It is no great mystery that Hollywood elites are decidedly left leaning in their politics. Occasionally, conservative films are made. However, in general the bent is more toward socialism or even outright Marxism, as opposed to capitalism.

“peddling anti-capitalist propaganda to kids.”2 Rarely do you find a film touting the benefits of a free-market society. Instead, we seem to live in a culture that loves to denigrate the ideals and values from which it has benefitted so much.

In recent years, the most difficult time for investment banking and the financial markets was the housing collapse of 2007-2008. The big banks were touted as being the incarnation of evil on earth. Politicians running for President and every other office routinely ranted against the banks in speech after speech. Echoes of that still exist in this election year.

As a senior executive at one of these institutions, I knew my company’s corporate culture as well as that of the industry in general. Much of what was said in political discourse about the strictly greedy and sinister motivations of my co-workers was flatly wrong. Some abuses existed to be sure, just as assuredly we live in a fallen world. By and large the pre-

Corporate matching gift programs are a largely untapped resource by many ministries.

Which leads me to the reason for writing this missive. Corporate America has an untapped giant awaiting many believers that is birthed out of a desire to progress society forward. This giant is the genius of the corporate matching gift.

Some 65% of Fortune 500 companies match donations from their employees to a wide variety of charitable organizations.3 Millions of dollars are available and often left untouched in these corporate gift-matching programs. Companies, small and big, often have programs to match the donations made by employees to the

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charities of the workers’ own choosing. Some firms offer $0.25 for every $1 donated; others $0.50 on the $1; still others fully match each contribution made to registered 501(c)(3) non-profits up to some predetermined limit during the year. The firm I worked for would match dollar for dollar up to $5,000. This means that if I had given $5,000 to Greenwood Hills Camp and Conference Center or to Christian Missions in Many Lands, as examples, my firm would have added another $5,000 to my donation.

Some firms even go well beyond the $1 for $1 match. Exxon Mobil, the so-called “evil and greedy oil company”, matches $3 for every $1 its employees contribute to the charity of their choice. Johnson & Johnson has a $2 for $1 match.4

In addition, many firms allow employees to apply for special grants to the charity of interest that go above and beyond any contributions made.

Some may wonder if this might go against the admonition of 3 John 1:7 of “taking nothing from the Gentiles.” I do not believe so. Corporate matches are part of the employee benefits provided to you for working at a given firm. It is a perk you receive as an employee for staying with your particular employer.

I believe an analogy exists in Scripture

4 https://doublethedonation.com/matching-grant-resources/list-matching-gifts-companies/

in the lives of both Nehemiah and Ezra. Look at the “support” provided by the Persian rulers to the efforts of these men to restore the Jews to the Land and to rebuild Jerusalem and its Holy Temple. Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes all provided financial support for these “charitable” efforts…these works of the Lord.

Nehemiah petitioned his employer, King Artaxerxes, to provide support for the effort to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem and received it:

“Furthermore I said to the king, ‘If it pleases the king, let letters be given to me for the governors of the region beyond the River, that they must permit me to pass through till I come to Judah, and a letter to Asaph the keeper of the king’s forest, that he must give me timber to make beams for the gates of the citadel which pertains to the temple, for the city wall, and for the house that I will occupy.’ And the king granted them to me according to the good hand of my God upon me.’” – Nehemiah 2:7-8

In Ezra 1, we see King Cyrus both encouraging and providing financial support for the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem:

“Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: All the kingdoms of the earth the Lord God of heaven has given me. And He has commanded me to build Him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is among you of all His people? May his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel (He is God), which is in Jerusalem. And whoever is left in any place where he dwells, let the men of his place help him with silver and gold, with goods and livestock, besides the freewill offerings for the house of God, which is in Jerusalem.” – Ezra 1:2-4

Quotable...“Corporate America has an untapped giant awaiting many believers that is birthed out of a desire to progress society forward.”

