

GIVING GUIDELINES

"Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."
2 Corinthians 9:7

A HEART ISSUE

Jesus talked about money more than he talked about virtually any other topic. And so we believe that giving is an essential part of our discipleship and our relationship with God. Primarily, giving is a heart issue. While giving would be an expectation of commitment to the church, it's not forced and it's not a

subscription fee! None of the leaders of the church know who gives what, or who gives at all. However, as Tim Keller says, "There will be no significant spiritual growth in your life unless you put money and your attitude towards it into God's hands."

THE BLESSING OF GIVING

We believe that it's actually a blessing and a privilege to give to the work of the church and God's Kingdom. The apostle Paul writes: "But since you excel in everything... see that you also excel in

this grace of giving." (2 Corinthians 8:7) Giving is not a legalistic thing - it is a reflection of God's grace - we can never out-give God. Giving is a privilege, a joy and a great investment.

WHAT TO GIVE

We believe the Bible teaches the following principles about giving:

- Everything you have belongs to God (Ps 24:1) - He is the owner, we are the stewards
- Give first to God rather than what you have left - the principle of 'firstfruits' runs throughout the Bible
- Giving should be regular*, systematic and proportional to your income (1 Cor 16:1-2)
- Many people find the 'tithe' (10%) to be a helpful guideline. However, this is not a rule - the New Testament emphasis is that what you give should be generous and sacrificial (eg 2 Cor 8:1-7) - so the question is, what is generous and sacrificial for you?
- God provides when we give generously so we can continue to give generously (2 Cor 9:6-11)
- Giving and generosity is the one area in which God invites His people to put Him to the test (Malachi 3:10)

GIVE OUT OF WHAT YOU HAVE

We recognise that your personal circumstances will affect how you are able to give. If this is a difficult time for you financially, please do not feel

under any obligation - we believe you should only give out of what you have. Feel free to talk to a leader if you are struggling with debt.