



# Giving

**G**iving. What does it really mean to me? How do I give of myself?

Giving sub-headings such as generosity, fruits of my faith, giving of my time, helping others or paying my church "fees" are sensitive matters. They've become tough topics for us to communicate with one another due to their nature. They're personal issues; sometimes secret, sometimes touching a raw nerve. However difficult it may be for us to look in the mirror or be a helpmate for another on such a topic, let us make no miscue...Christian giving is a spiritual matter. It's clearly a matter of the heart. What lies in my heart leaves evidence in my giving to my community, in my workplace, in my marriage, my friendships and yes, in my wallet.

In our pursuit of spiritual transformation, giving is an exciting and beautiful area for us to daily self-examine. Giving of our talents, labor, dollars, resources, time, and compassion are only some of the areas that show a true testimony of what lies in our hearts and our relationship with our Saviour. Giving reveals our heart. Giving shapes our heart.

As stressed in our previous newsletters, giving of course does not only involve our Regular Voluntary Contributions (RVCs) or our deacon bag deposit on Sunday. Although our firstfruits and giving of alms to the poor are

key ingredients to our giving "portfolio", God clearly shows us via his word, parables and actions that a generous heart is displayed in all our words and deeds. How awesome He designed our mandate: to each of us he gave different talents, characters, situations, health and monetary resources. So each of us may fully give as directed according to what we've received.

Let us involve ourselves with some Biblical principles for giving - both for tithing firstfruits and/or giving alms to the needy.

The Church of God is engaged in the greatest mission under heaven. Money is an absolute requisite in carrying on its great work and hence the proper use of money becomes an important theme in the New Testament and assures an important place in the Christian's life. The first sin in the Jerusalem church that we are told of was the sin of Ananias and Sapphira in the matter of giving money to the Lord. (Acts 5:1-2) So, Christians, in making money and giving, must "use whatever gift he has received for others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. (1 Pet. 4:10)

What is to be our **Manner** of giving? Well, giving is personal. Paul said, "Let everyone of you lay by him in store..." This responsibility

# Giving *continued...*

is given to every Christian. Jesus said, "Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap." and again, "...it is more blessed to give than to receive" (Luke 6:38, Acts 20:35).

The question arises, how much should I give? Is it as simple as writing some monthly cheques for our church treasurer with the exact amount outlined on our yearly budget? Paul gave some guidelines to the Corinthians, saying, "Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion..." (2 Cor 9:7) Unlike Israel of old, we are not under the law of tithing. (We are not able to fully cover the history and content of the O.T. tithe in this forum. Note, however, that the concept of firstfruit giving largely overlapped with tithing. Where tithing stressed the exact amount, firstfruits emphasized a spiritual principle: God is the Giver of the Harvest, and we should want to honor Him with the first and best of that we've received).

The Lord has presented a plan for financing the work of the Church in the New Testament scriptures. As in the case of every other plan God has given, it must be put into operation by faithfulness upon the part of Christians. The obligation is an individual one, and is sufficient when it is followed as the New Testament directs us.

God's plan is free will offering in love from a willing and grateful heart. This was determined by a percentage required of them to give to the Lord what is justly his. In Malachi 3:8-9

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God accused Israel of robbing him in "tithes and offerings." May we consider that things written in the past were for our learning. (Rom 15:4) Paul said, "a man reaps what he sows." (Gal. 6:7)

Under the aforementioned principle in 2 Cor 9:7, the Biblical way is the Christian never really has a sense of having done all he could. We cannot do enough to honor

God and there is no limit on the blessing from God. Why, do we say? If we give 10% we could say in pride, "I gave my tithe!" "I did what was required." We cannot do that under God's free will system. Every time we open our pocket book or write that check our love of our Savior is tested. We cannot do that under God's free will system. Every time we open our pocket book or write that check our love of our Savior is tested.

True christian giving is to show love, not law. (2 Cor. 8:8 "I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others.") Tightly knit with this motivator is generosity. 2 Cor. 9:5 teaches that giving should not be from the attitude of how much I can keep, but how much I can give. We are not to give covetously, but bountifully. These two giving attributes are becoming even more difficult and uncommon in our day or self-pleasure, individualism and materialism. Let us pray and work in seeking pure hearts - hearts that please our Creator and give back. Giving the "shirt off our back" will not leave us "standing in the cold". Let us be generous in our care for others, our commitment to our internal and external communities. Generous in our labors of love. Generous in giving of our given talents and resources. Generous is supporting others both emotionally and physically. Generous in giving of ourselves for our new Building Project. Generous in giving our money to God. God expects nothing short of such generosity. And we must expect nothing in return.

There is an unmistakable connection in Scripture between giving and spiritual life itself. Israel's giving patterns were a consistent thermometer of the nation's inner spiritual condition. When their hearts were kindled with a spirit of worship to God, they overflowed with contagious expressions of generosity.

