

# The Dark Side of Megachurch Money: When Fundraising Replaces the Gospel

A growing conversation within the church today revolves around a simple but difficult question: Should megachurch pastors make money from ministry, and at what cost?

In a recent discussion on the Shawn Ryan Show, filmmaker Nathan Apffel wrestled with the tension between the biblical call to discipleship and the modern reality of running churches as institutions.

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On the surface, many agree that it is not wrong for pastors or ministers to be compensated. After all, buildings require maintenance, technology needs to be managed and congregations expect basic comforts like air conditioning, child care and security. "I don't think it's a bad thing," Ryan said. "I think it is a good thing that people congregate together in the name [of Christ]. People want to be comfortable when they worship."

However, underneath these practical needs lies a deeper concern for Apffel. According to his perspective, no matter how well-intentioned a pastor begins, the financial pressures of sustaining a church often reshape the message being preached.

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A new pastor, full of zeal to point people to Christ quickly discovers the cost of running even a modest congregation. With monthly expenses easily reaching six figures, the pressure to secure funding grows. Tithing sermons become a regular necessity. "One out of eight weeks, your message is on tithing," Apffel explained. "As the budget grows, suddenly it's two out of eight weeks. Then three, with fundraising appeals added at the end."

The cycle intensifies as churches compete for members, often upgrading facilities to match or surpass neighboring congregations. What starts as preaching the gospel slowly tilts toward sustaining the institution. "Every pastor that plays in that game dies to the game," Apffel concluded.

This critique does not dismiss the need for resources, nor does it deny the good that comes from community gathering spaces. Yet the core question remains whether churches are continuing to focus on the main thing: Jesus Christ.

"Christ said to pick up your cross and follow me and make disciples of men," Apffel emphasized. "He did not say to build buildings. And I'm not saying that's necessarily bad, but everything you just described is just men building things."

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From this perspective, true ministry begins at home – raising children in Christ-centered values, discipling within families and living out faith in everyday community. The biblical model of church, above all, is believers connected in authentic relationships.

Ultimately, the challenge for pastors and congregations alike is whether resources can be used without being ruled by them –

whether the message of Christ can remain central amid the weight of institutional demands.

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## **Life on Mars? NASA Makes Incredible Discovery**

Do we have evidence now for life on Mars?

According to the New York Post, after years of doing research, NASA's Perseverance rover has discovered the "strongest evidence yet of Martian life," finding polka-dotted rocks.

As the New York Post discussed, these "building rocks" were found inside of the Neretva Vallis, which is an river valley on Mars. It is believed that this area contained water into the Jezero Crater which could have held signs of life.

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The report further noted that the red, clay mudstones collected contain carbon molecules which are essential pieces for life. The stones also had green-colored dots which are being called poppy seeds and leopard spots. It is also plausible that these dots had iron phosphate and iron sulfide,

which occur when microorganisms consume organic material.

The lead study author of this investigation, Joel Hurowitz, noted that “The sample contains what we believe to be a potential . Microbes will eat the organic matter and react it with the mud, and the by-product of that reaction is these minerals.”

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As Christians, we can marvel at the wonders of God’s creation and the vastness of the universe, no matter what kind of discovery is or is not made. Whether or not signs of life are ever confirmed on Mars, the gospel remains unshaken and central to our faith. The discoveries of science may expand our understanding of creation, but they should never shift our hope away from the Creator Himself.

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In a world fascinated by the possibility of extraterrestrial life, believers are called to keep their focus anchored in Christ, proclaiming the good news that eternal life is found not in the stars, but in the One who made them.

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# Darkness in Denver: Is There a Principality Over Colorado?

As we continue to see more crimes take place in Colorado, including another horrific school shooting at Evergreen High School in the greater Denver area, this raises a spiritual question: Are there dark principalities overtaking this location?

Evergreen High School is the latest school to endure a shooting, with one student still in critical condition and the suspect to have died after turning the gun on himself. According to the Associated Press, the suspected gunman was a 16-year-old boy named Desmond Holly who had “been radicalized” from an “extremist network.” ABC News noted how officials also said that he had a “mission.” Unfortunately, this is not the first incident of this kind in the Denver area.

