

Intro: I remember sitting in HR Block one day trying to explain to the individual doing my taxes what a tithe was. They finally got it...but the look on their face said it all. You are CRAZY for giving away 10% of your income...WHY in the world would you ever do such a thing!

It doesn't make sense, does it? I mean, from an economic, social, personal, family, cultural perspective, the idea that you would look at your income, figure out 10% and then give that away every week...every month....every year!

You try to explain THAT to someone that doesn't know Jesus, and they will think you are from another planet!

Heb 11:13 *"All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth"*

As we continue to look at getting our priorities in order, and process what it means to be a part of a Church, 6 Pieces to the "Path" that we believe will help everyone grow to be the kind of man/woman of God He desires.

Giving Generously

1. Generous Giving Is About Grace, Not Money!

1 Cor 8:1-2

When we start to talk about giving the first thing we have to do is get our frame of reference right!

Most of us think that our giving to God is at its core a financial issue.

And it isn't At it's very basic giving is a GRACE issue. *Unmerited Favor,*

Vs 1 We want you to "get" what was going on in the Macedonian Church...Because it doesn't make sense!

Mathematical Formula looks like this: Severe Trial + Extreme Poverty + Overflowing Joy = Rich Generosity
It just doesn't add up! Why? Because of Grace!

Their Joy at what God had done tilted the entire equation and led them to Give Generously!

- When We Think About Giving:

~Duty ~Responsibility
~Need ~Obligation

- When God thinks about Giving:

~Joy: ~Overflow
~Opportunity ~Grace
~Blessing

Illus: Triumphal Entry: Colt Luke 19:28-38

Why are you taking that? The Lord has need of it!

Ok...If it is for Jesus....

2. Generous Giving Is About Sacrifice, Not Amount!

1 Cor 8:3-4

We have it all wrong. We look at the wrong end of the equation again! Totally backwards

We look at the Amount we GIVE....God looks at the amount we have left OVER!

VS 3-4

- Their Sacrifice

~As Much as they were able Lit: *Gave all that was within their power*
~Beyond their ability Lit: *Over, above and beyond their ability*
~Pleaded for Opportunity: Lit: *Praying to us for the opportunity...Pleading....Begging*

- Their Focus

~We focus on the WRONG thing! (We think giving is about money...it isn't!)
~Giving is about the Sacrifice! (I have said for years, God doesn't want your money, He wants your heart!)
Now, there is a little secret that goes along with that...Has money...has heart!
~Backwards: We think, what is the amount of what I give?

God says, No, Don't look at what you give...Look at what you have left!
That tells you the size of your gift! Not the number of zero's

Illus: Widows Mite

Mark 12:41-44

3. Generous Giving Comes From The Heart, Not The Checkbook.

2 Cor 8:5-9

When we think about giving we often start in the wrong place

We start with the Checkbook. They started with the heart!

- Their Heart

~Gave themselves first This entire discussion is about the heart! Never was about money
~Sincerity of your love! Paul just said...The sincerity of our love can sometimes be measured by giving
~Jesus modeled it for us Grace and love overcame cost!
He gave himself to us, Gave up everything for us Despite the cost...He loved us!

- Jesus Teaching:

We think: I give to what I love....
Jesus taught us NO....you LOVE what you give to!
Mt 6:20-21
Heart FOLLOWS Money...Not Money following Heart!

4. Generous Giving Is Systematic And Intentional, Not Random.

2 Cor 8:10-15

Any time you look in the bible, OT or NT, you will see that God’s expectation is that our giving Systematic/Intentional
Many times we go about it in an entirely different way.

- **Our Approach**

- ~This is how I feel today
- ~This is what I have today
- ~This is what I see the need to be today

- **What is Best**

Systematic

Vs 10-15 This is the BEST way to go about giving!
way

Lit = *Right way, Most beneficial way, The most productive*

- ~First to start,
- ~Be sure you finish!
- ~1 Cor 16:2

First Day of Week (Sunday) Give Weekly as you worship
Set it Aside Reserve it for God Regularly, Consistently
In keeping with God’s blessing Proportional
Tithe: Great place to start!

- ~The Body shares equal sacrifice (All way back to manna in wilderness)
Give Generously as God blesses you!
God always provides

- **Intentional**

- ~Willingness: *Desire and Intention*
- ~Completion: *Performance*

You had the desire to do it...started well....now make sure you get it across the finish line!

CONCL:

Illus; Cartoon: So glad you said you didn’t know were you were going to get the money for they new building! For a moment we thought you were going to get it from us!

Giving is always a matter of the heart! We model after what God has done on our behal