

CHRISTIAN GIVING IS SACRIFICIAL GIVING

- A response to God's sacrificial giving in Christ

The motivation for all our Christian Giving should be our appreciation of God's giving to us – especially his giving of himself in the life and death of Jesus (John 3: 16).

- A measure of our desire to spread the gospel

Everything we have is from God and for God. This means that all our giving should be an act of praise to God. Giving to share and spread God's greatest gift – the good news of his saving grace – should be especially important to us. This is the work of the Church (Matthew 28: 16-20).

- A priority in our personal spending

Our giving to God for the work of his Church should be a priority in our personal spending, as it was for the Israelites who were expected to bring the 'first fruits' to God (Deuteronomy 26: 1-11).

- A generous proportion of our income

As some of us have much larger incomes than others, our offering should be a proportion of our income, rather than a fixed sum of money. If our offering is truly a response to God's giving to us, it will be a generous, even sacrificial, proportion of our income (Psalm 116: 12).

Is our giving a clear sign of our love for God and our commitment to Christ and the Church?

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A study leaflet
for groups or
individuals

CHRISTIAN GIVING ...

Begins with Prayer

We thank you, God, for all your gifts:
for life in your wonderful world;
for space and time to enjoy your gift of life;
for talents that bring us a sense of fulfilment.

We thank you, God, for coming as Jesus:
to show us how much you love us;
to forgive us through the cross of Calvary;
to raise us with Christ to new life with you.

We thank you, God, for your Holy Spirit:
your presence to guide us day by day;
your power to support us day by day;
your assurance of your continuing love.

Studies the teaching of Jesus

Four passages from Luke's gospel:

Luke 12: 13-21 Jesus tells a story of a rich man who stored up all his wealth for his own use. When he died, he could not take it with him.

How could this man have become rich in the sight of God?

Luke 18: 18-25 Jesus realises that the rich young man's possessions stand in the way of him becoming a disciple. Jesus challenges the rich young man to give up his possessions.

Why did Jesus demand so much from the young man?

Luke 19: 1-10 Jesus visits Jericho and encounters Zacchaeus, the tax collector who had cheated the people by collecting more taxes than were required by the Roman authorities.

When Zacchaeus experienced the grace of God in Jesus, what effect did this have on his lifestyle?

Luke 21: 1-4 Jesus watches the people presenting their gifts at the temple. Some rich people give large sums of money. A poor widow offers one small coin.

What was Jesus praising when he commended the widow's offering?

Considers the giving of the first Christians

In Acts 2: 43-47 and 4: 32-37 we see two pictures of the first days of the Church. One of the characteristics of life in the first Christian communities was a surrendering of individual possessions for the common good.

What made the first Christians adopt this lifestyle?

On a number of occasions in his Letters, Paul reminds Christian congregations of the poverty of the Christian community in Jerusalem. He appeals for financial support. In 2 Corinthians 8: 1-15, he appeals to the Christians in Corinth by reminding them of the example already shown by the Macedonian Christians.

Why did Paul commend the example of the Macedonian Christians?

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