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September 5, 2020

UNITED, WE ARE STRONG!

Ricardo Paccagnella, an elder of an Adventist Church in College Park, Maryland, was playing tennis when a fellow player mentioned that all money collected by his Evangelical church would be retained and administrated locally. “How is your church managing its finances?” he asked Ricardo.

Ricardo explained that while most Evangelical churches function under the Congregational system (funds are mainly handled by each congregation), the Adventist Church, modeled on the biblical Storehouse system, brings most of the funds collected by each local church to a common “bucket” and then distributes them equitably through different administrative levels, regionally and internationally, to support not only authorized missionaries (through the tithe), but also missionary projects and ministries (by offerings).

Ricardo was right. The system adopted by the Adventist Church was established upon biblical principles, fostering unity and equity. No one individual or interest group is owner or controls all the funds. Local church representatives elect leaders for limited terms, and leaders are paid on the basis of a common salary scale. The church is thriving in 212 out of the 235 countries and areas recognized by

the UN, because instead of each one doing what is right in their own eyes, 21 million members contribute to the same “pot” with tithes and Promise (regular/systematic offerings). United, they are stronger, are able to do more, and go farther!

“We all may have access to financial information,” said Ricardo, “and if we identify ourselves on the envelope, we are supposed to receive receipts from what is given. Additionally, there is an independent auditing service to help make sure funds are handled as intended.” “But do you really trust this system?” asked his friend. “I trust God,” said Ricardo, “who I believe had inspired this system. Even though I know it is managed by fallible human beings like me, no circumstantial human failure will affect my practice, because I actually give to God, as an act of worship. And He is in full control of His own business,” Ricardo concluded.

APPEAL: God invites you to join your brothers and sisters from all the world, to worship Him with tithes and offerings, funding also His work around the globe.

PRAYER: Take what belongs to You, dear God, for we worship you today!