

Special Report

This report is submitted to the members and attendees of BBC Ministries,

Introduction

We, the BBC Elders, believe it is time to inform you and ask for your prayers in regards to an issue that we have been pursuing, God's direction for dealing with our mortgage debt.

Just over a year ago a concerned member of our church presented her concern over our debt at a board meeting and challenged us that it was time to pursue how to reduce or eliminate it. We took her challenge seriously.

The Boards Process

Our first step was to simply take ownership of our situation. As many of you know, the debt was incurred almost ten years ago in order to build our current auditorium/worship center and convert the old one into an educational wing (chapel, library and classrooms). At this time our church attendance was larger and enough members committed to giving to the "Millennium Vision" (MV) over ten years that the monthly payments were completely covered. But with time and turmoil within the church, most of these commitments fell off, leaving the majority of the monthly loan payments to be paid out of the church's general fund. As we began to pursue what to do about it, our loan principle was approximately \$800,000.00 with monthly payments of over \$8,000.00. Needless to say, this is a large burden, and it felt to us like we were left to take care of a burden that was not really ours. But before God and the law of the land, it was ours, so we chose the attitude of taking ownership of the debt. But just what should we do about it?

Over the next couple of months we met early on Saturday mornings specifically to pray for God's direction in reducing or eliminating our mortgage debt.

One thing we soon realized was that the MV commitments which were still being paid by many faithful people were soon to be completed. The funds of MV donors who rightly concluded their giving to the MV fund would have to be picked up by the general fund, so time was important.

Within a short period of time, a church in the Rogue valley approached us with the possibility of purchasing our camp, Mountain Lakes Bible Camp, which was at first estimated to have a value in excess of \$800,000.00. We wondered if this was God's answer to our prayers and if we were willing to relinquish ownership and control of camp. We decided that it was the Lord's camp and that we should allow the process to move forward. To make a long story short the process of gathering the necessary information to sell the camp moved forward but the interest of the other church faded.

This spring, we began to look at the possibility of a capital finance campaign. We ultimately met with a local pastor who has much professional experience in directing churches through such campaigns and with great success. With such a campaign it was

virtually guaranteed that we could pay off our debt and more. But was this the Lord's will for us? We took some time to seek the Lord and then came together again a couple of weeks later to decide on a direction. As we discussed the issues at this meeting there was an amazing amount of agreement across the board. It was apparent that the Lord had been moving all of us the same direction. Here is what we concluded about a campaign:

- If we were to do a financial campaign as a church, this pastor was the right one to lead us.
- But a financial campaign was not right for us.

This conclusion was based on several considerations. Here are the big ones for us:

- Timing was such that it would be difficult and pressure filled to have a campaign at the most opportune time of the year, fall.
- The church staff would be highly consumed by the campaign through the summer and fall, cutting out many ministry opportunities.
- Such a campaign would be the main focus of the church for three months and a major focus for the next three years. We just didn't think this is what God wants for us.
- The campaign, though it would raise funds, would also cost many thousands of dollars to put on.
- And probably the greatest deterrent for us was that a campaign would move us dangerously close to breaking a biblical principle on giving found in 2 Corinthians 9:7 (NIV): *Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.*

Conclusions

With direction on what to do and especially what not to do, we asked, "what then does God want?" Here is what was decided should be done:

- Inform the church family about our situation and the process we have been through. This would be done in a general way through a report (this one) and at church services, and in a more specific way through a few meetings with the elders at various times.
- Ask the church to, for a period of time, be in prayer and involved in the considerations of good things to do to reduce or eliminate our debt.
- Establish a debt reduction strategy committee to plan and coordinate all debt reduction items and issues (this report is their doing).
- Ultimately, trust the situation to the Lord and wait on Him as necessary.

And here are the elder board's initial considerations of some ways to reduce or eliminate our debt:

- At a good time, ask the church members and attendees to consider giving sacrificially to reduce or eliminate our debt. Perhaps God simply wants to provide through the church.
- Provide our church family with encouragement, biblical instruction and tracking on the giving.