

The Past, Present, and Future of Missions Philanthropy

In this episode, Rob Martin is joined by two pioneers of missions philanthropy: Fred Smith and Tom McCallie. They discuss what missions philanthropy looked like in the past, what it looks like now, and what they hope it will look like in the future.

Introduction

Rob: Hello, I'm Rob Martin. And I'm the host of this podcast sponsored by the book, [*When Money Goes on Mission: Fundraising and Giving in the 21st Century*](#).

Today, I'm meeting with two of my fondest friends and oldest colleagues in this work. We go back at least 38, 39 years together, working together to figure out how to do philanthropy.

What we hope to do in this podcast today is give you just a picture of what we were thinking about 40 years ago when we were looking at missions philanthropy and what today, as we are, the three of us are exiting our careers or have exited our careers, what are we seeing out in the future that reminds us of what we saw in the past, but is what the next generation is gonna lead us to.

And we want you to be able to understand how American mission philanthropists, it's a very unique set of American Christian philanthropy.

There's just a few foundations, literally a handful, that exclusively focus on international mission. And this set of podcasts and this book were designed for the people that are emerging in the developing world and throughout, in how to become locally accountable, do local fundraising, and become the leaders in their own work that they need to be.

That's something we saw 40 years ago that needed to happen. We didn't know how to get there, we just knew as philanthropists, we were part of the solution, that's all.

And so I want to introduce you to, if you don't already know them, Fred Smith and Tom McCallie. Fred has an Ivy League degree, a PhD. And what is your PhD in, Fred ? I'm sorry.

Fred: Oh, it's, what is it? It's not a PhD, it's its own-

Rob: It was at Yale, though?

Fred: Yeah, it's only a masters. I don't have the bow tie. You get the bow tie with the PhD.

Rob: Well, he's just an attorney, so we'll get through that. I prefer my description of you, Fred. I want smart friends, don't you understand?

Fred: Smart friends, yeah. No, no.

Fred: I think it was in theology. Something that with a-

Tom: Master's of Divinity.

Fred: Yeah, with a major in Hebrew, yeah.

Rob: Fascinating. Fred, I learn something about you every time we talk.

Fred: Very useful.

Rob: Okay, so Fred was working in Texas for a large business that was associated with television cable enterprises.

He and the owner of that business were looking at what to do with the excess wealth. "What kind of difference can we make in the kingdom?" That was Fred's job.

And they started looking at leadership issues and philanthropy. And I'll get into what that was like for Fred then and what he sees now.

Tom McCallie Jr, III, in the bow tie, is a Southern gentlemen who was executive director of the largest and most influential foundation in our country in missions philanthropy.

That is the [Maclellan Foundation](#). And he started out as their attorney and then started getting involved in their grant-making work.

I got into the grant-making field with an individual named Howard Ahmanson, in the work called Fieldstead and Company.

And in 1983, I was running a small rescue mission. I was administrating in a small rescue mission in Orange County and Howard and I had become friends.

It sounds like exactly what happened between Tom and Hugh O. Maclellan, and his boss and between Fred and Bob Buford.

There was this friendship first, because when you're working for a wealthy individual, like we were, trust is the number one game.

If they don't know you and don't trust you, they're not going to release the gifts that they're setting aside for God's work to you. They're just not gonna do it.

So there has to be that trust and the trust started, at least in my case, with me having no idea I would get into the philanthropic field.

I just started doing some helping with Howard. He was needing help with his funding. I was running the mission. I helped them out a little bit.

And when he decided to go full-time, I had gotten married and decided I needed to make more than \$800 a month. It was hardly any more practical than that.

And that was months that I was actually working hard to do my fundraising. I could have \$800. I mean, it was pretty rinky-dink. When my wife married me, I was 39 years old with \$200 in my pocket.

How she saw through all that fog and decided I was a worthy mate, I don't know, but I'm thankful to God for it.

In any case, that's essentially our beginnings. And what we're going to do in this podcast, as I said, we're gonna look at what we looked at then and what we're looking at now as we exit our careers.

