From: WantTo Know
To: Preston Christie A
Subject: With Regards to Form 990
Date: Saturday, September 12, 2015 12:23:25 PM

Dear Ms. Preston;

I understand that you are taking into consideration comments from the public regarding churches and Form 990. It is my pleasure to inform you how I feel and believe regarding this subject matter.

Not long ago I watched a segment on "Last Week with John Oliver" about how many churches encourage their "flock" to send in "seed" money to their church in the belief that if they do the money will be returned to them many times over. Besides that being laughable in this day and age all it does is make many of these "prosperity gospel" church pastors rich with with no accounting for that inflow of money. You have the ability to change that now and start holding them accountable with Form 990.

I have a mother that, over time, has donated much money to Benny Hinn, one of the biggest snake oil salesman of our age. My mother needs that money to live on but chooses to send too much of it to this man who makes many promises to his followers that, to this day, I have never seen one of them come true. But in the money flows in and as the stage is set now he knows he can get away with such charlatan acts. Please rethink your position on church and taxes and start auditing ALL of them.

Now that I have told you a personal story of mine I've included a few bullet points below for clarity.

- All non-profit organizations should be treated equally, regardless of whether they espouse an atheist position, or a religious position. Currently the IRS singles out churches for privileged treatment by exempting them from the disclosure requirements all other 501(c)(3) organizations must comply with, or lose their exemption. Taxpayers, who are subsidizing tax-exempt groups, have a right to know what entities are exempt from taxation and to review general financial disclosures. The privilege of not being taxed must come with some measures of accountability.
- Please make churches conform to the same IRS requirements as all other 501(c)(3) groups. At a minimum, the IRS should require any organizations that claim to be religious organizations, to file an annual notice with the IRS that they are claiming tax exemption.

Thank you for your time with this and I hope what I have shared will inspire you to take action with auditing churches with Form 990.

Sincerely,

Truit Trowbridge