



Why Christians Do Not Give And What We Can Do About It

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Short Quiz ...

What do you think the most likely response would be?

“Why is the offering a part of our church services?”

Majority response from 10 random church attenders on Sunday morning?

Majority response from 5 random staff members at your church?

Your personal response?

Short Quiz ...

What do you think the most likely response would be?

“Why is the offering a part of our church services?”

Majority response from 10 random church attenders on Sunday morning?

“Because the church needs money to function”

Majority response from 5 random staff members at your church?

“Because the Bible says giving is an act of obedience”

Your personal response?

“Because our giving reflects the depth of our love for Christ”

Herein lies the problem ...

We do not have a shared understanding of giving

- **Between 30% and 50% of church attenders in evangelical churches give nothing or next to nothing (less than \$2 per week)**
- **Between 6% and 8% of regular church attenders tithe**
- **Average giving in the church is between 2% and 3%**
- **Giving in the church is lower today than during the Great Depression ... as a percent of income**

Big Question ... Why is this?

Contributing Factors To Why Christians Do Not Give

1) They believe they cannot afford to give

- Personal finances are out of control
- They are overwhelmed with debt payments
- Wrong priorities in their spending

Contributing Factors To Why Christians Do Not Give

2) They have not been taught *WHY* they should give

- People rarely respond when missing the “why”
- Biblical perspective has been missing
- Too often more about the *HOW* to give ... not the *WHY*

Contributing Factors To Why Christians Do Not Give

3) They see giving as a financial transaction with the church ... not a spiritual transaction with God

- “My family needs the money more than the church”
- “I need to be ‘emotionally moved’ to give”
- “The church is not using the money the way I want”
- “The church cares more about my money than me”

Contributing Factors To Why Christians Do Not Give

4) They see the church being the “hero” not the “guide”

- “Give us your money and we will do great Kingdom work”
- “You care more about getting from me than for me”
- “The church is not helping me grow in generosity”

Contributing Factors To Why Christians Do Not Give

5) They see themselves as Owners not Stewards

- “I worked hard for my money ... I will decide”
- Never been taught to consult God about giving
- Fear of giving up ownership of their money

Contributing Factors To Why Christians Do Not Give

6) They see their modest giving won't made a difference

- “The rich folks will carry the load without me”
- “Some day when I make more money I will give”
- “The church has plenty of money”

The Critical Question ...

Since this is the current reality

What Can We Do About It?

What Can We Do?

1) Teach giving as a spiritual transaction not a financial one

- Emphasize not “fundraising” but “faith-raising”
- Focus on the attitude of giving not to act of giving
- Use key Bible passages that emphasize this

Key Bible Passages

- Philippians 4:16-17 ... *“For even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid more than once when I was in need. Not that I desire your gifts; what I desire more is that more be credited to your account.”*
- 2 Corinthians 8:8 ... *“I am not commanding you (to give), but I want to test the sincerity of your love.”*
- 2 Corinthians 9:11 ... *“You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous ... ”*

What Can We Do?

2) Teach that giving is to God not the church or to causes

- 2 Corinthians 8:2,5 ... *“In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. ... They gave themselves first of all to the Lord, and then by the will of God also to us.”*
- In Mark 14:3-6, *Mary pours extremely expensive perfume on Jesus while the disciples rebuke her harshly for “wasting it” rather than giving it to the poor. But Jesus disagrees saying, “She has done a beautiful thing “for Me.””*
- In Acts 10:1-4, *Cornelius, a God-fearing Roman soldier, gave generously and prayed to God regularly. An angel of God came to him and said that his generosity and prayers came up as a “memorial offering before God.”*

God

**The
Giving
Triangle**

2 Corinthians 9:7

“You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don’t give reluctantly or in response to pressure.

“For God loves a person who gives cheerfully.”

God’s Children

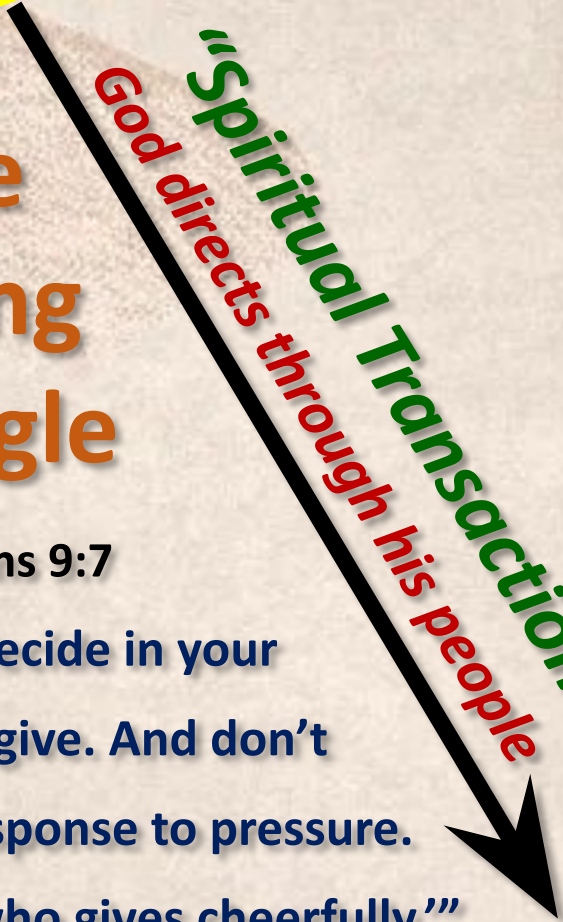
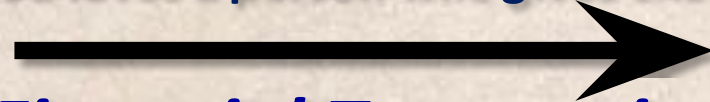
Needs & Causes

“Financial Transaction”

Danger of excluding God

“Spiritual Transaction”
Directed to God

“Spiritual Transaction”
God directs through his people



What Can We Do?

3) Stress giving decisions impact our relationship to God

- Philippians 4:18 ... *“I have received full payment and have more than enough... I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God.”*
- Hebrews 11:4 ... *“By faith Abel brought God a better offering than Cain did. By faith he was commended as righteous, when God spoke well of his offerings.”*
- 2 Corinthians 8:19-20 ... *“He was chosen by the churches to carry the offering, which we administer in order to honor the Lord himself ... we want to avoid criticism with this gift. We are taking pains to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord but also in the eyes of man.”*

What Can We Do?

4) Explain ... “Generosity writes you into the story of God”

- Teach specific biblical passages that support this truth
- The feeding of the 5,000 ... started with the generosity of the little boy who gave to Jesus, then Jesus gave to the disciples and the disciples gave to the people and the miracle of multiplication happened
- The Generosity of the Good Samaritan
 - Compassion, Time, Comfort, Safety, Money and Commitments
- The widow gave the little she had and was written into the story of God
- If we care about our people, we will desperately want them to be written into God’s story by their generous attitudes and actions

Two Things to Think About ...

- If someone in your congregation died and left your church enough money to totally cover two years of budget ... Would you still take up an offering?
- When your church introduces the offering on Sunday morning ... How different is that from how the Red Cross or the local food bank would ask for money?

In Closing ... Our Language Matters!

Critical questions:

- Does our language more frequently communicate giving as a financial transaction or a spiritual one?
- When setting up the offering are we more often promoting the church as the “hero” or the “guide?”
- Does our communication give people the impression we want more “from” our people or “for” our people?
- What could we specifically do to teach our people that “Generosity writes them into the story of God?”