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Back in 1999, in Littleton, the historic and horrifying mass shooting took place at Columbine High School. This shooting dramatically changed the landscape of safety for schools and the way police respond to these types of scenarios. Unfortunately, this was only the beginning of these types of events.

As CNN noted, 12 people died and 70 more were injured in an Aurora movie theater back in 2012 during a showing of “The

Dark Knight Rises,” and another school shooting took place at the STEM School Highlands Ranch in 2019 only a few miles from Columbine High School. Five law enforcement officers also were shot in an apartment complex in Highlands Ranch, which is also in the greater Denver area.

With this number of shootings taking place in the area over the last 25 years, it can be wondered if there is something darker happening over the Denver area. Perhaps even a territorial spirit.

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Ephesians 6:12 reminds us that “...our fight is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, and against spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.” There are real demonic powers that take control over an area, having their dominion and influence over places and people. This is why it is critical that we put on the full armor of God through prayer and submission to the Lord.

What’s happening in Denver, while potentially part of a territorial principality’s stronghold, is not limited just to Denver alone. There is a real spirit of murder that we see permeating in the wider spaces of the world around us. Within just a short time span we have seen young Catholic children shot at while praying, the horrific stabbing of Iryna Zarutska, the assassination of Charlie Kirk and yet again this latest Denver area school shooting. Satan really does come to steal, kill and destroy while Christ came to give us life and life more abundantly.

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While these things are happening all around us, it is a

reminder for us as Christians that we need to faithfully walk beside the Lord at all times, not giving into the pressures of the world around us, but drawing close to the Word and the presence of God.

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## **Remembering Charlie Kirk: The Powerful Lasting Marks of His Faith in Christ**

In the wake of the shocking and devastating assassination of Charlie Kirk at Utah Valley University, Kirk's fame around the world has only escalated as a man who wanted to share truth, conservatism and the gospel of Jesus Christ to those around him. It was his faith, however, that he wanted to be remembered the most for.

In a previous interview on the Iced Coffee Hour podcast with Jack Selby, Kirk was asked, "How do you want to be remembered?"

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"You mean if I die?" asked Kirk.

Selby clarified, "If you could be associated with one thing, how would you want to be remembered?"

"I want to be remembered for courage for my faith," Kirk said. "That would be the most important thing. The most important thing is my faith."

And indeed, Kirk will be remembered for his unashamed courage and boldness for Christianity. As Fox News noted, days prior to his death he wrote on X, "Jesus defeated death so you can live."

The outlet also discussed how Kirk described his faith in a conversation with Russell Brand last year. "I'm a sinner. I fall incredibly short of the glory of God. We all do. I gave my life to the Lord in fifth grade, and it's the most important decision I've ever made and everything I do incorporates Jesus Christ."

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Previously on the George Janko Show, Kirk also gave his testimony of coming to Christ as a child and realizing that the eternal stakes are much higher than what we tend to teach people.

"The modern gospel is, 'God has this beautiful, amazing wonderful life for you, and if you give your life to Christ your life will infinitely improve.' That is somewhat true, but it's very misleading because you're basically trying to sell people on Christianity of a life without difficulty..." said Kirk.

*@thegeorgejankoshow How @The Charlie Kirk Show found and accepted Jesus Christ ☐☐ #charliekirk #jesuschrist #jesussaves #christians #georgejankoshow 🎵 original sound – The George Janko Show*

Kirk also saw that there was a need to be a light in a dark place. Podcaster Chad Prather shared a clip where Kirk described how the political and spiritual divide would only continue to grow in America. Prather captioned the video: “Charlie Kirk was being prophetic. I’m sad that he was correct.”

“They are going to be violent. You will not be able to walk the streets [with] a MAGA hat without your physical health be put in jeopardy,” Kirk said.

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Charlie Kirk’s life was cut tragically short, yet his message continues to echo with eternal weight. More than his influence in politics or culture, he will be remembered as a man who stood boldly for his faith in Jesus Christ. His courage, conviction and testimony now serve as a reminder that true legacy is not measured by earthly success, but by an unwavering devotion to the One who conquered death and gives eternal life.

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# Trump Remembers 9/11 Victims, Says America Shares 'One Glorious Destiny Under Almighty God'

When Jonathan Cahn reflects on the journey that led to his groundbreaking book *The Harbinger*, he doesn't describe a typical writing process—he describes divine orchestration.

