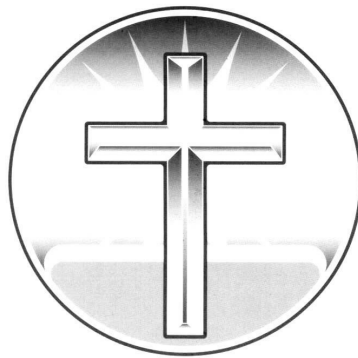


# *A Practical Guide for Planning Your Giving*

## *Developing the Lifestyle of a Steward*

Giving is more about who we are than what we do. When we understand ourselves to be stewards (managers) of the material resources God has placed in our possession, what we do will flow from our identity.

The Green Lawn family has entered into a project we are calling ...



## *Under God's Construction: Designing for Discipleship*

This is a campaign to meet the growing facility needs of the ministry that goes out from this congregation. The question is often asked, "What will I be able to do, and how do I go about making this decision?" Hopefully this guide will be beneficial to you and your family as you consider your participation in the campaign.

**This exercise, however, has greater application than giving toward the campaign.** The suggestions made in this guide can help you as you grow in your life as a faithful steward of God's material blessings in your life. Prayerfully consider how God wants to use you to glorify Him through your material possessions.

## ***Participation in the “Designing for Discipleship” Campaign***

### ***Commitments***

The word “commitments” refers to the amount individuals or families pledge to the campaign in order to meet the need stated.

1. Commitments are over and above present giving for a three-year period.
2. Individuals or families are challenged to respond to the theme:

**“Not Equal Gifts, But Equal Sacrifice.”**

No one will ever be pressured or embarrassed. Each person will be asked to make the church, its leadership, its ministry and its facility expansion efforts a matter of daily prayer. Each person is asked to discover God's will for giving.

3. A meaningful commitment is ...
  - a. Made willingly - Exodus 35:21; 2 Corinthians 9:7.
  - b. Discerned by prayer - James 1:5.
  - c. Sacrificial in nature - 2 Samuel 24:24.
  - d. Given in faith - Luke 6:38.

### ***What is Sacrifice?***

For many it is difficult to answer the question “What is sacrifice?” because this concept is foreign to most people today. It is a very biblical concept nonetheless. David said in 2 Samuel 24:24, “I will not sacrifice to the Lord my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing.”

A sacrifice will cost us something *in the way we live*. It is giving up something we love and cherish for something we love and cherish more.

The theme “Not Equal Gifts, But Equal Sacrifice” recognizes God has not given everyone the ability to give the same amount in dollars and cents. He does call us, however, to make the same *quality* of commitment. David in 1 Chronicles 29:3-5, Barnabas in Acts 4:31-37, the widow in Mark 12:41-43, and the Macedonian Christians in 2 Corinthians 8:1-5 all provide testimonies of sacrificial gifts.

Sacrifice is ...

- a. Altering one's lifestyle - Matthew 16:24; Romans 12:1-2.
- b. Rearranging one's priorities - Matthew 6:33.
- c. Giving up something - 2 Samuel 24:24.

Unfortunately, many consider their financial commitment to God about on the level of a tip to God. As with a tip, a believer may give a token gift to God because (1) he feels that God has given him good attention, as a waiter might, and (2) he feels that God might need his help, even as one would tip a young waiter who is attending the local university.

But a tip is not a sacrifice. Instead, a sacrifice must: (1) be given voluntarily, (2) be purposeful, and (3) represent exceptional value for the giver. Anything less than sacrificial giving provokes only pride or regret - or both. True sacrifice evokes JOY (2 Corinthians 8:1-3) in the giving and in the faith that one can fulfill the commitment of his prayerful response.

## ***A Living Example of Sacrificial Giving***

**Illustration:** A family of four with two teenagers

Current Giving: \$50 per week in regular contribution to church operating budget  
\$25 per week to a special mission project

Question: "What would a sacrificial commitment be for us today?"

Answer: "Anything beyond what we are presently giving."

Concern: "We want to participate, but how?"

Answer: "In order to arrive at a sacrificial commitment, we must give up

\* something we want,

\* something we need,

\* something that represents security.

Giving must be by faith. For us to make a sacrificial commitment, we would have to re-prioritize our lives. This is what the Lord helped our family to do.

### **The Plan:**

#### **1. Things we want or need.**

Son in private high school - \$200 per month

Finishes in one year

remaining 24 months of campaign  $\times$  \$200 = \$4,800

A copier has been paid off

monthly payment applied for 36 months  $\times$  \$133 = \$4,788

A vehicle gets paid off in 6 months

remaining 30 months of campaign  $\times$  \$299 = \$8,970

\$18,558

#### **2. An item that represents security**

Annuity costing \$208 per month

36 months  $\times$  \$208 = \$7,488

\$7,488

Thus far we had given out of what we wanted, needed, and what represented security, but we had not given by faith.

#### **3. By faith, this is what we will do.**

First year \$25  $\times$  52 weeks = \$1,300

Second year \$30  $\times$  52 weeks = \$1,560

Third year \$35  $\times$  52 weeks = \$1,820

\$4,680

### **Our three-year commitment summarized:**

Want and need \$18,558

Security 7,488

Giving by faith 4,680

Total Commitment \$30,726

## ***My Plan for Sacrificial Giving***

Current Giving: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Giving must be by faith. For us to make a sacrificial commitment, we will have to re-prioritize our lives. This is what we believe the Lord can lead our family to do.

### **The Plan:**

#### **1. Things we want or need.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### **2. An item that represents security**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Thus far we have given out of what we want, need, and what represents security, but we have not given by faith.

#### **3. By faith, this is what we will do.**

First year \_\_\_\_\_

Second year \_\_\_\_\_

Third year \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### **Our three-year commitment summarized:**

Want and need \_\_\_\_\_

Security \_\_\_\_\_

Giving by faith \_\_\_\_\_

Total Commitment \_\_\_\_\_

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