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CHURCH OFFERING TALKS

52 PROMPTS FOR EVERY OCCASION



11 TIPS FOR IMPROVING YOUR CHURCH OFFERING TALKS
52 CHURCH OFFERING SCRIPTS FOR EVERY OCCASION

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INTRODUCTION

Every week your church takes up an offering.

Regardless of your church's denomination, tradition, or location, there's likely a moment during your worship service when you receive tithes and offerings. Unfortunately, this moment can easily become something you dread, delegate to someone else, or gloss over.

But here's the deal:

Your church offering can (and should) be inspiring and reverent.

After all, you're giving people an opportunity to trust God with their finances and to participate in God's work in the church.

In *Church Offering Talks: 52 Scripts for Every Occasion*, we're going to help you make the most of these opportunities.

Below, you'll discover:

- 11 tips for improving your church offering talks
- 52 pre-written offering talks for every occasion

We pray this resource is a blessing for you and your church.

Let's get started!

11 TIPS FOR IMPROVING YOUR CHURCH OFFERING TALKS

As we've worked with pastors, there are several things we've learned about this offering moment that we'd like to pass along to you:

#1. PEOPLE LIKE TO GIVE TOWARD SOMETHING SPECIFIC

Do you know why online crowdsourcing sites are so popular? They give people a chance to donate toward something concrete. As you prepare to receive your church's offering, share stories of how your church has served the surrounding community, helped people overcome challenging circumstances, or spread the gospel around the globe. Be specific. Help your congregation see how their financial contributions made those moments possible. When you inspire people and invite them into these stories, they'll be more motivated to give.

#2. KNOW WHAT YOUR CHURCH WANTS TO HEAR

“Can you handle the offering?”

This is a question I’ve been asked on more than one occasion because the pastor was apprehensive to talk about money.

Here’s the deal: There’s no need to be afraid.

Go into the offering moment with the belief that your congregation desires to live for Jesus and wants to hear what the Bible has to say about managing their money. From there, go ahead and boldly proclaim what the Bible says!

#3. LET PEOPLE KNOW HOW TO GIVE

Toward the beginning of your offering time, let people know how they can give.

This reminder is something you’ll want to do every week during your offering. Give people an opportunity to get their phone ready to give with your church app, mobile giving, or online giving, or to get their cash or checkbook out.

At Tithe.ly, we provide our churches with an editable graphic they can display on-screen during their offering. Sharing a graphic is an easy way to remind your church about the different ways they can give.

#4. CAST A VISION

Your church will always have administrative costs.

You’ll need money to pay for your mortgage or rent, utilities, and office supplies. But leading people to give money toward the church’s bills isn’t inspirational.

Instead, answer these questions for the congregation:

- How does the financial support of your church further the kingdom of God?
- Do you use donations to support local organizations or missionaries around the world?
- Do you have an opportunity to acquire a new building to serve as a launching pad for the gospel?

Cast a vision for your congregation to get excited about. Let them see how their financial support furthers the kingdom and helps those in need, which leads to the next point.

#5. INVITE PEOPLE TO PARTICIPATE

As you cast a vision for your church, invite them to participate in God's work.

When you prepare to "make the ask," focus on using invitational language, like: "receive your offering," "your support helps all of us to fulfill God's call," or "your offering makes it possible to support missionaries around the world."

From just these few examples, the offering can be easily tied into the vision you cast for your church, and it presents the offering as an opportunity—not an obligation.

#6. USE SCRIPTURE

God has a lot to say about money, giving, and generosity. Don't ask people to take your word for it that they should give. Share what God says about money, so they learn the true reasons for giving to a local church.

#7. SHARE STORIES AND TESTIMONIES

Sharing a story will further inspire the generosity of your church.

The story you include doesn't have to be grandiose or a huge production.

You can talk about a conversation you recently had with someone or how the church's giving helped to support a student ministry camp, and you can read a message from one of the students.

Don't feel obligated to include a story every week. Just aim to share something every few weeks as a way of providing your church with updates.