And what is it that we're thinking about that the next generation is gonna have to deal with? So welcome, Fred. Welcome, Tom. Thanks for coming on the podcast.

Tom: Thank you.

Fred: Thanks, Rob.



How Fred Smith Got into Missions Philanthropy

Rob: Actually, I want you to tell us a little bit about how you and Bob got into philanthropy and what you were looking at that you didn't know quite how you were gonna get there, but you knew you needed to get there, and you were part of the solution of getting there. What was that like for you?

Fred: Well, they say in Texas, that when you get rich you either buy an airplane or start a private foundation or do both, and so that's what what Bob did. And neither of us knew anything about philanthropy.

Bob was in business and I was a school teacher in New York. And so we started from scratch. And that's why I started calling around trying to find out out who knew something about philanthropy.

And in the course of those calls, that's why I called you, and why I called Tom, and learned about what had been going on to get groups together in the past through the Maclellan Foundation and others.

And I just said, "Would you guys tutor me," basically. "Could we meet for a weekend? And you take me on as a student?" And you graciously said, yes. And that was 1985, I think.

And we just started learning from and teaching each other. So actually, Bob and I ended up not doing traditional philanthropy.

We ended up forming a number of nonprofit organizations and using the money that would've gone to disbursement to fund the different things that we started.

Rob: Well, and if you look at philanthropy, it has many, there's not just a single way of looking at this,

Particularly missions philanthropy, because an individual can create an operating program,

Which is what you did. And that's a great use of your money, because you're still gonna need partners to make the operating program happen, the field is still gonna have to tell you what it needs and wants so that your program is buy-able to them.

It's just a different way of doing philanthropy. And let me move over to Maclellan. Here's another one that had different way of doing philanthropy. And that was by encouraging other people to do philanthropy.

To use their philanthropy as a platform for other people to understand how to go about their own plant philanthropy.

If you've heard about the Generosity Movement and other things like that, a lot of it came out of this desire to help people steward their wealth.



Maclellan

How Tom McCallie Got into Missions Philanthropy

Rob: So Tom, why don't you tell us your story for a little bit, about how you got into the work and what that was like as you began to really organize the Maclellan philanthropy?

Tom: [Maclellan Foundation was started in 1945](#). And I began work with Hugh Jr, Hugh Maclellan Jr in the late 70s, on some projects in the Chattanooga area that were his projects, not the foundation's projects.

And then in 1982, I became associated with the foundation and began to work with it on a part-time basis. And then I went full time and 1989 on that.

Hugh is one of those, well, when I was hired I was told to keep him out of trouble and stay out of Mr. Maclellan's hair.

But he had this incredible all desire to build the kingdom of Christ, both through evangelism, through ministry, but also through the donors and helping them have the joy that he felt in working in Christ's kingdom. And that's kind of the way that we began our work together.



Missions Philanthropy Needed Transformation

Rob: When we look at our each of our starts, and I'll get to mine in just second, but when we look at each of our starts, I'm seeing a theme here that actually fits into what you saw and what you couldn't or you weren't sure how to accomplish.

And so, Tom, you guys were looking at the mission world. You had the ability to make large gestures, but you were smart enough to take the time to figure out how to make that gesture.

And then you brought along the other philanthropists that were interested in working in that. And so you took on big efforts there to help.

Some of the biggest movements were underwritten by you guys, that brought together all the people. So you were looking at the American philanthropic scene and saying it was weak and unfocused.

And it was, particularly when it came to missions granting. And that's because the field was changing faster than the philanthropies were changing.

The philanthropies were all reactive philanthropies back then. When I went to work for Howard, the model that I inherited was you sat back, you had a nice suit, long tie, no bow tie, that's way too friendly.

You had a suit, you had your power tie, you had a desk, and you had a chair. It was almost like going into a funeral home, where they put you in one of those soft chairs where you're slightly lower than they are, so that when they're selling you their stuff you're kind of like a, in any case.

Fred: You'll be a lot lower at the end of that process.