Standing at Ground Zero years after the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, Cahn recalls a moment that would ignite a prophetic mission. "I was standing at the corner of Ground Zero and I see a tree that had been struck down, and something says, 'There's a mystery here. You have to seek this out,'" he recalls. That tree became the first key in a puzzle that would guide him through a time of research and revelation.

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Ground Zero also holds significant importance to Cahn because the woman who would later become his wife had plans to be at the World Trade Center that morning but changed them at the last minute—saving her life. Several others from his congregation had been inside the towers that day and narrowly escaped.

After his profound moment of reflection and revelation at Ground Zero, Cahn began writing *The Harbinger*. “Every time I sat down, it was like a half chapter would write itself,” he says. Insights, connections, and story elements appeared at the precise moment they were needed—sometimes through conversations, sometimes through unexpected discoveries on his computer. Each revelation felt like God leading him, step by step, to tell a story that would resonate deeply with readers.

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Cahn is now releasing his latest work, *The Avatar*, which continues this prophetic trajectory. It examines the influence of ancient spiritual forces on contemporary culture and politics, exploring patterns and principles that have been active since biblical times. Like his previous works, *The Avatar* combines history, prophecy, and personal insight to help readers understand not just what is happening in the world, but why.

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Through it all, the thread is clear: Jonathan Cahn’s writing is less about human planning and more about being a vessel for divine insight. From his congregants’ narrow escapes on 9/11 to a single tree at Ground Zero, and from his first book to his latest release, Cahn demonstrates how obedience, discernment and attentiveness to God can transform vision into reality—leaving readers with a profound sense of God’s sovereignty and a call to recognize His hand in the world around them.

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## **Pray: At Least 3 Shot in Colorado School Shooting**

At least three students were wounded in a shooting today near Denver, Colorado.

The shooting took place at Evergreen High School, located 28 miles outside of Denver. As CBS News reported, St. Anthony's Hospital noted that three students were undergoing active treatment.

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"We've received three victims, all minors from Evergreen High School. They are currently being actively treated at St. Anthony Hospital," CommonSpirit St. Anthony Hospital CEO Kevin Cullinan said. "We are a level-one trauma center and prepared for situations like this. Each of the victims that we have sustained gunshot wounds. They are all, all three victims are all either in the emergency department or operating rooms at this time."

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During a press conference, Public Information Officer for Jefferson County Sheriff's Office Jacki Kelley said, "We're not certain how many shooters we have or where that shooter might be."

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As CBS noted, a reunification center for families is to be opened at the Bergen Meadow Elementary School.

Pray for the students who were wounded in this horrific event.

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## **Dinesh D'Souza Exposes Media Bias After Death of Iryna Zarutska**

A prophetic dream received by Alwyn Uys is raising questions about South Africa's political and spiritual trajectory. The dream, which he described as vivid but brief, depicted a dramatic vision of the nation in crisis, with imagery

suggesting both destruction and divine intervention.

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From a bird's-eye perspective, Uys saw South Africa engulfed by a massive flood, with water sweeping from the northern reaches of the country down to the ocean in the south. The continent itself appeared to split, with South Africa highlighted in particular. Buildings, homes and vehicles were submerged, leaving a striking image of total devastation. Amid the chaos, a native African man appeared crossing a river with his possessions, aided by others—a symbol of resilience and communal support.

Uys interpreted the flooding as a symbol of transformation and cleansing. "A flood is something that brings transformation. It's something that brings cleansing," he explained, emphasizing that the sudden, violent nature of the event reflects the urgency of God's intervention. The vision was framed not as a prediction of despair, but as a call for restoration and unity in a nation described as "on the knife's edge" politically.

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***To pre-order Alwyn Uys' new book, Speak, Lord, visit .***

Uys further suggested that similar transformative events could be imminent, stating that history may repeat itself with a sign confirming God's involvement. The emphasis was on the need for national unity: "A nation divided will not stand," Uys said. Only by working together, he suggested, can the country overcome political divisions and fulfill its potential.

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As South Africa continues to navigate political tensions and social unrest, prophetic voices like Uys offer a lens through which believers interpret current events, combining historical awareness with spiritual insight. The dream concludes with a reminder that while upheaval may come, divine guidance can steer the nation toward renewal and reconciliation.

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