

16 WAYS TO INCREASE GIVING (FOR PASTORS)

1. **Establish a Year-Round Stewardship/Finance Committee.**

There is more to stewardship development than the annual event. Stewardship is more a process than a program. Stewardship learning and performance flourish best in an atmosphere of planned systematic cultivation.

2. **Set Higher Goals.**

The giving potential of most churches is far beyond its present levels. Only unprecedented goals release unprecedented performance.

3. **Get Back to Early Christian Communications.**

The early Christian churches had none of the modern technology such as copiers, computers, telephones, etc. They prevailed through face-to-face talk; person-to-person conversation and commitment, and in small groups.

4. **Give More to Missions.**

By its own giving, the church sets its members a compelling example.

Church giving off the bottom generates member giving off the bottom.

Church giving off the top (tithes and offerings) generates members' giving of the top (tithes and offerings).

"To show a liberal, self-denying spirit for the success of foreign missions is a sure way to advance home missionary work; for the prosperity of the home work depends largely, under God, upon the reflex influence of the evangelical work done in countries afar off." Gospel Workers, p. 465.

5. **Reverse the Every-Member Visitation.**

Rather than mailing the commitment cards and then calling on those who do not respond, call first on your prospective best givers. Spend 85% of your time where 85% of the money will come from, not on the last 15% where very little will happen.

6. **Wear Handcuffs.**

Be the pastor equipper to your lay stewardship leaders but don't do their work for them. Keep your hands off the machinery. Accept the chairmanship of no committee. The question is: who is helping whom with whose responsibility? Are lay leaders helping you with your responsibility? No! Are you helping them with theirs? Yes!

7. **Organize Your Best Givers.**

Only good givers can make other good gifts. Nominal givers can make only other nominal givers. In stewardship development and cultivation, use your best givers.

8. **Teach the Virtue of Commitment.**
"I'll give, but I won't pledge usually means, "I'll not give much." Teach and preach planned giving. Don't defend commitment of pledging on the basis that the church needs it so that it can plan. The member needs to make a decision based on his/her relationship to God.
9. **Encourage Systematic Giving.**
Presenting one's tithes and offerings is an essential element of worship. God planned systematic benevolence for the good of mankind.
10. **Recognize and Honor Faithful Givers.**
With the permission of the givers let others know about how God is blessing them as His channels.
11. **Provide Guidelines for Giving.**
For most families, "How much should we give?" is a difficult decision. Be prepared to offer some specific, helpful suggestions for individual cases--not just bland generalities.
12. **Provide for Confidential Conversations.**
Counseling about Christian giving should be highly confidential, and should take place in the homes. That is what the EMC should be. Let it be laity to laity. It is best for the pastor to stay out of this.
13. **Encourage Personal Testimony.**
The most powerful, effective stewardship force within a congregation is the personal testimony of those who have experienced the gospel of good giving.
14. **Let the Congregation Take Pride.**
As the level of giving in the congregation rises to its goal, publicize the good news. Keep the good news flowing. Publicize success, not failure.
15. **Provide New Members with Education and Commitment Right Away.**
Don't wait until the next EMV. That is too late. Becoming a member of the family and signing a commitment can almost be considered two sides of the same coin. If you don't commit your money, there could be some question about your nonfinancial commitment.
16. **Raise Capital Funds Separately.**
Except for new work or mission groups, few church mortgages are really necessary. 80% of American and Canadian churches could raise more building funds than budget funds in one year.

"It is a dishonor to God for our churches to be burdened with debt...If the money that is needed to build could be first accumulated, by strenuous efforts, and the church dedicated free from debt, how much better it would be." CS 259, 260.