



GIVE GENEROUSLY!

God is a generous God. And he teaches us to be generous. Throughout the Bible we see examples of sacrificial giving, beginning with God, but also as evidenced through his people. Here are some basic principles to consider:

1. Put God first. With every paycheck, budget the amount you plan to set aside to give back to God as you invest in his work. (Proverbs 3:9-10)
2. Use the tithe as a guide. Although there is not a clear New Testament command to tithe one's income, the Old Testament principle of tithing made its way into the practice of the early church. Jesus decried the legalistic approach to the tithe (Matthew 23:23, Luke 11:42), not because of the practice itself, but because of the disregard for the greater principles of justice, mercy, faith and the love of God.
3. Giving should be both planned and spontaneous in response to needs. (1 Corinthians 16:2, 1 John 3:17-18)
4. Giving fulfills the principle of sowing and reaping. (Malachi 3:10, Luke 6:38, 2 Corinthians 9:6)
5. God provides the grace to be able to give. (2 Corinthians 9:10)
6. Giving is commanded, but should be done voluntarily, out of cheerful obedience, with a view to grace and love, not rigid legalism. (2 Corinthians 8:7-15, 9:7)
7. Giving should be generous and sacrificial. (Mark 12:41-44, Hebrews 13:16, 2 Corinthians 8:1-5)
8. Live substantially below your means so that you have more to give and more to save. (2 Corinthians 8:1-5)
9. Giving is an issue of the heart. Where our treasure is our heart will be. The opposite is also true. (Luke 12:34)
10. Our earthly giving affects our spiritual riches. (Luke 16:10-12)
11. Giving should be done secretly, with humility. (Matthew 6:1-4)
12. Giving honors God and brings him glory. (2 Corinthians 9:1-3)
13. Giving brings a blessing to the giver. (Acts 20:35)
14. Support your local church, including its pastors, teachers and leaders. (1 Corinthians 16:2, Galatians 6:6.)
15. Support evangelists, and those engaged in apostolic ministry among unbelievers. (3 John 8)
16. Support the poor, widows and orphans. (1 John 3:16-18)
17. Although it is good to give to ministries even if you don't personally engage with the beneficiaries, consider investing in the work of individual missionaries so that you can pray for and be kept abreast of their work.
18. Consider giving globally. Jesus wants us to disciple the nations. Support a missionary on every continent to give you a global sense of the Lord's work.
19. Assess what hinders you from giving generously. Consider such roadblocks as selfishness, procrastination, illegitimate excuses, overspending, a standard of living you can't afford. If necessary, take drastic action. (Matthew 5:29-30)