

GIFT POLICY OF _____ CHURCH

Why Should God's People Give?

1. Giving is a privilege

The churches of Macedonia were models of generosity in giving, even though they were poor. They gladly gave out of gratitude toward God and love for their brethren (2 Corinthians 8 and 9; see especially 8:4, 9). Paul reminds us of Jesus' teaching that "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

2. Giving is an obligation

In the Old Testament (Deuteronomy 14:22-29; Haggai 1:1-11; Malachi 3:7-12) and in the New (Romans 12:13; Galatians 2:10; Hebrews 13:16; 1 John 3:17), the people of God are commanded to give for certain needs. Failing to give for such causes when one is able is therefore an act of disobedience. Not all giving is required, however (see Leviticus 7:16; 2 Corinthians 8:1-15).

3. Giving is one dimension of our stewardship

Very often Jesus spoke of the stewardship of His people in terms of money (see Luke 16:1-13). Our faithfulness as stewards in this "little thing" of money has a bearing on what other (and greater) responsibilities we will be given (see Luke 16:9-12).

4. Giving is an act of worship

The Old Testament saints could only approach God in worship with a sacrifice, and this sacrifice was a contribution, whether whole or in part. In the New Testament, contributions were also described as sacrifices offered up in worship (see Hebrews 9:1-10; 10:1-25; 13:10-16).

No offering is taken during the teaching hour. This is so that unbelievers will not feel obligated to give, or think that their giving would contribute to their salvation. Unbelievers do not need to give to God, but to receive the gift of salvation which He offers to them in Jesus Christ. The offering is taken during the worship time, after the Lord's Supper, to encourage the saints to give as an act of worship.

5. Giving is an investment

Jesus encouraged believers to give in order to "lay up treasure in heaven" (Matthew 6:19-21). Investing earthly money in the advancement of the kingdom of God is one way in which we can lay up spiritual treasure in heaven (see Luke 16:1-13).

6. Giving is an act of self-sacrifice

All Christian service should be a sacrifice (Romans 12:1-2). In giving, we should not seek man's praise, but God's (Matthew 6:2-4). We should not give with the hope of getting ahead in this life, but with the faith that God will reward us in heaven (Luke 14:12-14). We should not give under pressure, but willingly and cheerfully, with gratitude for God's grace to us, according to our ability (2 Corinthians 8 and 9).

7. Giving is an expression of brotherly love

Giving is an expression of brotherly love and of Christian unity. The principle is set down in texts such as Matthew 25:31-46; Luke 3:11; Romans 12:13; James 2:15-17 and 1 John 3:15-18. The practice of this principle is seen in Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-35; 11:27-30; 2 Corinthians 8:1-5; Philippians 4:14-19.

To Whom Do We Give?

When the Christian gives, he may give to individuals or to the church, but in the final analysis in doing so **he is giving to God** (see Proverbs 19:17; Matthew 6:2-4; 22:17-21; Acts 5:4; Romans 14:4-8; 2 Corinthians 8:5; Colossians 3:22-25).

How Do We Give?

1. Attention to the Lord

Psalm 148:13 says, "Let them praise the name of the LORD, for His name alone is exalted; His glory is above earth and heaven." We give as unto the Lord drawing attention to His provision and glory as opposed to drawing attention to ourselves or even our loved ones. Therefore, we no longer use recognition plaques or signs on or by the gift and encourage all gifts to be as anonymous as possible according to Matthew 6:2-4.

2. Undesignated Gifts

We encourage giving to be undesignated which will go into the church's general fund and used according to her budget under the management of the church council or leadership.

3. Designated Gifts (Established By Church/Council)

We also encourage designated gifts as established and called for by the congregation or church council. Such designations may include a building fund, special needs, love offerings for particular ministries or missions, etc.

4. Designated Gifts (Not Established By Church/Council)

Individuals who desire to designate a gift outside of that which has already been established will need to present such a gift idea to the Stewardship Committee. The Stewardship Committee will work with the giver to determine the need and appropriateness of the gift for the ministry of the church. The Stewardship Committee will then present the gift idea to the Church Council for approval or disapproval and then will contact the giver accordingly. Once the gift is given and received, the church reserves the right to use the gift in such a way that best benefits the ministry and purpose of the church. The church also reserves the right to dispose of the property in a way that best fosters the ministry of the church.