Rob: All I know is that, here I'm in this little rescue mission, barely learning what to do and how to run the thing and messing up much more than I was, what I did learn was God's love for the poorest among us are breathtaking.

So even when you're working at a rescue mission, when you screw up, you get something good out of it, because He wants those people help, no matter what you give Him.

So He'll take whatever puny effort you put out and just multiply it. And those kinds of Ebenezers are the things that kept me going in this work all these years.

But in any case, it felt like I went from playing Texas League ball, up into the bottom of the ninth in Yankee stadium, and I had to hold the lead. I was on the mound and had to hold the lead.

And I was wetting my pants. It was just so much input. And people were just coming out of the woodwork, because there were so few of us that were engaged in missions philanthropy.

And there was such an explosion of philanthropy missions going on and there was very little connection between the real world of wealthy Christians who were working through philanthropy or through their own operating

foundation, like you did with Buford in the [Leadership Network](#), where you were attacking the things you saw, even though you didn't quite know how you were gonna get there, because you were using others and you were using resources.

And in Tom's case, they used influence as much as they used resource. You used action as much as you used resource.

And with Howard, we were essentially a resource foundation working in that reactive model, which I couldn't function at, because that model required a professional in the job that knew everything about the field that they wanted to fund.

So if you had a medical foundation, you had a doctor in the job. If you had a legal foundation, you had a legal person in the job.

It was just, that was kind of the way things were done in the professionally, particularly those that were working in the civics, in the arts, and other things like that. You'd have a leader in that field, or a cancer researcher.

Our field was all together different. We needed to have an expert in experts. We needed to know who to work with in an astonishing variety of what God's up to.

And I couldn't figure out how to do the job receiving proposals, primarily because the math was for every 20 people that actually were able to connect with us and get an appointment or get a proposal in front of us, we were saying no to 19 of them.

Which has a staffer, means you open up a meeting, you're looking for where the exit door is, because you know they've gotta surprise you to get the money. And I hated that. So we stopped that model almost immediately, because I couldn't execute it.

There was no way for me to sit in a closet, in a closeted place and read proposals and know whether there was any efficacy, whether it was useful, how it fit into the context of a larger picture, whether it was tactical or strategic. I had no idea about any of that.

And you couldn't tell from the proposals coming in, because they were focused on the narrow agenda of that mission. And so you'd have to cobble together all the narrow agendas to feel the trends. And that just made no sense.

And fortunately, I had a boss, as we all did, who was interested in learning, was interested in risk, was available to risk, interested in learning, and realized that the model needed to change.

And so the only thing I knew to do was go to them instead of having them come to me. And in missions philanthropy, that meant starting to travel.

And at the same time I started to travel, I started realizing I had no idea how to do this job and I was wondering who else was doing it? Because there was no colleagues in Southern California, where I was working, that I could go to and get training from or get mentoring from.

There just wasn't anybody. And so when you called, and the three of us and a couple of others got together, in Washington, D.C.

I think it was, and we started talking, the value of that talking then was, "Here's somebody else learning how to swim and I can learn from them and I'll tell them what I'm seeing and we'll start validating our work. We'll start figuring out. And we'll start talking about the things we see that we're not able to achieve, but we think should be achieved."

And so in light of that, what were those early days like around Bob, when you and Bob were meeting and you were looking out at how to design your philanthropy?

What were the things you were looking at and you were saying, "This is what we wanna do something about"?



Missions Philanthropy in the Past: Why Change Was Needed

Fred: Well, we had an advantage in that Bob really felt a call to work with churches. And so, that's why we created Leadership Network, to work with large churches around the country.

And as you were talking, I was thinking, what we did was instead of funding missions, we got churches together in peer groups.

And one of the groups that we got together for 10 years, at least, were missions pastors of large churches.

And so, I feel like that was our contribution to, because so much philanthropy is done at the level of the local church and local individuals.

In fact, I would say that most what we call philanthropy or giving, actually comes through the local church and of course not through private foundations.

So we thought, "Where's the investment we can make in missions that actually has leverage and far more leverage than we could have as two individuals in Tyler, Texas?"