So allow me to challenge you to look into your employer’s corporate matching gift programs. Think of how the additional support generated could be of help to ministries that serve local church fellowships or whatever works that the Lord has laid on your heart. Don’t leave the untapped giant alone! □
Ministry Spotlight: Everyday Publications

By Mark Beach

Everyday Publications, Inc. (EPI) exists to feed the Lord’s sheep around the world by producing high-quality, affordable Bible Study materials that are both doctrinally sound and yet easy-to-read.

What led EPI into the “sheep food” ministry? In 1964, the Lord showed Dr. R.E. Harlow (co-founder of both Emmaus Bible College and Emmaus Correspondence School) and his wife Gertrud a great need that existed among the peoples of Africa and other developing nations. That need was for Christian literature, particularly books about the Bible and Christian doctrine, that were easily understandable by all, especially those of limited educational background and/or those who spoke and read English as a second or third language.

How is EPI able to produce quality “sheep food”? Dr. Harlow adopted a method of writing called “Everyday English”, which is based, not so much on limited vocabulary, as on the concept of short, uncluttered sentences. His first book written in Everyday English was a small commentary on the book of Genesis called Start of the Race. Gertrud at once translated it into the Congo Swahili language. From that single title the work grew to include a complete set of commentaries on the entire Bible (most as separate volumes) in Everyday English as well as more than 250 titles in Standard English, Chinese, Spanish, Portuguese, French, and Swahili.

How does EPI get the “sheep food” from the barn to the manger? EPI books are made available to individual believers, commended workers, prison ministries, and assemblies in North America and Europe at the deepest possible discount. Assembly-commended missionaries and national commended workers ministering in developing countries are supplied books at no charge including shipping. Untold thousands of books have gone out under this policy with not a single request being denied for lack of funds.

How is the “sheep food” paid for? Book sales account for a very small percentage of the operating expenses. The remainder is received in answer to prayer; from the beginning of the ministry, it has always been the policy not to make public solicitation for funds. Faithful prayer partners are exercised by the Lord to send a gift of financial support or to inquire about current or upcoming projects they could fund, in whole or in part.

How can you learn more about this ministry? You can visit www.everydaypublications.org or type the words “Everyday Publications” in Facebook.

You can also subscribe to the ministry’s channel on YouTube. The newest video is “Feed My Sheep: EPI’s Story”. You can also subscribe to the bi-monthly prayer guide or the quarterly newsletter. For specific questions about EPI please feel free to contact Executive Director, Mark Beach, at (905) 834-5552 or by email at: markdbeach@everydaypublications.org.

Quotable...

“In 1964, the Lord showed Dr. R.E. Harlow and his wife Gertrud a great need that existed...”

Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep.” John 21:17b
Mission... Believers Stewardship Services is a ministry designed to glorify God by helping Christians accomplish their financial and estate planning goals in fulfilling biblical stewardship.

www.bssmatters.org

A Final Thought on Your Tax Return

By Emily Vargas

It may not be too late to lower your 2015 tax bill!

December 31st came and went; April 15th is coming quickly. If you suddenly realize your 2015 reportable income is more than you expected, you may be looking for additional tax deductions and credits to lower your tax bill. Below are a couple options you could discuss with your tax advisor:

1. Contribute to a Health Savings Account before April 15th. You and your employer can contribute up to $3,350 (single) or $6,650 (family) to a Health Savings Account if you have a High-Deductible Health Plan (that is, a plan with a deductible over $1,300 for self-only coverage or $2,600 for family coverage). If you are over 55, you can contribute an additional $1,000! The amount you contribute is deductible, meaning your taxable income will be lower. In addition, your contributions grow tax free and provide savings for medical expenses you may incur in the coming years.

2. Contribute to your retirement before April 15th or October 15th (if self-employed). If you are under 70 ½ and have earned income, you can contribute to a Traditional IRA, which may provide a deduction of up to $6,500. This contribution not only lowers your taxable income but also helps build resources for retirement. Amazingly, if your gross income is lower than approximately $30K (single) or $61K (married), you may also be able to receive a credit (money that goes directly against your tax bill) of up to $1,000 (single) or $2,000 (married) for contributions to a Roth IRA, Traditional IRA, 401(k), SEP, SIMPLE, etc.

May you and your tax advisor make wise choices as you minimize your tax bill and maximize your stewardship!