

Christian Billionaire Pledges to Donate Half His Wealth

What does David Green have in common with Warren Buffet, Microsoft Chairman Bill Gates, and Facebook Founder Mark Zuckerberg? First, they are all billionaires. Second, they are all giving away half their wealth to charity.

The CEO of Hobby Lobby, Green, a devout Christian, is among a growing list of billionaires who have pledged to give away most of their money. Green and his wife, Barbara, are officially part of The Giving Pledge, an effort to invite the wealthiest individuals and families in America to commit to giving the majority of their wealth to the philanthropic causes and charitable organizations of their choice either during their lifetime or after their death.

“Coming from a family of preachers, the idea of giving back has been part of my life as long as I can remember,” Green wrote in his pledge letter. “My parents and their parents before them were what some would consider poor, but they gave back whenever they could whether through small contributions of money, or through acts of kindness. God has blessed me with a wonderful family, a successful business and outstanding employees. I do not take these blessings lightly.”

When Hobby Lobby was created in the early 1970s, Green says he was committed to use his profits to help ministry work. He says he knew from an early age that ministry work, at least in the sense of preaching from a pulpit, was not his calling. But, he adds, he also knew that God gifted him with a mind for understanding business, and that gift would allow him to carry out God's work through contributions to great missions throughout the world.

"We honor the Lord in all we do by operating the company in a manner consistent with biblical principles. From helping orphanages in faraway lands to helping ministries in America, Hobby Lobby has always been a tool for the Lord's work," Green wrote, pointing to a verse in 2 Corinthians that says: "Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. ... You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God."

What's your take on wealth? Did Green make the right move?