And so over the years what we watched was missions pastors get together and do the same kind of work that you, and Tom, and I, and others did as foundation executives.

And that was pretty exciting, because they were, they had their own things that they were wrestling with, and what does the future look like? And what's the state of missions? And of course, that's a field that had been done the same way for an awfully long time.

Rob: Yeah, in fact, in my work, just on that last point, one of the things that I noticed when I started out were just about every one of the institutions I was dealing with was disrupted by their success.

The emerging church in the world was emerging from the work of these missions. I mean, these 18th century and 19th century missions that went out from Europe and America established the dominance of the majority world evangelical church.

Now they've far eclipse their parentage, but their institutions, this is what we learned. Their institutions didn't move pace with the change on the field.

And so we were looking at how could we adjust to the pace of the change in the field? Because I wasn't part of the old industry. I had no dogs in the fight. I was just looking at the whole world and seeing that it was time for what we're calling today, localization. I think you were looking at the same thing there.

Tom, how about you? What was it like in those early days, sitting around with Mr. Maclellan and Hugh O. and plotting your direction? What were you guys looking at that you just wanted to get after?

Tom: When you go back and look at the history of the Maclellan Foundation, you realize the family had a real heart for evangelism.

And at that time, evangelism was proclamation evangelism. If you remember the last half of the 20th century, probably the whole 20th century, was on proclamation evangelism. Billy Graham, Billy Sunday, Luis Palau, any number of other organizations.

So in the mid-80s, we had a speaker come in and talk to us. And one of the things he said is that more people came to Christ in the context of a church plant than in any other form of evangelism that was known.

Well, that was incredibly new information, because we were into the proclamation issues. And all of a sudden that caught the attention of our trustees and Hugh Maclellan in particular.

And we really began to start looking at church planting and moving from the concepts of planting an individual church over your life, to planting the saturation or the movements of church planting models, where you created churches, it created churches, which created churches.

And that was a huge, huge change.

One issue that we had at that time is most all of missions was Western and they were all international organizations, top-down, the centralized power. And that was a huge issue that we had to come to grips with.

Fred: Rob? You talk about the changes that were going on in the field and the lack of change that was going on in the mission organizations.

Do you think that there was also a problem with how to educate the traditional donor about the changes that were going on in the field, because that would require changes in the mission organization?

I mean, where was the reluctance to change? Was it the organizations not wanting to educate the donors, because that might disrupt some of the funding? Or the donors simply not desiring to be educated or not knowing how to get educated?

Rob: Well, I think there was an implicit top dog/underdog, that was being fed by both sides of that equation.

By that I mean, you had international folk starting to find us, because we started to become more visible, because we were traveling.

We weren't just sitting back in desks. This was a brand new field and we were going out and meeting these people, just trying to get a sense of what was going on. Imagine you were popping around all over the country going to these big churches just to experience them so that you'd know what they were dealing with.

We were doing the same thing in the field. Tom started traveling with me, took three years for his foundation to release him to travel.

And it started, Mr. Maclellan saw me traveling and Tom and I had become friends, because of the meeting you'd put together. And he called me to his lunch table once, the first time, at a gathering meeting, had me stand up and said, "You know, you don't need to go overseas. You don't need to do all of that. Just find a few good missions and accelerate their traction."

And I thought, well, you need to look in a philanthropist and you need to look how they made their money.

In an insurance company, you make your money with sure bets, as best as you can. Howard made his money through his father.

And that helped him to be free to just explore it in a risk environment, because he didn't have a formed philosophy that he had inherited.

He just saw his father playing in politics and playing in the arts and other things like that, very influential philanthropists. And there was, it was just, we had no idea what was actually going on out there.

So we traveled to India. We traveled wherever we could and started learning from the field what they were up against and started to sense this disconnect between us and them that needed-

And so, at the same time we started the professionalize, if you think about it. We were some of the first guys to have a professional job as a gatekeeper to a foundation.

And then later, Fred, you took the three of us, the five of us that were first getting together. And by the early 90s, none of us could do it as a volunteer anymore, it had grown so big.

