

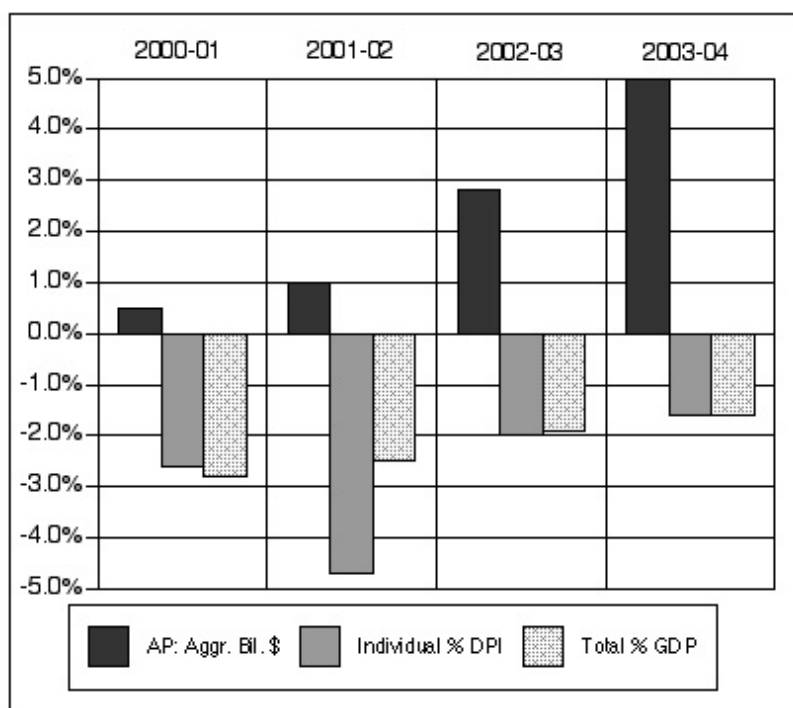
## The State of Church Giving through 2003

### Excerpt

#### Recommendation:

"Reports of philanthropic giving need to be adjusted by population and income, as are other national statistics. The Associated Press told the American public that a fundraising industry estimate of giving rose 5.0% in 2004, while the percent change in the industry estimate of individual giving, when adjusted for population and income, was actually -1.6%" (p. 71).

**Figure 16: Associated Press Reported Aggregate Changes, Americans' Individual Giving Changes as a Percent of Disposable Personal Income, and Total Giving Changes as a Percent of Gross Domestic Product, 2000-2004, from Previous Year's Base: Data from Giving USA 2002, 2003, 2004 and 2005 Editions**



Source: Associated Press; *Giving USA* data; U.S. BEA data; emptytomb analysis

emptytomb, inc. 2005

Table and Chart regarding the Disparity between Associated Press Reports on Aggregate Charitable Giving Levels, and Giving Adjusted for Population and Income. As pointed out above, the Associated Press charitable giving articles' lead routinely emphasizes the upbeat tone of the *Giving USA* press releases in terms of aggregate billions of dollars raised, unadjusted for population and income. This pattern of disparity between AP reports on aggregate billions of dollars raised, and the complete picture of changes in charitable giving patterns, can be observed in Table 24.

Figure 16 illustrates the disparity in the category of percent changes in aggregate charitable giving reported by the AP and the two categories of charitable giving as a percent of either per capita Disposable Personal Income (DPI), or Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

In 2002, 2003, 2004, and 2005, the AP lead uncritically emphasized the aggregate billions of dollars raised, as promoted in the related AAFRC *Giving USA* press release. However, in all four years, the available *Giving USA* data indicated that charitable giving actually declined from one year to the next, when considered as a percent of either Disposable Personal Income or Gross National Product.

The observation may be made that the Associated Press chooses to highlight an industry's interpretation of its own work in an uncritical fashion that omits essential elements of the whole truth. Perhaps the Associated Press regards the annual news about Americans' giving patterns more on the level of society galas than as a vital indicator of the social fabric. (pages 78-81).

**Table 24: Associated Press Reported Aggregate Changes, Americans' Individual Giving Changes as a Percent of Disposable Personal Income, and Total Giving Changes as a Percent of Gross Domestic Product, 2000-2004, from Prior Year's Base: Giving Data from Giving USA 2002, 2003, 2004, and 2005 Editions**

<i>Giving USA</i> Edition	<i>Giving USA</i> Data Interval	AP: First Percent Change from Previous Year Listed in AP Story: Aggregate Bil. \$ <sup>21</sup>	Per Capita Individual Giving as % of Per CapitaDPI: % Change from Base Year <sup>22</sup>	Total Giving as % of Gross Domestic Product: % Change from Base Year <sup>23</sup>	AP Headline and AP First Mention of Percent Change	AP Byline and AP Dateline
2002	2000-2001	0.5%	-2.6%	-2.8%	"2001 Charitable Giving Same As 2000" "Total giving by individuals, corporations and other groups amounted to \$212 billion, up 0.5 percent from 2000 before inflation is figured in"	Helena Payne, New York
2003	2001-2002	1.0%	-4.7%	-2.5%	"Donations Held Steady in 2002" "Giving rose 1 percent last year to \$240.92 billion from \$238.46 billion in 2001"	Mark Jewell, Indianapolis
2004	2002-2003	2.8%	-2.0%	-1.9%	"Charitable Giving Rises in 2003" "the survey showed a 2.8 percent	Kendra Locke, New York

					increase over 2002, when giving amounted to \$234.1 billion"	
2005	2003-2004	5.0%	-1.6%	-1.6%	"Charitable Giving Among Americans Rises" "Americans increased donatons to charity by 5 percent in 200"	Adam Geller, New York