

GIVING GUIDE

"LIVING IS GIVING"



2 Corinthians 9:6-7 (ESV)

6 The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7 Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, **for God loves a cheerful giver.**

“There are three conversions a person needs to experience: The conversion of the head, the conversion of the heart, and **the conversion of the pocketbook.**” Martin Luther

Malachi 3:8-12 The Message (MSG)

9-11 “Bring your full tithe to the Temple treasury so there will be ample provisions in my Temple. Test me in this and see if I don’t open up heaven itself to you and pour out blessings beyond your wildest dreams. For my part, I will defend you against marauders, protect your wheat fields and vegetable gardens against plunderers.” The Message of God-of-the-Angel-Armies.
12 “You’ll be voted ‘Happiest Nation.’ You’ll experience what it’s like to be a country of grace.” God-of-the-Angel-Armies says so.

Talking about money can be challenging on many levels. Some of us feel we don't have enough and others have more than we need. Wherever we are on the spectrum, we are not defined by how much money we do or do not possess. **We are defined by Jesus.** We are a King's Kid! Who the Son set free is free indeed, come on somebody shout - **"I AM FREE."**

Financial health and integrity impacts our future trajectory. We have seen this time and time again. **As a King's kid,** it is important we know how the Kingdom works and operates in all ways, including our money. Having financial literacy and exercising the principles **God teaches us is a game changer.** God is a giver, and we get the joy to be cheerful in the same way to God's glory - **we are forever changed.** We don't own any of it - God does. We are stewards of the resources He has given us. Giving impacts us deeply in our hearts and that is why God wants it **for us,** not from us. We move what we know, from our head to our heart, through our hands.

We at City Life believe that **Living is Giving.** We believe we get to give, and don't have to give. It's an opportunity to be like Jesus. We exercise our faith, worship, and show deep level of trust as we give. Giving is as natural as living, and when we give, our lives enter fun depths of adventure. **Generosity is our privilege!** We hope this material is helpful on your giving journey to steward and invest in what Jesus is up to! We make an **INVESTMENT** into the **FOREVER KINGDOM.** We hope this guide can help disciple us further on how to see generosity as an investment.

LET'S DO IT!

WHAT IS A TITHE?

Simply put, a tithe (tenth) is the first 10% of our income. It's measured in money or monetary gain; not our time or talents.

Leviticus 27:30 (ESV) 30 "Every tithe (tenth) of the land, whether of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the trees, is the Lord's; it is holy to the Lord."

WHAT IS AN OFFERING?

You may hear this term in church. This refers to giving above a tithe and is more of a one-time giving opportunity. Example - supporting a missionary when they come to City Life, an offering for Christmas and Year End Push, or sponsoring a child for food/clothing. There is much debate about if all giving is an *offering* in the New Covenant, and overall we have found it helpful to operate in the tithe first and then offering next out of the "we get to, not have to" mindset.

WILL I GET RICH WHEN I GIVE?

This is a massive misconception for many. The answer is...no. We don't give to get monetary blessing alone, we give for God's Glory and for His Story. We give for the advancement of the Good News, making disciples, & helping the poor. The great news is we have a good Father who will reward us, and we will reap mightily both now and forever. That may include great blessing through monetary means, but it certainly includes promises of a treasure forever. The superior truth is how am I stewarding and being faithful with God's resources He has graced us to have and invest to sow seed.

WHY WOULD GOD WANT MY MONEY?

God doesn't want our money; He wants our hearts. We can't serve two masters. We can only serve one. God doesn't want us to be set free from sin alone, but also walk in that freedom daily. The love of money and lie to not be content destroys so many of us. Generosity is one of the quickest ways to cut the umbilical cord on coveting and reminds us that God is in charge of it all. Becoming a radical giver is a joyful opportunity. We trust, believe, and practice that we can't out give God. As we keep an open hand and are faithful in a little, He blesses us to be more generous with a lot.

DO I HAVE TO TITHE?

The short answer is no. Jesus bought our freedom from the law, and we are not under any curse. The longer answer is tithing is a powerful Kingdom principle and opportunity to give and be a part of what God is doing. Giving is a grace from God.

It's not what God wants from us, but more of what He wants for us. We don't own anything, God owns it all. We ask God what He would have us give. Tithing is a powerful exercise to begin the giving adventure for us to trust God with our finances. We see tithing more like the floor of God's generosity structure. In the Old Testament, the tithe was created as somewhat of a tax structure and overall scholars believe Israel tithe totaled approximately 23% of their income, others believe it was a flat 10%. The point is they gave first out of all their increase. To the tabernacle, the poor, and hungry, the Israelites gave their tithe.

In the New Testament, we see followers supporting Jesus' ministry (Luke 8), others giving all they had (Acts 2, 4) at times and the main theme is EXTREME GENEROSITY CHEERFULLY. Woah!

Tithing begins that journey to plant seed in the Kingdom of God. Remember, Jesus says where our treasure is our heart is...

Ultimately, each one of us needs to seek God for what sacrificial giving and to be extremely generous with our resources looks like.

I WANT TO GIVE & INVEST IN THE KINGDOM, BUT WHERE DO I START?

God has established His Church as the manifold wisdom of Himself. The church is a home, a people, and a body with Jesus as the head. Jesus uses the church as a vehicle for His Good News to travel in, disciples to be made, the Kingdom to be caught/taught and be an example of holistic restoration to a fallen world. We want God's Church to have ample resources for the cause of Christ! We believe and practice the freedom of tithing and being generous to our Local Church first and then giving outside next in that order. We are free to do so, with hearts cheerfully, and we invest in a Kingdom that will reign forever. This is a great place to start.

Ephesians 3:10 (ESV)

10 so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.

WHY GIVE TO CITY LIFE?

City Life is Jesus' bride, His local church (ekklesia). If you call City Life home, let's make this the best home we ever could. Let's help reach more of God's kids to come back home. We have a crazy big prayer that Jesus is coming back for City Life first because we are so radical about His love:-) Hey, you can't knock us for dreaming big!

So if you call City Life home or simply want to help us, we would love to run together.

More resources means the further we can travel to keep ***Loving the City and World ONE LIFE at a Time!***

GIVING TO CITY LIFE HELPS EMPOWER

- Staff (Helping equip the church for the work of the ministry)
- Facility rentals for ministry
- Ministry operations to serve the people
- Love the City Impact
- Love the World Missions work
- Plant 100's of ARC Life Giving Churches
- CL Stewardship Guide
 - 2020 City Life Annual Report

HOW DO I START GIVING AT CITY LIFE?

1. WAYS TO GIVE

1. www.citylifelansing.com
2. Download the Church Center App
3. Text to give any amount to 84321
4. Mail in a Check (PO Box 22181 Lansing, MI 48909)

2. **CREATE AN ACCOUNT** - Click Give & follow the steps to create an account

3. **AUTOMATIC/RECURRING GIVING** - Setting up automatic/recurring giving helps us live out our conviction of generosity. (We joke around that the Board of Water & Light shouldn't have autopay and not God's Bride..lol..jk...well kind of:-)

SHOULD I RECORD MY GIVING?

Absolutely! This is a perfect way to show faithfulness in the area of finances. If you are giving to be seen, that is a separate issue. Not tracking giving can be a form of deception also. It can be that we don't want to be honest with ourselves. Keeping good records helps each of us account and track healthy consistency. (God is into numbers, He has a whole book of the Bible named Numbers) Luke 16:10 (ESV) "One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much.

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR GIVING,
INCOME & ASSISTANCE:**

<http://bit.ly/GivingResources>