

Sunday, October 6, 2013

New Church building

1. Modern Churches are not merely places of worship; they have to fulfill the needs of their congregants such as worship, teaching, and various activities. There has to be room for all these needs.
2. The new building should fulfill these needs: Rooms equipped for Sunday school and youth ministries, Library, day care, Gym, stage, larger church to conduct two liturgies simultaneously, a small outpatient clinic, and conference rooms. The preliminary architectural drawings meet all these requirements and match the current building style while making an efficient use of the land.
3. The initial estimate for the whole project ranges from \$6,000,000 to \$7,000,000. Currently, we have close to \$600,000 in liquid funds and we need to have around \$1,500,000 by the end of January 2014.
4. The project will be carried out in three phases, and we would like to start as soon as possible because we in a dire need for these facilities. We have started the phase of the detailed drawings and obtaining the permits. With God's will, we hope to start groundbreaking in early April of 2014.
5. This is a matter of faith, and we have many examples of the miraculous work of God with His children despite their limited resources:
 - a. The people of Israel took over the land of the Amalekites with very limited abilities, but with faith that was expressed by Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh: ***"If the Lord delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us...The Lord is with us. Do not fear them."*** (Numbers 14:8-9).
 - b. Nehemiah built the walls of Jerusalem in less than two months with almost no resources what so ever, and in opposition to many people. He only relied on the divine support and persistent prayer, saying: ***"The God of heaven Himself will prosper us; therefore we His servants will arise and build"*** (Nehemiah 2:20).
 - c. Five loaves and two fish were offered by a child and God used them to feed thousands.
6. The door will be open to everyone to donate or lend money to the church with a mutually beneficial arrangement.
7. We have to recognize the historical responsibility to serve the future generations in the area.



Q & A

Q1: Doesn't the Bible say that we should first count the cost, and if we don't have enough money we should not even begin?

A1: The Lord Jesus said this parable in a completely different context. He was speaking to His followers (Luke 14:25-35), saying that in order to follow Him and become true disciples, you should calculate the cost first. You need to cut the emotional ties and the love of money, and be prepared to bear the cross otherwise you will not be able to finish the journey to the end. The meaning of counting the cost in this context is preparing oneself to follow Christ, not the financial aspect of the ministry. Otherwise, we would be like Phillip who wanted to abandon his duty in fulfilling the need of the crowd and said that they needed at least two hundred denarii to buy bread only. In doing so, he overlooked the fact that Jesus was present with them and had the ability to bless any resources to feed the crowd. Therefore whoever speaks about counting the cost should include Christ in his calculations first, and then he would say: ***"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."*** (Philippian 4:13). This does not contradict with financial planning and working diligently to provide material support for the ministry.

Q2: Is the current income of the church sufficient to start the project, or to pay the mortgage payments to the bank when we get a loan?

A2: Whenever there is a large church project, the income of the church is much more than usual. When people are inspired, when they recognize the value of the project, and see that the work started, the income greatly multiplies. Therefore, we should not measure the financial needs of the project against the current income of the church.

Q3: Is financial planning of church affairs any different from that of the family?

A3: Yes. The income of a family, regardless of how rich it might be, is still limited. As to the church, God is responsible for her and is able to open the windows of heaven and pour blessing on His people (Malachi 3:10). Therefore, we should not worry about church projects and think about them the same way we think about our personal affairs. God is responsible to provide all the expenses for such projects.

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