What is to be our **Motive** of giving? First, the heart is

the motivator in our giving. Of the Macedonians Paul said, "...but they gave themselves first to the Lord, and then to us in keeping with God's will." This is impressive when we consider those Christians were in deep poverty and affliction that "welled up in rich generosity." (2 Cor 8:2-5,12) But, the greatest motive for giving is the sacrifice that Jesus our Lord made for us, "...that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich." (2 Cor 8:9) Surely this will stimulate us to give freely of our means, and of ourselves, as a living sacrifice.

Giving is in response to need. In Acts 2&4, they saw a need someone else had and they sold something that they had and gave to meet that need. It is also an investment with our Father. God blesses the righteous heart; the one who gives out of love and concern for the work. Generosity to God in giving is an indication of a person's Spirituality.

As with giving of our RVCs (church) so giving of our alms (needy) is to be done with conscious planning and prayer. Knowing our own sinful, selfish and unloving nature due to our Fall, what are our motives when giving? How much time is spent on prayer, consideration, and generosity when giving to the needy? How do we approach putting money in the deacon bag? Whose interests are at stake? These are serious and spiritual questions we must all regularly ask ourselves. And yes, once again, these are sensitive matters for us to challenge ourselves with.

[ Giving REVEALS our heart.  
Giving SHAPES our heart. ]

In the giving and distribution of righteousness, or alms, we should remember and take note that the eye of the Lord is on us, and that He sees not only the act but also every motive that leads to it and comes from it. We must follow the words of Proverbs 19:17 when God says, "He who is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and He will reward him for what he has done".

Matthew 6 teaches us a cardinal principle in our giving to the poor. By not letting our left hand know what the right is doing, we should hide away our charity - yes, even hide it from ourselves. Like the poor widow with the two copper coins (Mark 12) our giving should be so generous and so often, that we don't take note we've helped the poor anymore than noting we've eaten our regular meals. Do your alms without even whispering to yourself, "How generous I am!" Let's leave the matter with God, who never fails to see, to record, and to reward. Blessed is the man who is busy in secret with his kindness: he finds a special joy in his unknown benevolences. Here and hereafter the Lord Himself will personally see to the rewarding of the secret giver of alms. This will be in His own way and time; and He will choose the very best. How much this promise means it will need eternity to reveal.

Let's all then, with whatever we have at our disposal, give generously and regularly - in all areas of "living in the light". May it be our prayer that our giving is forged in God's love for us, and that we may see our present lives through lenses of eternity. Let's invest *today* in the light of that glorious *Day*.

## Special Collections:

JUN 6  
Anchor

JULY 4  
Wycliffe

AUG 1  
MERF

SEPT 5  
FSBF

OCT 10  
CRWRF

NOV 7  
Portuguese  
Mission

DEC 5  
Anchor

DEC 31  
Campaign Life

COLLECTIONS



If you have or know of any kind of need within or outside our congregation, please do not hesitate to communicate with your deacons. We are here to be a hand & foot to one another.

*- and we're only a phone call away...*

## Practical Application

Take specific note of these thoughts or feelings (or the lack of them) related to money and possessions that are triggered throughout the day:

- " Delight
- " Disappointment
- " Insecurity
- " Contentment
- " Greed
- " Dissatisfaction
- " Anxiety
- " Peace of Mind
- " Guilt
- " Anger
- " Envy
- " Gratitude
- " Trust
- " Regret
- " Excitement

At the end of each day, have a brief time of reflection. Make a few notes. What are you seeing in yourself? Is there any dominant pattern? Anything that surprises you? What kind of summary can you make?

*your*  
**Deacons**

Andrew Kampen  
t. 905 508 2533

Fred Pilon  
t. 905 508 0643

Darren Bosch  
t. 905 833 6042

Bruce DeBoer  
t. 905 773 0538



## Personal Planner

In prayerful commitment to the Lord, and in secrecy, I plan to give the following during the year of \_\_\_\_\_:

### FIRST FRUITS & OFFERINGS

Total Expected Income: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Giving Goal as a % of Income: \_\_\_\_\_ %  
**Total Giving Goal:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### ALLOCATION

**Category 1**  
Ministry & Church Operations (RVCs) \_\_\_\_\_ %, \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Category 2**  
Needy \_\_\_\_\_ %, \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Category 3**  
Global Missions  
Local Missions: \_\_\_\_\_ %, \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Category 4**  
Charities & Organizations  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ %, \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Category 5**  
Ministries outside of Can. Ref. Federation: \_\_\_\_\_ %, \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Category 6**  
Special Collections: \_\_\_\_\_ %, \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Category 7**  
Building Project: \_\_\_\_\_ %, \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Category 8**  
Other: \_\_\_\_\_ %, \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### TIME & TALENT

\_\_\_\_\_ Hours per week in \_\_\_\_\_ ministry.

\_\_\_\_\_ Hours per week in \_\_\_\_\_ ministry.

\_\_\_\_\_ Hours per week in \_\_\_\_\_ ministry.

\_\_\_\_\_ **TOTAL hours per week.**

**THIS IS ONLY A PROTOTYPICAL GUIDE.  
MAY NOT BE APPLICABLE FOR ALL.  
FOR YOUR PERSONAL, TAILORED USE ONLY.  
THIS IS NOT A PLEDGE FORM.**