

# **Retreat offers biblical stewardship education**

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HOUSTON—Texas Baptists offered pastors and other church leaders reminders about biblical stewardship, including education in personal and church budgeting, at a one-day Giving Your Money Purpose retreat at Houston Baptist University.

The event, one in a series sponsored by the Baptist General Convention of Texas Center for Ministerial Excellence, was designed to encourage ministers and provide strategies to allay the financial pressures pastors and their families often experience.

The initiative is made possible by the Lilly Endowment, which aims to improve the financial literacy and management skills of pastoral leaders, as well as help develop and strengthen each pastor's ability to provide fiscal leadership and bolster church members' knowledge of scriptural giving principles.

## **Provide for the shepherds**

Many pastors lack adequate pay, not to mention benefits like insurance and retirement plans, said Tammy Tijerina, director of the Center for Ministerial Excellence.

"We're trying to remind people to not neglect pastors and their families. We want them to be financially supported," she said. "It's God's plan that the pastors—shepherds—are provided for. Pastors across the nation are facing economic challenges. We are saying: 'We hear you. Let's work together so that Baptist churches are there in the future.'"

Ward Hayes, senior pastor of Valley Grove Baptist Church in Stephenville, who presented workshops at the retreat with Larry Post, a certified public accountant and deacon at Sugar Land Baptist Church, emphasized the significance of talking about financial issues in the church.

“It’s not just about managing funds, but about giving them purpose and making them a strength,” Hayes said.

## **Presented from a biblical basis**

Workshop topics included tithing, savings, Sabbath rest, budgeting, and formulating individual and church resources plans.

“There is disparate financial information out there,” Post said. “We are presenting it from a biblical perspective. There is a biblical basis, and God has a plan.”

That biblical emphasis prompted Joe Theus, pastor of Canaan Missionary First Baptist Church in San Antonio, to make the trip to Houston.

“We came to refocus and get back to the basic principles of church stewardship and discipleship. We want to align ourselves biblically,” he said. “For me, it’s confirmation that we’re going in the right direction.”

## **‘Help the pastor ... help the church’**

Theus emphasized his congregation will benefit from his involvement.

“If you help the pastor, you’re going to help the church,” he said.

Graceland Community Church Pastor Rivers Glover likewise said his Missouri City congregation will benefit from the material presented at the retreat.

“It’s something that our church needs retraining on—the things that God has made us accountable for,” he said. “I think the main thing I’ve gotten out of it is wherever you are, be all there. Give God all.”

Additional Giving Your Money Purpose retreats are scheduled May 19 in Plainview, June 2 in San Antonio and Sept. 8 in El Paso. For more information, click [here](#).