



Financial Giving Theological Explanation

Why Giving Is Important?

Giving and money is a topic fraught with abuse and confusion. Many people are understandably skeptical of any church that starts to talk about money because unfortunately, examples of greedy mega-church preachers are all too common. To be honest, we just don't like to be told what to do with our money. It personally bothers us. However, giving and money are important topics for Jesus and anyone that wants to follow Him. Jesus talked about money in roughly 15% of His preaching and 16 of the 38 parables were concerned with how to handle money and/or possessions. Our relationship with money is directly connected to our relationship with God.

- It's important because Jesus teaches that the money in our wallet follows the loyalties of our hearts. (Matthew 6:20–21)
- It's important because healthy growing churches require resources to reach and teach people to follow Jesus. (2 Corinthians 9:12-13)
- It's important because giving is fundamentally an act of faith. When we give we are trusting Jesus' teaching that it is better to give than to receive. (Acts 20:35)
- It's important because the local church is in many ways a family, and like a family, we all are called to play our part to support the needs of the family. (Galatians 6:6)
- It's important because there are some blessings that only come to those whose financial giving comes from a heart of generosity. (2 Corinthians 9:8-10)
- It's important because it recognizes that we are stewards, not owners, of our money. (1 Chronicles 29:12-14)
- It's important because God will hold us all accountable for how we manage our financial resources. (Malachi 3:8–10)

How Should We Give?

When it comes to giving, how we give is far more important to God than how much we give. How we give often reveals our motivations as well as our personal loyalties and priorities. At the heart of every gift is an intent to worship, honor, and enjoy God.

- Giving that honors God comes from the first and best of our financial resources. This means that giving from what is left over from our budget or giving only when it is convenient does not honor God. (Nehemiah 10:35; Genesis 4:1-5; Proverbs 3:9-10)
- Giving that honors God comes from a willing and joyful spirit. Guilty and begrudging gifts of God's people do not honor Him. (2 Corinthians 9:7)
- Giving that honors God starts with generosity in mind. Giving is the starting line, generosity is the finish line. Generosity is a journey, and we all need to start somewhere. (Luke 21:1-4)
- Giving that honors God grows as we grow. The goal of generosity is to grow in our capacity for and enjoyment of giving. As you grow in your giving you grow in your joy. (Acts 20:35; 2 Corinthians 8:10-12)
- Giving that honors God is a spiritual decision, so we should seek God's prompting and leading. How does He want us to give? Where does He want us to give? Are there any needs He wants us to meet? Are there any causes He wants us to support? Is there a ministry He wants us to invest in? Giving is a spiritual discipline and should be incorporated into our prayer life. (2 Corinthians 9:7)
- Giving that honors God recognizes that we are not giving God *our money*, we are bringing *God's money* back to Him. Every dollar we possess is a gift from God. We are stewards of our financial resources and not owners of our financial resources. Our disposition should reflect the heart of a humble steward rather than a self-deceived owner. (Deuteronomy 8:18; Luke 12)
- Giving that honors God is done intentionally. When we give we should plan to give rather than passively wait to see what resources we may or may not have. Intentionality reveals priority. (1 Corinthians 16:1-2)

What Types Of Giving Should I Participate In?

There are two categories of giving in the Bible. One of the challenges we face in being the giver God has called us to comes when we fail to discern the different ways we can and should give. Each way has its own unique purposes and motivations. When we understand and embrace the different categories of giving, we maximize our impact in the world and our ability to worship God through giving.

First, we give out of obedience.

- **Percentage Giving:** The Biblical word for this is a tithe and represents 10% of our income. This type of giving is the starting line and not the finish line. It is not the ceiling but the foundation of our financial stewardship. This giving is about supporting the local church and expanding the global mission of Jesus. Percentage giving is a command of Jesus and is an issue of obedience. (Genesis 28:20-22; Malachi 3:8-9; Matthew 23:23)

Then, we give out of generosity.

- **Offerings:** This type of giving is based on personal conviction and the leading of the Holy Spirit. It is designed to meet needs locally and globally as well as fund import kingdom causes. Offerings are optional commitments made between the individual and the Lord. (Acts 24:17; 2 Corinthians 8:19)
ex. Dollar Club, supporting a Missionary, Christmas Eve Offering, and/or a Vision Campaign
- **Sacrificial Giving:** Sacrificial giving often hurts. It is an expression of faithful trust in the provision of God where we obey God's leading our life. Like all meaningful things in life, real-world-changing generosity comes with a price tag. Sacrificial giving is an optional commitment made between the individual and the Lord. (Mark 12:42–44)
ex. Downsizing our home to fund ministry, cutting cable for a vision campaign, not shopping for a season, or trading fun money expenses for a cause
- **Legacy Giving:** This is an act of generosity that intentionally leverages the financial abundance of today to fund ministry, meet needs, and extend blessings to future generations. (Proverbs 13:22; 1 Chronicles 29:14–19)
ex. Estate planning, dividends from investments, passive income, and/or an inheritance

Giving is a more expansive topic than many first realize. In order for us to worshipfully bring God our first and best, it requires that we think and plan intentionally. While giving is something every Christian is expected to do, our hope at Grace is that you would find great joy and satisfaction in becoming the generous giver God has created you to be.

Best Practices

When it comes to giving, here are a few practical considerations:

- Online giving is more cost-effective and efficient for Grace. The cost of managing cash and checks is higher than that of online giving.
- Automation always trumps determination and intention. Automated giving removes the temptation to stop giving and combats the busyness of life.
- Grace has many resources to help meet financial needs. If you have needs you cannot meet with your own financial resources, reach out to us. If you find yourself in a place where your desire to give surpasses your ability to give, reach out to us. We offer coaching and resources to help you help attain financial health.