#8. CAPTURE "THE MOMENT"

The time you ask people to give is what we like to call "the moment."

Up to this point in time, people in your church may have been wrestling with whether or not to give or they may have been stressing out over their financial situation. Use this moment as a way of leading people to seek the Lord as they make an offering.

Here's an example of what you could say:

"Hey, church.

I want you to focus for a moment.

We're going to worship God with our money, and then I'm going to pray over the offering."

Regardless of what you say, your goal is to lead people to seek God, receive His grace, and give by faith and with joy.

#9. EXPRESS THANKFULNESS

The money people give to your church represents their lives—their time, talents, and hard work. Let them know you recognize that and how much you appreciate their generosity. Remind them that their support makes an impact and thank them often.

#10. PREPARE AND PRACTICE

The offering in your church will take place every Sunday.

Don't get caught by surprise and just have a member of your staff or volunteer mumble through the offering.

Redeem this time by preparing what you're going to say and practicing what you're going to say.

Get your stories ready.

Know what verses from the Bible you're going to share.

Write down your thoughts.

#11. GIVE YOUR VISITORS A PASS

Don't forget to acknowledge your guests during this time. Let them know you don't expect them to give. After all, they're your guests and you want them to feel welcomed.

These tips are based on our lessons learned over decades of ministry and talking with hundreds of pastors. Don't be afraid to ask people to give. Instead, see the offering moment as presenting an opportunity for people to have an impact for the kingdom and to worship God with their finances.

52 CHURCH OFFERING SCRIPTS FOR EVERY OCCASION

In this guide, we've created 52 church offering prompts.

Many are narratives you can use with information and statistics from your church. Others include a passage from Scripture along with several points you can expound on as you feel led. In either case, adapt them to your context and unique style.

HERE'S THE KEY:

Be well-prepared to lead your congregation in worship as they prepare their tithes and offerings.

Inspire them with examples of how their contributions have helped people receive the gospel. Teach them the importance of putting God first with their finances. Help them understand that God isn't after their money ... he's pursuing their heart. That's what you can communicate through these offering talks.

We pray these spark God-inspired ideas and make the offering moment a pivotal aspect of your weekly services.

WEEK 1: Give Cheerfully

SCRIPTURE: 2 Corinthians 9:7

What do you love more—opening a present for yourself or watching someone you love open a gift from you? As parents, we look forward to watching the joy on our children's faces as they open presents. We love our children and want them to experience the excitement and wonder that comes from opening a much-anticipated gift. Those are moments we cherish and remember for years to come.

That's what came to mind as I considered what Paul meant when he wrote that "God loves a cheerful giver." We give to bless others and out of obedience to God.

"Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7).

Give out of love for God and a desire to help those in need. Give to see the look on someone's face who receives groceries from your food pantry or who receives help to break an addiction.

As we prepare to receive the offering today, let's pray and ask God to help us give with cheerful hearts.

WEEK 2: A FRAGRANT OFFERING

SCRIPTURE: PHILIPPIANS 4:10-19

As Paul traveled, preaching the gospel and planting churches, some groups of

believers took up a collection to support him financially. In Philippians 4:10–19, he expresses his gratitude for those gifts.

“I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God” -(Philippians 4:18b).

As you prepare your tithes and offerings, we want to express our gratitude as well. You’re supporting the work of this church to spread the gospel, make disciples, and serve our community. Your tithes represent the time and talent you expended to earn that money. As Paul put it, “They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God.”

Let us pray and dedicate these offerings to God.

WEEK 3: HONOR GOD WITH YOUR FINANCES

SCRIPTURE: PROVERBS 3:9

Have you ever considered the purpose of obtaining wealth? Is it to be able to buy whatever catches your eye at any given moment? Is the goal to support any cause or ideal that comes to your attention? Or perhaps it’s to simply be able to have enough money to “get by.”

None of those are the best motivation for earning a paycheck.

