

A GUIDE TO FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP



We believe God wants us to recognize that the time, treasure, and talents in our lives are gifts from Him. Everything we own He has given to us. He simply asks that we invest in His work by returning a portion of those gifts. Most of us understand this and want to be generous. But in practice, giving can generate questions. Why should we give? How much should we give? How will our gifts be used? At Horizon, we want to support your giving goals. This document provides a brief guide to financial stewardship and giving opportunities at Horizon.

WHY SHOULD I GIVE?

From the time their children are born, parents begin teaching them to share their possessions. They want their children to understand that what they have is to be shared with others. When it comes to their own possessions, however, adults often forget that very lesson. They look upon their own possessions as something to be kept for themselves.

Why should we share what we have? Here are a few reasons you might want to consider.

Gratitude ... The first reason is that God has shared so much with us. In fact, "...God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." (John 3:16). Generosity with others, sharing what God has generously shared with us, is a natural response.

Purpose ... Why has God been so generous with us? Certainly He wants us to enjoy life, but ultimately, God gives us resources so we will invest them in ways that will accomplish His purpose to bring hope to the world. He gives us talents and financial resources, expecting us to put them to work, not just to benefit ourselves, but for the benefit of others.

Reward ... Giving to God's work is not a matter of throwing money away, but rather it is an investment that promises a staggering return. God promises to reward us for investing in His people and His work (Luke 12:33).

HOW MUCH SHOULD I GIVE?

But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.

(2 Corinthians 9:6-8)

God wants us to give cheerfully. Giving your time, talents and treasure will not buy you entrance into heaven. That comes by faith in Jesus Christ and by faith alone. Don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. Giving back to God should be a "want to" activity, not a "have to" one. If you can't give cheerfully, don't give! God tells us He responds to our gratitude as expressed through giving by lavishing blessings on us. This is no "get rich quick" scheme. It is simply the way God responds to us when we express gratitude for what He has done.

Priority. The question of "how much" ultimately comes down to a decision between you and God. But the Bible does give us some practical guidelines. Scripture says that we own nothing. We are simply managers of God's property. Though He seldom asks it, God wants us to be willing to put 100% on the table. After all, 100% of what we have is His.

Percentage. The tithe (or 10%) is often considered a "benchmark" for giving. The question is, "10% of what?" Gross? Net? Can I give more or less? That's between you and God, but ask yourself whether you would rather He bless you on the gross or the net. Remember, it is the attitude with which you give that counts more than the amount.

Progressive. The important thing is not how much we are giving now, but which direction we are moving: are we becoming more selfish or more generous? Begin by committing something, whether it is 1%, 5%, 10% or 90%. Once you start experiencing the joy of giving you will find yourself wanting to move toward a larger goal.



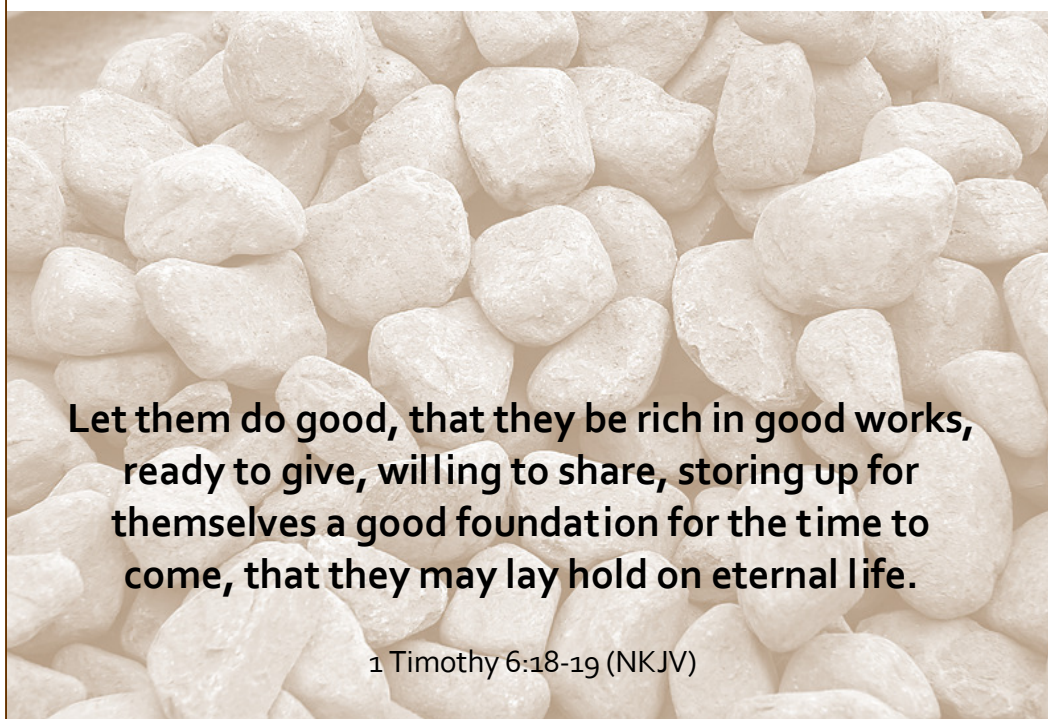
Giving to God is the one area where God says, "Test Me."

Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this," says the Lord of hosts, "If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it."

(Malachi 3:10)

HOW WILL HORIZON USE MY GIFTS?

All gifts are used by Horizon Community Church either to support the wide range of programs and services offered or as part of the capital building campaign, "On Course for the Future." If you wish to obtain more information, please contact Horizon's Chief Operating Officer, Phil Charlton, who will be happy to answer any questions you may have.



**Let them do good, that they be rich in good works,
ready to give, willing to share, storing up for
themselves a good foundation for the time to
come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.**

1 Timothy 6:18-19 (NKJV)

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GIVING