And you started the very thing that Maclellan was doing in influencing others to give, you created the vehicle that they could all come together and having an association around in The Gathering.

Fred: Well, and Tom named it, and Tom also came up with the original logo, and I suspect that The Gathering has something to do with some sort of Scottish tradition.

Rob: Yeah, now I never thought of that.

Fred: So let's give credit where credit is due.

Rob: Is that why we used to toss those big logs every year?

Fred: That was it. All those proposals were compressed into a log and then we had to toss it, yeah.

Tom: Whoever could throw it the farthest.

Rob: And wear a skirt.

Fred: Whoever could throw it the furthest, yeah.

Rob: And you had to wear a skirt .

Fred: But don't you think there was also something around the explosion or the proliferation of nonprofits and mission, small mission emphasis?

And so, whereas, Hugh O or Hugh O's father could say, "There's five big organizations and let's just fund them." Well, in the 80s and the 90s, it went from 5 to 5,000.

Rob: And you had the emergence of local mission in the post-colonial environment, all over the world. I mean, fabulous mission movements. Up at the Missio church.

Up 95% through their own fundraising. The "Handful of Rice" film is worth seeing. You can find that on the [First Fruit](#) website or a number of other places, just look up "Handful of Rice" and you'll see what we mean.

We were discovering all the energy that was out there and that's where we wanted to put our work. And we started traveling and traveling and getting out there. And what happened was more in more philanthropists, because of The Gathering, were getting the idea that they could steward their money in a fresh way.

And they were hiring people like us to help them steward it. And those people were immediately jumping in and going on trips with us and so they learned by osmosis, at the same time we were learning.

Some of the most valuable stuff we did in those years was when we gathered as a gathering and just fellowshiped for a while, but then just started talking through our problems.

And when we traveled together and we sat at dinner after a long day of meetings and site visits and all the rest of it, and just interpreted what we saw from each perspective and began to arrive at a place of understanding of what we needed to do in the future.

We were always trying to improve. This isn't a pat on our back, self-patting on our back. It's just, when you work for God in this way, when you're serving with Him, you can never set on your laurels, because stuff moves too fast. You gotta get better all the time.

And so the mutual exclusive, having a lot of people come into the field and then come to The Gathering and come to the separate meetings and briefings and other.

Can you imagine all those briefings we did for years and how they set the pace for meeting some of the key leaders in the world, the people that came to teach us and such?

It was good stuff. It was along that line that when I got to work for, when you took over The Gathering and made it an active ministry, I started at The Gathering. The Maclellan Foundation was hitting full speed in the world at that point, staffing up and all sorts of things. And I started with First Fruit.

And what we saw at First Fruit that we didn't know how to get there, was localization. Was how do we strengthen the ministries that we are funding? How do we come alongside them?

It turned out our mission wasn't the loving actions of the ministries, that is the cold cup of water, the warm blanket, whatever it was that they were delivering, the proclamation of the good news.

Whatever they were doing, that wasn't our business. Our business was the mission. That took a long time to learn. That what we were about were missions flourishing, so that they could do their job of church planting proclamation, helps, whatever it was.

And then, once you realize that your job is to help them flourish, it changes your whole mindset as to how do you make the field flourish?

And we started looking at the entire world and thinking, "What's the potential out there? Is there potential out there?"



Missions Philanthropy in the Present: The Communion of Giving and Receiving

Rob: So that was the trend we were looking at then. And we are now fully in it.

You're fully into the localization issues, as well. Tom's been a chairman of the [Prison Fellowship International](#), which is attempting to localize its work all over the world.

So we started looking at that then. He looked at it. Tom, why don't you weigh in here about how in the early 90s your work started to change and what you started looking at.

Tom: The way we began to change is realizing that the North American mission, and it was probably about that time that I heard this statistic, that in 1800, only 6% of the world's Christians lived outside the West.

By 1990, I think it was only 6% of the world's Christians lived in the West. I mean, this incredible explosion.

