

Giving...a Biblical Approach

By Rev. Greg Creasy

Over the past few months, God has been doing some amazing things in our church. We have seen attendance grow and we have had several baptisms. God has helped us to expand and reach into new areas of ministry - new Sunday school classes and the addition of our Ignition Worship on the first Saturday of the month. It has been exciting to see how God is working in the hearts and lives of people at Pea Ridge. We have also seen an increase in our giving. I believe this goes hand in hand with our growth in other areas. When we see God doing amazing things...it is easy to want to give. Why do people give to the work of God? Some people give out of duty to God. They see that giving is part of their life as a disciple of Jesus Christ and give because it is the right thing to do. Some people give due to perceived pressure. They feel forced by someone else to give to the church. Some people give because they are exercising their spiritual gifts. The Bible teaches us about giving in many ways. There is more mention of money details in the scriptures than any other topic. Let me list several biblical reasons to give.

1. ***To give back to God in gratitude for all He has given to me. He meets my every need.*** “Much will be required of the one who has been entrusted with more” (Luke 12:48).
2. ***To obey God’s command to give.*** “Bring the full tithe into the storehouse” (Mal. 3: 10).
3. ***To support the work of God’s kingdom.*** There are many good causes, but only the mission of God’s church can guarantee eternal life. “Go into all the world and preach the gospel” (Mark 16: 15).
4. ***To remind myself that everything I have is God’s.*** Ten percent is the Old Testament requirement. Sacrifice is the New Testament standard. But ALL I have is His. “I testify that, on their own, according to their ability and beyond their ability, they begged us insistently for the privilege of sharing in the ministry to the saints” (2 Cor. 8: 3).
5. ***To do my fair share in keeping this church alive.*** My family and I benefit from being in this church, and I want to share the load. “Each of you is to set something aside and save to the extent that he prospers” (1 Cor. 16: 2).
6. ***To challenge me to be a good steward of all my possessions.*** Regular, planned giving helps me better manage my money. “It is expected of managers that each one be found faithful” (1 Cor. 4: 2).
7. ***To show my love as an act of worship.*** From Abel’s burnt offering to the gold, frankincense, and myrrh of the magi, giving the best gifts has always shown love for God. “God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Cor. 9: 7).
8. ***To prove that I trust God to provide for my needs.*** When I put Him first, the things I need are provided for me (Matt. 6: 33). “My God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory” (Phil. 4: 19).
9. ***To guard myself against the temptation of materialism and greed.*** “What shall it benefit a man to gain the whole world yet lose his life” (Mark 8: 36).
10. ***To lay up treasures in heaven.*** There is no better way to invest my wealth. “Collect for yourselves treasures in heaven” (Matt. 6: 20).
11. ***Because it truly is more blessed to give than to receive.*** Giving brings me joy! “It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20: 35).

12. ***God has placed the desire to give in my heart, and it is as natural as breathing to me.*** “Christ’s love compels us” (2 Cor. 5: 14).
13. ***Because my parents taught me to give generously, and the example of others reinforces that practice.*** “This poor widow has put in more than all” (Mark 12: 43).
14. ***I would be afraid not to give.*** Remember Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5: 1-11)? “Will a man rob God?” (Mal. 3: 8).
15. ***When I give, it is given back to me all the more!*** I can never out-give the Lord. “Give, and it shall be given to you” (Luke 6: 38).

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While this list is not complete in teaching the whole theme of giving in the Bible, it should be received with an understanding that God’s desire is that we become wise and gracious stewards for His kingdom.

You have always been very generous givers at Pea Ridge and I know God has blessed this church because of your generosity. I trust that your giving is grounded in the Word and in your relationship to Jesus Christ. As God continues to grow our church, I am certain that He will provide, through His people, for all that He calls us to accomplish for His kingdom. Thanks for your giving and thanks for your willingness to take even greater steps of faith for our God.

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