gates to take over even for a day.

There are many missionaries and Christian workers out there seeking support from God's people. Sometimes we think of ourselves as in competition with all of them for every dollar we need to meet our budgets. But are we? Do I have to get there before you do? Do I have to be more aggressive than you, make a better

presentation, or write more letters? Must I court the friendship of mostly rich people? (In my case, the friendship of anyone under the age of 95 who hopefully won't die next month!)

Where do we find a balance between working hard at raising our support and resting in God's promise to meet our needs? You are a servant of the Most High, higher than any earthly King. You are in His service. He cares for you. On the basis of your relationship with Him, and His with you, He invites you to ask Him for what you need. God is not broke.

- Romans 16:25—He is able to establish you.
- 2 Corinthians 9:8—He is able to keep you from falling.
- Ephesians 3:20—He is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or think.

We cannot possibly strain the resources of a mighty God. Our human hopes and imagining, anything we can ask, or think to ask, does not strain His supply. Ask.

*Pat is pictured above with her great grand kids, including the newest one.

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