So how did we get away from funding a few major international missions, to really involve ourselves in what God was doing.

And that was the other thing that the speaker did a while ago, I mentioned while ago, is look to see what the Holy Spirit's doing and we get that on it.

And all of a sudden we saw what the Holy Spirit was not doing, was the international. And it was the local and moving and how did you move from one to the other? And so that was a huge issue, but it did involve the travel, the understanding, the meeting.

And I think Fred said it earlier, before we went on this, though that's a cultural translation and we have to be very sensitive to who other people are that we're trying to help and how they need and what they need and how they articulate, and that we understand.

And sometimes that translation was a real clear. Sometimes it was pretty cloudy. And anyway, it was a good learning thing. But the point is, is we learned it was the group that we had in that smaller gathering that really made the difference, because each one had different perspectives.

And one of the things you learn as you get into it is God has a lot bigger idea than any individual within. And we just needed each other to hear it.

And you mentioned we would sit around that table, but you would see something totally different than what I saw and somebody else would see something totally different. And I just learned that two people on a trip say three times as much.

Fred: But the local is messier, isn't it?

I mean, it's easy to sit in your office and write a check to the large mission organization and assume that they'll take care of everything.

And then when you guys started traveling, you started seeing things. And you saw that things were messier.

And I think one of the advantages of those early meetings was not only did we get educated, but we got encouraged and not disillusioned by some of the stuff that we were seeing here.

Rob: Oh yeah. I mean, we're working for God, but we create human institutions, which have a knowledge of evil.

Corruption flies around our world as much as it does in the rest of the world. Because we're taught in scripture that there will be people who do fabulous things in the name of Jesus, who He doesn't know or won't know, in fact.

Tom: Rob, let me, before you go onto the next issue, let me go back to what I just said.

At some point, when we talk about the large international organization, top-down, we're talking about something that was created by God in the 18th century that really had an important role to play.

But by the 1980s, the 1990s, we are beginning to see God was changing the things around the world. And that was, we were in a unique period of history where a change was taking place.

Rob: Right, but at the same time, without really knowing how it would happen or even thinking it should happen, we suddenly had hundreds of philanthropists that were interested in missions and started coming to The Gathering.

And they were newly minted philanthropists. People who had earned their money, not just received it in transfers, and who were vital, risk-taking, successful business folk.

And they, when they came into philanthropy, they said, "There's a certain amount of discipline in my work in my work that I wanna see in missions work."

And we went out and said, "Good." And we started talking about who's your hedgehog, and who's on the bus, and all the management stuff.

And we started asking for outcomes. And by the mid 90s, we'd made such a mess of it in the developing world that we had created an atmosphere of tension between the kinds of questions we were asking.

I actually sat in a meeting once, it may have been a side room at The Gathering, in which some missionaries were in there and some philanthropists were in there. And the philanthropist, he was a newly minted guy.

One of these guys that's just come into the field. Full of energy, full of money, full of success in his business world and wanting to apply that to his commercial world.

And he stands up in front of this group of missionaries, he says, "I literally have two proposals right now from one guy that's baptizing 100 people a year, to another guy that's baptizing 1,000 people a year. ROI tells me to go with the guy that's baptizing 1,000 people a year."

And you could just see in the missionaries, what he was basically saying was, "You're not any good at your job. You don't run your job like a business. You gotta run your job like a business, and then you can get this effectiveness and we can measure it, and more is better."

That whole thing, without taking into fact that the guy that was maybe doing 100 baptisms a year was actually working in a much tougher environment, a much more hostile environment.

And that those were much harder conversions, if you will, than the mass conversions that we were seeing on the West Coast of the United States in the Jesus People Movement.

And you see these all over. India had that Northern India. You see the explosion of Christianity in Africa, in the post-colonial environment there.

I mean, it was just popping all over the place and asking those outcome based questions, which seemed perfectly logical to us and seemed to bring discipline to the field, actually caused a lot of blow back and led to other work needing to be done through the [Lausanne Movement](#) and other places, still going on, which is actually featured in the book, in which we talk about [the communion of giving and receiving](#).

