

# Holy Currencies

May 29, 2014  
Keynote Address



*Praise God from whom all blessings flow  
Circling through earth so all may grow  
Vanquishing fear so all may give  
Widening grace so all may live*

## Six Currencies for a Sustainable Ministry

***Currency of Time and Place:*** Paid and volunteer time that leaders/members offer to the church/ministry. Properties from which a church/ministry operates, and other properties owned or which can be accessed by the church/ministry.

***Currency of Gracious Leadership:*** The ability to use skills, tools, models and processes to create gracious environments (Grace Margin) within which mutually respectful “relationships” and the discernment of the “truth” across differences can be built internally, among existing members, and externally, with non-members. Differences can be racial/ethnic, age, gender, sexual orientation, class, political affiliation or just church members and folks in the neighborhood.

***Currency of Relationship:*** Internal and external networks of mutually respectful connections that leaders/members of a church/ministry have. Internal connections include constructive relationships among members/leaders, area churches/ministries of the same affiliation, area denominational organizations and national and international denominational structures. External connections include constructive relationships with non-members, different racial/cultural/ethnic groups in the neighborhood, people with resources and people in need in the community, civic community leaders, ecumenical/interfaith partners, community and civic organizations, and local businesses.

***Currency of Truth:*** The ability to articulate individually and corporately the global/wholistic truth, both internally—the experiences of different individuals and groups within the church/ministry—and externally—the experiences of different individuals and groups in the community, the neighborhood, the city or town, the nation, and the earth.

***Currency of Wellness:*** The state of being healthy physically, socially, economically, ecologically and spiritually within a church/ministry, the neighborhood, the town/city, nation or the earth, especially as the result of deliberate effort. Sustainable wellness requires regenerative and recirculatory flow of material, human, financial and natural resources.

***Currency of Money:*** Something generally accepted as a medium of exchange, a measure of value, or as a means of payment.

## Ways to Embrace the Cycle of Blessings

1. *Personal Spirituality*—As a leader, apply the Cycle of Blessings to your life and ministry. Do the “Time Inventory” exercise and explore how you have apportioned your time for the different currencies. Which currencies do you have and value, and which currencies are you lacking and in need of development? How would you adjust your thinking and what would you do in order to develop these currencies? Create a personal action plan based on this reflection.
2. *Congregation Vitality Assessment*—Working with leaders of your church, discern which currencies are your strengths and which are your weaknesses. Do we have a balance of internal and external movements in relationship, truth, wellness and leadership? What would you do and how would you adjust your thinking in order to develop those currencies in which you are lacking? Create a six-month action plan based on this exploration.
3. *Assessment of the Flow of Resources in the Wider Community*—Using the Cycle of Blessings, you can analyze how resources are circulating in the wider community. What are the signs of blessing flowing through your community? How can you help people in your community to acknowledge and celebrate these blessings? Where do the currencies become stagnated? How can your church take part in unclogging the blockage? How can you mobilize the currencies that your church has to restore the healthy circulation of resources? How can your church be a place where blessings flow in and out rejuvenating the wider community?
4. *Change the Way Your Church Values Currencies*—Working with leaders of your church, review the various ways to value the various Holy Currencies. Explore which of these suggestions can be implemented to help members of your community to recognize and affirm the flowing of these currencies toward blessings internally for church members and externally for the wider community.
5. *Redesign Worship*—You can use the Cycle of Blessings to design a liturgy. Worship begins with people taking their time to come a place. How do you use gracious leadership to enable worshipers to build stronger relationship? How does the liturgy enable participants to speak and listen to the truth through sermon, music, prayers, and other kinds of presentations? Where in the liturgy does it foster spiritual wellness? If your worship indeed provides relationship, truth and wellness, worshipers will be happy to contribute money and time to support the ministry of the church, which in part will enhance the leadership capability and maintenance and improvement of properties of your church.

6. *Redesign Gatherings* – Keeping the Cycle of Blessings in mind, we can redesign an annual conference, convention, synod, assembly, or local and regional gatherings, making sure that all six currencies are flowing. Again, we start with a time and a place for these gatherings. What part of the agenda builds relationships, speaks the truth, fosters wellness, increases gracious leadership, and strengthens financial stewardship? Decide how these differently focused agenda items should flow and create an overall agenda.
7. *Re-Envision an Existing Ministry*—You can use the Cycle of Blessings to analyze an existing ministry and see what you need to do to make it sustainable and missional. Sometimes, it is just a readjustment of the way people think about that ministry that will transform it. Because the currencies of relationship, truth and wellness are often lacking in many ministries, re-designing a ministry based on the exploration on how to develop these currencies will create a more complete Cycle of Blessings, which will make the ministry missional and sustainable.
8. *Incubate a New Ministry* – To create a new ministry, you can start anywhere in the Cycle of Blessings and imagine how each of the currencies can flow and rejuvenate each other. At the end of the reflection, ask: What is God calling you to do? Create a ministry plan that will incorporate all the currencies of the Cycle of Blessings:
  - a. Name the truth you are seeking and the wellness you are fostering in this new ministry;
  - b. Construct a relational network that supports this ministry;
  - c. Establish a place and time in which this ministry will take place;
  - d. Create a wellness plan for people involved;
  - e. Develop a leadership-training process to empower people for this ministry;
  - f. Find initial investors to give money, time and talent to launch this ministry;
  - g. Formulate a financial plan for ongoing financial sustainability, perhaps using GracEconomics; and
  - h. Project a timeframe when this ministry will be self-sustaining.