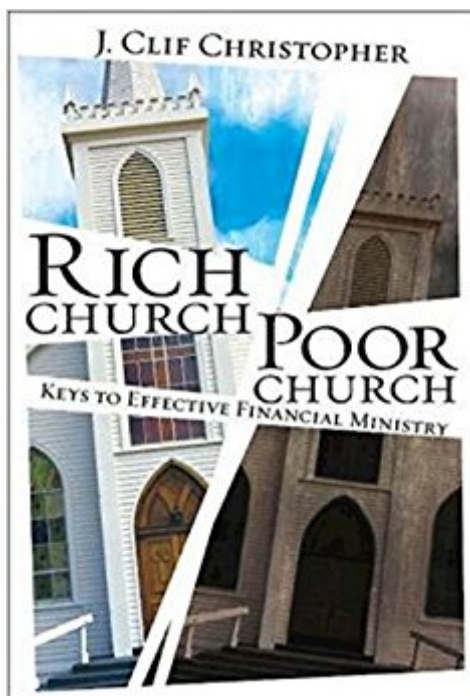


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# Rich Church, Poor Church: Keys To Effective Financial Ministry



## Synopsis

Does your church have the necessary funds to do ministry? In Dr. Clif Christopher's nearly forty years in ministry as a pastor and President of Horizons Stewardship Company, he has witnessed the financial stewardship practices of thousands of churches. A few have exceptional records in acquiring and managing the necessary funds for mission and ministry, but the vast majority struggle every year to get by. In this important new work made even more relevant by our economic times, Christopher contrasts the traits of the most productive congregations with those who perennially fail to secure the funds to perform transformational ministry. Some churches practice the necessary financial habits that form the foundation of successful ministry, and others waste valuable resources and undermine ministry opportunities. Through Christopher's insight born out of years of experience and consultation, readers can assess the financial condition of their own churches. [Â](#)

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Dr. Clif Christopher, MDiv, CFRE, is the CEO of the Horizons Stewardship Company. He is a certified church growth consultant and has earned the coveted title CFRE (Certified Fund Raising Executive). Christopher founded the Horizons Stewardship Company in 1992 following a challenging and rewarding career in pastoral ministry. Since founding Horizons, he has led consultations in more than 400 churches, conferences, synods, and dioceses in all phases of building, finance, and church growth. For the last 10 years, Christopher has secured more than \$500 million for his clients. He has worked in more than 32 states and is a frequent speaker at stewardship seminars around the country. He is the author of several books including *Not Your Parents' Offering Plate*, which was published by Abingdon Press. Christopher has been an

ordained minister of The United Methodist Church since 1975. He is a graduate of Hendrix College and Emory University. Christopher and his wife have four children. He lives in Cabot, Arkansas.

As the Rector (senior pastor) of a relatively large Episcopal Church I am always looking for resources to help with congregational growth and vitality. I have read several of the author's previous books that focus more specifically on stewardship (congregational giving). This is his most recent and best book. It includes stewardship but is more broadly focused on how to be a healthy congregation. The title could easily be "Healthy Church, Unhealthy Church." The Vestry (parish governing body) and I read the book and discussed it at our annual retreat. We found it to be very helpful and as a result have decided on several new approaches and modifications to our ministry in the coming year and beyond. I highly recommend this book to clergy and lay leaders looking to understand the health of their parish and how to move in a healthier direction. The Rev. Lou Hays

As a member of a church I would classify as "Getting Rich" (my term...read the book and it will make sense), I found this book truly inspiring. This book is NOT about "money money money", and I think the title may turn some off, unfortunately. It's about becoming and/or being a church that "walks the walk" in the most important ways. The church I'm a member of is so "rich" in terms of what we do for the community both locally and globally, and yet I realize we still "talk poor" when it comes to stewardship and other aspects of our ministries. As a 2-time "Stewardship Committee Chair"... wow...I realize I have done it SO WRONG for 2 years in a row now!!! Read this book. Period. If you aren't moved in some way to move in a more positive direction...read it again when you're in a different/better mental state.

As a member of a "Poor Church" I have gained an insight I did not have before. This book has given me a new outlook that I will take back to our leadership body and encourage them to read it as well. I have been struggling with many things in our church and this book shines a bright light on solutions and guidance for those problems. Amen.

I highly recommend! This is not a financial campaign. It is a book that describes the attitudes and actions of the church that is budget focused and not making it, compared to ministry focused finance. We have transitioned from one size church to another and the old patterns will not work. They didn't work before but they survived, now they cannot without training and a new mind set. So this was definitely the place for us to start. Stop doing things with were not only ineffective

but hurting their cause. Then change the perspective and attitudes and then move forward with a plan that honors the Kingdom and its people. Good for a group study or finance committee training. The information would be beneficial regardless of church size.

I am the treasurer of Centers for Spiritual Living. I have long been a big fan of "Not Your Parent's Offering Plate" This delightful book is exactly what I would expect from Clif. It is well written with stimulating discussion question at the end of each chapter. The underlying theme is not so much a how to as it is a how to be in the world of church finances. A must read for all those involved in church leadership. On a personal note, I greatly appreciated Clif's willingness to be vulnerable and disclose where he had not necessarily been a good steward. I have bought a few cars myself. Read this book and it will change your church for the future. Healthy spiritual communities is everyone's responsibility.

Very insightful book from Clif Christopher. He brings his own experience as a minister and as a consultant and shows how the entire ethos of a congregation affects church finances and vice-versa. As a United Methodist Pastor, I will keep this book handy for every church I serve. The 11th (last) chapter is where it all comes together. I would have paid many times over for this information and insight.

Easy read with a power packed message. Mr. Christopher clearly articulates the difference between financially thriving churches and those that operate in survival mode. He honestly states that the Poor Church can become a Rich Church but it will take some drastic changes and time. He provides the steps to get there.

As others have written, this is far more than a book on church finances, but rather one on what makes a church rich in spiritual vitality and missional passion. This is will be the leadership read for our church for 2014. It's short, pithy chapters combined with its spiritual boldness will be a powerful encouragement as our church move from to being a truly rich church.

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