The answer we came up with was we gotta talk better to each other. We've gotta connect to each other. We have to have a communion where there is no over dog and underdog.

That was the change that we had to bring about, or at least the change we needed to see. Again, we didn't know how to get there. This was 20 years ago, 25 years ago that we were struggling in that.

Fred: But Rob, there's something that you worked on that I think was very important. I remember a trip, I think it was Rwanda.

And I visited a ministry and he had a long table and there were like, eight stacks of paper on the table. And I said, "What is all that paperwork?"

And he said, "Every foundation has a different set of questions. And they all want us to answer their particular questions. And there's no common form. There's no common language. And all of these funders are entrepreneurs and they want their money to be treated individually."

And I thought, "He probably spends 60% of his time just filling out forms because there was no common language."

But hadn't you worked on a project to come up with some sort of common language and common form?

Rob: Yeah, that came about in the preparation for the Lausanne meetings in Cape Town, and something that was called the Resource Mobilization Network.

And part of that was to create some sort of standards out there that we could look at and that had enough cross-cultural pull to them that you could look at

it from your perspective and see something authentic in it that could bring you to this place of where we all should be, which is in a communion with each other. All equals, no matter.

And it's at that point where you have to, if you're engaged in the giving of money and listening to this, you have to understand that the small gift, in God's mind, is as important as yours.

If you don't understand that, if you think in terms of dollars and ROI, then you're not thinking kingdom, because the most celebrated donor in all of history is a widow with two pennies, giving to an institution that did not need her two pennies. It didn't.

And we don't see in that scene, of Jesus showing his disciples that woman's sacrifice, we don't see Him running up to her and going, "Now, dear, this is really cool that you wanna put this money in here. You are a disciple of God because you're doing this, but keep it, you need it more than they do."

He didn't do that. He honored her giving and we need to, too, the small and the large.

That was another part of dealing with this, because most of the grants we were able to make back in the 90s and the 80s, particularly in the early 90s, had to be small. They were very difficult.

We called it the Success Paradox, because it was harder to make a small grant in the field than a large grant at home.

And so the travel was our first way of trying to bust it. Then the field started developing what you might wanna call ambassadors.

People that were able to rise above their own needs and give us a picture of their whole needs. Guys like Richard Howl in India and others like that, began to mentor us and feel comfortable enough to correct us.

That was very important. That was the big breakthrough, when they realized we could listen. And if we didn't, they would tell us to. They started to take

their own space. And so that work continues. And then it's a bit in the localization model.

So yeah, we tried to bring the standards in. It's helped a lot. The book is being used extensively now through the National Association of Evangelicals in various countries, 150 countries, it's now an opening textbook for their leadership people to get them thinking about how to do fundraising in their setting, how to be localized, how to be able to serve their churches and also be a credible international receiver of money, because most national associations can get international gifts. It's a good way to get leverage with your giving.



Missions Philanthropy in the Future: A Theological Foundation is Needed

Okay, so that kind of brings us up in our work. Now, here we are at the end of our careers.

And when you look at out, as if it were when you were starting in this career, what are the things you see that you think our field, our work, missions philanthropy, missions fundraising, what are the things that you see in the future that you don't quite know how we're gonna get there, but you know we have to get there?

What's on your mind when you think about that?

Fred: Well, I'll tell you what's on my mind by expressing one of my concerns. So much of evangelical philanthropy was driven, as Tom said, by proclamation theology and Matthew 25, "And then the end will come."

And so it was all about getting as many people inside as possible, but not caring much about what happened to them in the interim.

And then we, gradually, or maybe radically, swung to the other side, which was social justice, and and feeding, and sex trafficking, and all those issues that rightfully are within the gospel message.

And now, what I sense is there's a move toward even not away from that, but younger people saying, "Well, even social justice isn't enough. We really need to move towards systemic reform, because of the disparities between the wealth of the few and the poverty of the many."

And so my concern is, there was an enormous theological foundation for proclamation theology and funding proclamation.

You could point, I mean, Dallas Seminary probably provided a great theology to base that on.

