

Steven D. Reece

From: Steven D. Reece <sdreece@matzevah.org>
Sent: Thursday, April 19, 2012 11:28
To: 'Brown, Elaine'
Subject: RE: How is it going?

Thank you!

From: Brown, Elaine [mailto:elaine.brown@Vanderbilt.Edu]
Sent: Thursday, April 19, 2012 11:25 AM
To: 'sdreece@matzevah.org'
Subject: RE: How is it going?

You have such a gift for summarizing! And I completely agree with what you say in your points.
I'll take a look this evening at the documents and try to get something together and to you by noon tomorrow. K? e

From: Steven D. Reece [mailto:sdreece@matzevah.org]
Sent: Thursday, April 19, 2012 10:16 AM
To: Brown, Elaine
Subject: RE: How is it going?

Thank you for your response! I have put the issue before Kevin and JoAnn regarding moving forward with the LOI to Natan. I believe we should proceed based on the following arguments:

1. We are a public charity in the eyes of the IRS not a church or a Christian organization. We are a public charity established by Christians.
2. Luke 7:36-50 – Jesus was anointed with oil by a prostitute. Jesus received what she did to Him as an expression of love and gratitude. Are we responding like Simon in this passage? Are we being prideful by not taking funds from a sinner? Generally speaking I believe God places the matter of giving to us specifically on the heart of a person out of love, identification or gratitude with what we are doing.
3. Matter of Faith – Do we trust God to bless us through both “good people” and “bad people” meaning through sinners and saints? Beggars can't be choosers and humbly speaking I am literally a beggar. If we apply and God grants us favor with Natan and they fund us, what does that mean? We will not know the answer to that question, unless we “ask, seek and knock.”
4. I believe that God has placed us in the public sphere for a reason. We need to be open to sinners who want to bless us much in the same way that Jesus was open to the anointing of a prostitute. Very risky scenario because it comprises the identity of Jesus to religious people but it opens the eyes of sinners to the magnitude of God's grace, mercy and love. In which place do we wish to be?

I believe the LOI is due Monday (23 April). I am in the midst of writing my final paper for the semester, which is due tomorrow. If you could research what needs to be in the LOI and look at the LOI that I sent to Draper Richards and Kaplan, then pull the bits together from what is already applicable, I will finish it.

Building consensus is time consuming. Consensus is not necessarily unity but it is general agreement on how to move forward. Only three voices have publicly stated disagreement, which means that we have possibly for a both/and situation and more than an either/or decision.

We will see what develops. Keep praying!

Steven

From: Brown, Elaine [<mailto:elaine.brown@Vanderbilt.Edu>]

Sent: Thursday, April 19, 2012 10:52 AM

To: 'sdreece@matzevah.org'

Subject: RE: How is it going?

I think this is going to be an issue that we will never find a firm concrete answer to in every case so we must trust in the Lord. My first feelings were that we should go ahead and apply, earnestly praying that God would manipulate the application and those doing the review in such a way that if it was his will that we be granted funds from Natan then so be it. If there was a hindrance to our mission of serving him then I would hope he would not let funds be forthcoming.

I'm sure not everyone would agree but I think transgender/gay people are a part of our society (right or wrong) and first of all I think we are to love them also in the Lord. Like I mentioned before, I would have a much bigger problem if Natan supported an organization that performed abortions, which to me is murder or something like capital punishment. I do think there is a difference. Maybe I have just never considered it my God-given mission in life to change who someone feels they are – only to be a loving witness before them of the Lord's mercy. But I know the Bible also says we are not to cause our brother to stumble, so if we accept funds from Natan and it is discovered they have supported work with gay/tgender people what is that possibly going to do to our witness – except I have to say even as a Christian I would not find offense with that. If they were RECRUITING people to be gay and campaigning for such a lifestyle, providing literature in schools for kids or something like that then I would probably feel we should stay away from an organization that might support that.

I do worry that this might cause a division even between the members of TMF. I am not a person that feels I am the “enlightened” one and all the rules have to comply with what my heart tells me so either way we decide to go I see the positives and negatives. So not having a clear answer I wonder if we should just apply to Natan and all of us be prayerful that the Lord have full sway in this. He knows we must have funds, and since we know he has a plan of work for us then I can't help but be *assured he has the funds provided already* – it is just up to us to seek where he would have us look. Sounds easy but I think probably it isn't.

I guess if I had to vote right now I'd vote for submitting the application but ask everyone to remain prayerful that no funds will be offered if this is not the will of the Lord.

I hope you are doing well. It has been extremely chaotic with my life the past month – with family (my Mom has terrible dementia and is very frail and has been really struggling, my daughter made a tough decision to change jobs even though she loved the patients she saw at the practice where she was but wanted closer to home, and my work – well work is often a challenge but for some reason the past couple of months have been tough. But God is good and amazingly I am very happy thru all this and know the sun is shining and what a glorious spring it is! Do you need me to do anything for the Natan submission if you decide to go forward? I think it is due very soon. I am at work tomorrow but then going out of town for a few days of R&R with Gillie (my daughter) before she moves to her new practice. I'm happy to help as needed. Have a blessed day! e

From: Steven D. Reece [<mailto:sdreece@matzevah.org>]
Sent: Thursday, April 19, 2012 7:54 AM
To: Brown, Elaine
Subject: How is it going?

Elaine,

I have not heard from you in a while. How is it going? Are you still processing the implications of donor issues?

I believe that we will not be able to hash all of this out via email and I think that there are differing opinions regarding the issue. The problem is we need funds. Do we trust God enough to allow Him to bless us?

I have been thinking about moving forward with the LOI with Natan as a means to test the waters. If God blesses us by granting us funds, would we accept them or not? What do you think?

Steven

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