

Creflo Dollar Makes Surprise Donations

✖ An Atlanta-area pastor known for his teaching on financial prosperity has been giving money away to deserving nonprofit organizations in hopes of sparking a “change” that starts with individuals and eventually touches the globe.

Since February, Creflo Dollar has taken his Change Experience tour to five cities, giving away \$10,000 in each location to a ministry making a difference in its community. During a tour event Friday in Denver, the pastor of 30,000-member World Changers Church International gave an unexpected \$10,000 donation to The Gathering Place, the city’s only daytime drop-in center for poor and homeless women and children.

“God has called us to be agents of change,” Dollar said in a statement. “That is why we are so intentional about making sure we do what we can to help our brothers and sisters. It is so important to use the resources that God has blessed us with to be a blessing to others.”

A spokesman for The Gathering Place said the gift was completely unexpected. “We got a call on Wednesday [July 15]. ... We had no idea what the call was for,” said Denny Thompson, public relations director for the Denver ministry. “They said they had a substantial gift for us and could we arrange for someone to accept this gift. I personally didn’t know about Creflo Dollar Ministries, so I had to do a little research to find out what the ministry was about.”

He said the donation “couldn’t have come at a better time,” noting that demand on the ministry’s resources has increased while contributions have decreased. “We’re really struggling

with our food bank this year,” Thompson told *Charisma*. “This was a God-send. It was unexpected, but it couldn’t have come at a better time.”

The Change Experience tour is designed to help participants discover keys to acquiring the “character, hope and answers” necessary to change their thinking and their lives, according to the Creflo Dollar Ministries Web site.

In addition to Denver, the tour has traveled to Columbia, S.C.; Richmond, Va.; Louisville, Ky.; Houston and Milwaukee. Between now and November, the Change Experience will stop in Omaha, Neb.; Seekonk, Mass.; Los Angeles and Charlotte, N.C.

“In a time where so many people find the world caving in around them and have lost hope, that is when the body of Christ should be there with open arms,” said Dollar, who with his wife, Taffi, ministers to millions each week through their TV ministry and satellite church campuses. “We must be the change.”

Dollar is one of six charismatic televangelists whose ministries are under investigation by Iowa Sen. Charles Grassley, ranking Republican on the Senate Finance Committee. In November 2007, Grassley requested information regarding the nonprofit ministries’ expenses, and executive compensation and amenities to ensure their financial integrity.

Grassley’s office said Joyce Meyer Ministries, Benny Hinn of World Healing Center Church, Randy and Paula White of Without Walls International Church, Eddie Long of New Birth Missionary Baptist Church and Kenneth and Gloria Copeland have responded either fully or partially to Grassley’s inquiry.

Creflo and Taffi Dollar have not provided any of the requested information, saying the IRS should investigate religious

groups, not the Finance Committee.