

The Relationship between Financial Giving and the Gospel

Church is Family

The Bible's description of the relationship between believers and their local church is very much like a family. People in a church loved each other dearly because they recognized that ***though they deserved to be outside the family of God, they were undeservedly adopted into it because the only begotten Son of God, Jesus, was treated like an enemy as they deserved on the cross.*** They called each other brothers and sisters. They treated each other that way.ⁱ They corrected each other that way. They cried with each other that way. They rejoiced together that way. They forgave each other that way. They ate together that way. They studied together that way. They served together that way. They gave together in that way. They gave to take care of each other's physical needs. ***They gave for their church family's shared Gospel ministry.***

They Gave for their Church Family's Shared Gospel Ministry

They believed that one of the primary reasons they had been brought together as a family was for the ministry of the Word of God; to receive it and give it.ⁱⁱ This happened in two main ways: first, since they so valued the Gospel that saved them, they shared resources so that they could be 'fed' by, or ministered by, the Gospel. They believed that they were more dependent on God's Word than on food.ⁱⁱⁱ Secondly, they also knew they were on gospel mission together, and deeply desired to be equipped together for this. Because of that passion, ***they gave sacrificially to provide for those preaching and teaching the Gospel both to their local church and off around the world.***^{iv}

They Gave Sacrificially to Support the Preaching and Teaching of the Gospel

How did they give? First of all, it is important to remember they gave in a way that resembled taking care of their own family - they owned the needs of these ministries as if they were family needs,^v considering it their shared responsibility to care for those needs.^{vi} Secondly, the Word of God instructed them to think about it in a similar way as the Old Testament people of Israel viewed the ministry of those serving on their behalf in the temple. Its not the same, but God brings it to the church's attention. The Old Testament people of God took on the responsibility to provide for the needs of the temple ministry - since it was done for them and on their behalf - the whole family of God benefited from it - it was of desperate value to them. To demonstrate their shared responsibility in this ministry, they were each instructed to give one tenth of their crops to care for those workers and their families. This is where we get the term 'tithe'. It is important to realize that God didn't direct the writers of the New Testament to pass on the command to tithe from the Old Testament to the church. However, a comparison is drawn between the relationships between Gospel-workers and their church families and OT temple-workers and the Israelites.^{vii} It is as if the writers are saying "think about it in similar terms even though it's not identical". Churches and Christians are instructed to give generously, regularly, in amounts *fitting* to their income^{viii}, and in a way that bears a resemblance to the support of the Old Testament temple ministry which the Gospel completely fulfilled once and for all. They are said to have given joyously, sacrificially, *beyond* their means^{ix}, and in a way that

reflected how deeply they treasured the gift of the Gospel. This is why, historically, our brothers and sisters for the past 2000 years regularly set a benchmark for themselves of 10% even though such a number was not specifically commanded. We believe that it wasn't specifically commanded, even though it was *referenced* so that struggling believers who desired to but *could not* give to such degree wouldn't feel guilty and wouldn't see their gifts as unworthy. Also, so that believers who could easily give such gifts wouldn't see 10% as a cap, but would give in a way that reflected their ability to give, and in a way which treated their church family as family.

Park City Gospel Church's Promise Regarding Money

The church doesn't just get to wave a magic wand and say that just because money is spent by the church it was used for the ministry of the Gospel. It is, in fact, very possible for a church to use sacrificially given money in a way that is not beneficial to the God-given mission of the church. ***We at PCGC are committed to using all funds we receive to help glorify Jesus for His sacrifice for us on the cross.*** In general terms, PCGC uses offerings to care for the expenses of the Gospel ministries we do together, care for the needs of Gospel workers at PCGC as well as around the world, and, on behalf of PCGC, care for the physical needs of people both in and outside of PCGC. PCGC's budget is reviewed and needs to be approved by PCGC's membership each year to ensure transparency and accountability.

God has not promised that He will give you more wealth or health based on how much you give. But the great joy of a person who has been born again by believing in the gospel of Jesus is to glorify Him. Our heart toward giving demonstrates just how strongly we desire Christ to be glorified and known by people in Transcona and in every corner of the world. We don't give money to get money. By sacrificially giving, we demonstrate just how precious we believe the Gospel to be. ***The Gospel enables us to give to get the pleasure of Christ being glorified.***

May the Lamb receive the reward of His suffering - the reconciliation, freedom, joy, and worship of those purchased by His suffering... and may that be our great desire.

ⁱ Acts 2:42-47

"And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved"

Galatians 6:2-10

"Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. But let each one test his own work, and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbor. For each will have to bear his own load. Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches. Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith"

ⁱⁱ 2 Corinthians 5:18-21

"All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God"

ⁱⁱⁱ Matthew 4:4

"But he answered, "It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God"

Acts 6:2-4

"And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word"

^{iv} Philippians 4:14-20

"Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble. And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only. Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again. Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit. I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen"

^v Galatians 6:2-10

(See above note)

^{vi} 1 Tim 5:17-18

"Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain," and, "The laborer deserves his wages"

^{vii} 1 Cor 9:7-14

"Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard without eating any of its fruit? Or who tends a flock without getting some of the milk?

Do I say these things on human authority? Does not the Law say the same? For it is written in the Law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain." Is it for oxen that God is

concerned? Does he not certainly speak for our sake? It was written for our sake, because the plowman should plow in hope and the thresher thresh in hope of sharing in the crop. If we have sown spiritual things among you, is it too much if we reap material things from you? If others share this rightful claim on you, do not we even more?

Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right, but we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ. Do you not know that those who are employed in the temple service get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in the sacrificial offerings? In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel”

^{viii} **1 Cor 16:1-4**

“Now concerning the collection for the saints: as I directed the churches of Galatia, so you also are to do. On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper, so that there will be no collecting when I come. And when I arrive, I will send those whom you accredit by letter to carry your gift to Jerusalem. If it seems advisable that I should go also, they will accompany me”

^{ix} **2 Cor 8:1-7**

We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord, begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints—and this, not as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God to us. Accordingly, we urged Titus that as he had started, so he should complete among you this act of grace. But as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love for you — see that you excel in this act of grace also.