My concern is, what's the theology that this next generation will turn to support systemic change? And so when they grow weary of the work, what will they fall back on? Or will they be disillusioned by not being able to make those great systemic changes?

There was so much in the early missions about not growing weary in well-doing and discouragement. But there was a theology to support you.

I don't know what the theology is to support this next generation of donors, but maybe I'm overreacting. I would like to see a theology for the changes that are being made. An adequate theology.

Rob: A theology of money? Are you talking about a theology of money at working missions, or something more?

Fred: I think it's more.

Tom: It's more.

Fred: I think people are moving away from "just missions", defined in a certain way and moving toward "We've got to reform the world. We've got to change the systems of economics that actually put people into poverty."

And so, one of the ironies is, a number of the people who are most responsible for some of the inequities are now focused on solving the inequities.

Jamie Diamond just sent out a letter to all the JP Morgan people saying, "The biggest problem in the world today is inequity."

And I'm thinking, "Well, who's had one of the biggest hands in creating an equity other than the investment banks?"

So where's the theology for that? Where's the theology for system change? Is that too vague?

Rob: No, I think it says that it's that the leadership is swinging to the local and that they're going to create the atmosphere.

I always think vision starts with the mission, not with the donor. The donor's reacting like an investor to the ideas of the missionary and of the mission organization.

And so the more articulate that the field is about what they're doing and why they're doing it, and that happens to be where I'm concentrating the last year

of my work, is helping them be articulate about what God is showing them and how to tell us. They need to lead us through this.

I'm with you in that same confusion. I have a great deal of hope about the future, because I look at this millennial generation, which I have three children in, and I like the way they do church. I like the way they think about social action. I like the way they love Jesus.

And at the same time wanna be a vigorous, muscular evangelical that does something, and not just talks about what they do. I'm quite hopeful.

I'm just wondering how all of that's gonna connect. But we need leadership from the field. That's the thing I see.

And Tom, we're gonna be wrapping up this in just a minute, but I want your thoughts on this as well.

Tom: Okay, I don't think it's missions that leads us. I think it's the local church.

That's what God created. Missions is a para-church function, for the most part. It can be a local. So I do think the big issue, in my opinion, is the growth of the local church, its strength and its purity.

And then going back to something that Fred said, we've moved from proclamation evangelism to demonstration evangelism.

And when we teach the local church what it is and why you do what you do, I think the theology sometimes is really pretty good, but the young people, I can tell you that when you get into the millennial in the US they can hear, but they don't understand what they do, because of what they hear.

And that has got to change. So I go back to, I'm really interested in what the local church looks like and how it works.

I'm interested that the local church takes leadership, which means money for the organizations within their own country, and helps provide that. We need to see ourselves as servants.

And Rob, one of the things you did years ago that has really been wonderful in my thing is, how do we get treasure in heaven? Jesus says if you lay up treasure.

And sometimes we think we have to control how we use that money to lay up treasure, but you've just given the widow's mite. And the treasurer is in the giving, and in giving to that which God's all of.

So I think we've got to move to a strong church, to strong organizations within countries, to keeping our hands off the controls of how those monies are used overseas.



Closing Thoughts

Rob: Well, unfortunately we've come to the end of our time. But I feel like we could do another whole podcast.

And I may ask you guys to come back and let's go a little further and talk about what actually, how philanthropy is changing with localization taking leadership.

What does that actually change? And how should our field here come alongside that and understand it?

In any case, I thank you guys so much. It's been so much fun working with you all these years. And we'll figure out a way to make trouble still, even if it's three guys on a bench, poking fun at whoever walks by, but.

Fred: I welcome it.

Tom: Me, too, I do, too.

Rob: Hey, at my age, it's about all the energy I have left.

Okay, this has been the podcast of When Money Goes on Mission: Fundraising and Giving in the 21st Century.

I'm Rob Martin. This has been Fred Smith and Tom McCallie. Thank you for listening. Thank you, guys.

Tom: Thank you.

Fred: Thank you, Rob.