

Stewardship

by Patch Blakey

Jesus told many parables about wise and faithful stewards, and enjoined us to be good stewards. A steward is a person who manages another's property, business, home or financial affairs. The steward is accountable to the owner for ensuring that the owner's possessions are being adequately maintained and managed. The Apostle Paul said, "Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" (1 Cor. 4:2). ACCS wants to be both a faithful steward of all it has entrusted to it as well as being a good example to others.

This past year, ACCS joined the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA). ACCS has been actively contemplating this action for some time, but has needed to do the necessary "leg work" to be able to meet the high standards of financial accountability required to join this organization. As Dan Busby, president of ECFA, says, "ECFA's members must pass all of the Standards all of the time. Noncompliance with even one of the Standards disqualifies an organization from ECFA membership."

Why did ACCS even consider joining ECFA? In his second epistle to the church in Corinth, the Apostle Paul wrote, "For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise" (2 Cor. 10:12).

Paul stated that we are not to make ourselves the standard for our own conduct. Just as ACCS provides accountability

to member schools through accreditation, ACCS thought that it was important enough as an organization to have itself held accountable for its financial activity. While the ACCS bylaws have always required that ACCS receive an annual financial review, it seemed to be of further advantage to our membership to be held accountable by a well-known Christian financial organization independent from ACCS. ECFA met that need.



ECFA is one of the nation's largest nonprofit financial accountability agencies. Its membership represents more than \$18 billion in annual revenue. Because of the organization's commitment to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the authority of the Scriptures, they have a strong reputation for integrity, accountability, and transparency. As it says in Proverbs, "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed" (Prov. 13:10). ACCS wants to be associated with such men of wisdom as represented by ECFA.

As a further introduction to ECFA, we have included an article by Dan Busby, president of ECFA, on avoiding common fund-

raising mistakes. Other articles and additional information on joining ECFA are available on the ECFA website at www.ECFA.org.

ACCS is aware that funding the operation of a school is a topic of high interest among the ACCS membership, and development is a central aspect of this important subject. As a consequence, we are also pleased in this issue of *Classis* to include articles from men who have answered the call to be good stewards through their roles and extensive experience, past and present, at ACCS schools in the area of development and stewardship. In addition, this issue includes a research primer on the stewardship literature base extant by a professor of stewardship. Finally, there is a stimulating book review of a small but valuable book on raising Kingdom resources.

I hope classical Christian schools find this issue helpful in both a philosophical as well as practical fashion. Because of the significant value (no pun intended!) of this subject, ACCS hopes to have much more to publish on this topic in future issues of *Classis*.

Patch Blakey is the ACCS executive director.