

EPHESIANS 3:20-21

“NOW TO HIM WHO IS ABLE TO DO FAR MORE ABUNDANTLY THAN ALL THAT WE ASK OR THINK, ACCORDING TO THE POWER AT WORK WITHIN US, TO HIM BE GLORY IN THE CHURCH AND IN CHRIST JESUS THROUGHOUT ALL GENERATIONS, FOREVER AND EVER. AMEN.”

Activity	Weekly	Yearly	Three-Years
Eliminate 1 Meal Dining Out	\$15	\$1,560	\$2,340
Reduce Ongoing Expenses	\$25	\$1300	\$3,900
Reduce Vacation Budget	-	\$250	\$750
Eliminate 1 "Dates" Per Month	-	\$900	\$2,700
Reduce Coffee Purchases	\$10	\$520	\$1,560
Eliminate 2 movie rentals per month	-	\$120	\$360
Three-Year Total			\$11,610

A LOOK AT ONE FAMILY'S COMMITMENT TO INCREASED GIVING

Creative Strategies
IN GIVING

DETERMINING WHAT TO GIVE

WANT TO BE INVOLVED BUT NOT SURE WHERE TO START?

PRAYERFUL CONVERSATION WITH THE LORD, YOUR FAMILY, AND YOUR PEERS REMAINS CRITICAL. ASK THE LORD, AND BE CONFIDENT IN HIS DIRECTION: “GOD, WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO THROUGH ME TO ACCOMPLISH YOUR WILL IN MY CHURCH?”

FIRST, DISCUSS.

Your treasure is already where your heart is; ask yourself if both are submitted to His Lordship. Bringing your requests to God and receiving wisdom from Him is every believer's privilege and responsibility. He wants to reveal His heart and His will to you; be proactive and ask Him.

THEN, DECIDE.

Giving out of your income is a great place to start; perhaps it's an unexpected financial blessing that could be set aside. Consider assets: did you know you can give land or a home directly to your church and avoid paying any capital gains tax while still getting a fair market value deduction? Then there's "stuff": you move it, you store it, you insure it, and you dust it. Perhaps you could give it? Most importantly, consider a sacrificial gift. Set aside funds you normally would have spent on something you can do without or even something you think you can't.

NOW, DO!

Follow through! Faith without works is dead; we must set it in motion to produce its results. Making a commitment is about anticipating what God will do with what you give through your humility and obedience, not about how or how much you give. Your job is to ask, listen, and respond. His role is to bring seed to the one who would sow. He is faithful, and we are to likewise model that faithfulness.

DETERMINING HOW TO GIVE

GIVE BY SACRIFICE. David, a “man after God's own heart,” declared, “That which costs me nothing is not a sacrifice” (Acts 13:22, 2 Sam. 24:24). Challenge your people to give what they otherwise would spend - without a second thought - on a fast-food meal, or a cup of fine coffee. These real-world examples are almost universal to American culture and provide an opportunity for leaders to bring the principle of “denying oneself” to the forefront.

GIVE BY REVELATION, NOT BY REASON. Pray and ask God what He wants to do through you, and expect an answer (John 10:4). Don't be frustrated or disobedient if you can't discern how you will produce that amount. Walk by faith, not by sight, and make that your commitment.

WAYS TO GIVE

GIVING DOESN'T HAVE TO BE COMPLICATED. CONSIDERING THE FOLLOWING SUGGESTIONS OFTEN CAN RESULT IN UNANTICIPATED, FAITH-STIRRING GENEROSITY:

- Eliminating “extra” expenses or spending and redirecting those payments.
- Selling off excess. Releasing appreciated assets is often accompanied by the blessing of avoiding capital gains taxes on the sale of said asset. Additionally, you may receive an income tax charitable deduction on the donation.
- Donating valuable “stuff.” Sell it and give the proceeds directly to the church, or donate it and trust the church to liquidate it in the most beneficial fashion.
- Dedicating unexpected income. Perhaps it's in the form of a surprise bonus, a favorable commission, an inheritance, or an increase in salary.
- Re-prioritizing your budget. An honest rearranging of what's important typically reveals available funds. Perhaps it's a matter of giving up something in your current budget - a hobby, habit, or routine - and redirecting those monies permanently, or for a season.
- Exercising self-control. Postponing a planned purchase, vacation, or investment will free up resources to support the current needs and opportunities as presented in the campaign. God loves a cheerful giver, and a content heart in the midst of self-denial results in glory to God.