Instead, what if we chose to pursue an income that we can use in service to God? What would that look like? It’s more about what we do with what we earn than the balance in our checking account. In Proverbs 3:9, we read that we should, “Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops.”

As we pray before taking up the offering today, let’s dedicate our finances to God. Whatever you’re giving today, whatever amount you’ll give this year, devote your pursuit and use of money to honoring God first and foremost.

WEEK 4: WE SPEND IT

Have you ever wondered what we do with the offering each week? We spend it. No, seriously, we do. We spend it on buying curriculum for the children’s ministry. We spend it on helping those in need through the food pantry and benevolence fund. We spend it on ensuring we have a safe, healthy environment in which to meet each week (and throughout the week). We spend it on spreading the gospel through online services, outreaches into underserved areas of our community, and discipleship

classes here at the church.

Note: Tell a story about a specific program or event your church hosted along with a testimony from that moment. This helps the congregation visualize an individual who was impacted by their financial support.

Yes, we spend the money you give as your tithes and offerings. We take our responsibility seriously to be excellent stewards of the money entrusted to us. As you prepare your tithes and offerings this morning, know that we don't take them for granted. We will use the money you're offering to God to honor Him, to spread the Good News, and to make disciples. Let us pray.

WEEK 5: WHERE IS YOUR TREASURE?

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 6:19-21

Have you seen any of the shows on the History Channel about looking for lost treasure? There's one about an island off the coast of Canada, one about lost WWII gold, and a few others. Each show has a few things in common: legends, a few maps, and the hope of finding a vast treasure. Whether you've ever wanted to follow "x marks the spot" on a treasure map, it's easy to get caught up in the potential for a big find. As amazing as it would be to dig up a chest of gold coins, Scripture tells us to look at treasure a bit differently.

In Matthew 6:19-21, Jesus tells us, "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

While there's nothing wrong with looking for a chest full of gold coins, our reward in heaven for obeying God is far greater than any earthly treasure. One tangible way to obey God is by trusting Him with our finances—our "treasure" (however much that may be). When we give, we're saying that we trust God with that money. Today, let's prepare our tithes and offerings with the mindset that we're honoring God with our finances. Trust Him to use these offerings to build His church and make disciples.

WEEK 6: INVESTING IN THE NEXT GENERATION

We have a growing church and a significant part of that comes from growing families. We love seeing couples welcome new little miracles into their families. Our goal is to support you as you raise your children "in the way they should go, so they will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6).

Part of that involves having a safe, fun environment for children at church. We are at a point where we need to expand and remodel our existing kids' areas—which is a great “problem” to have, right?! (Note: Mention one specific thing you're working on. Maybe it's a reading room for a children's Bible study, a new curriculum, a play room, or perhaps an overflow room for parents with crying children. People are more inclined to give toward a particular project that inspires or benefits them in some way.)

Here's where we need your help ... creating a better kids' environment will cost roughly \$X. I'd like to invite you today to invest in the next generation by giving toward this project. To designate your gift for the kids' ministry project, text “Kids Min” to XXXXXX or write “Kids Min” on the giving envelope with your check or cash offering. Thank you!

WEEK 7: SERVING OUR COMMUNITY

We participate in a number of local civic organizations to stay in touch with community needs, challenges, and efforts. Over the last few months, we've partnered with <insert need or program here>. They do X for X. We'd like to help make this effort a success by supporting it through volunteers and with supplies/finances. This is a very tangible way for us to be the hands and feet of Christ to our neighbors.

Please consider donating toward this effort during our offering today. To do so, text “X” to XXXXXX or write “X” on the giving envelope with your check or cash offering.

WEEK 8: CHURCH ANNIVERSARY

This week, we're celebrating something special ... X years ago, Pastor <Name> and a few others joined together to launch <Your Church Name>. When they started the church, they had no idea it would grow to this extent or have this kind of reach into our community. They simply chose to be faithful to follow God's direction as He led them to plant a church.

X years later, we have X members, average about X in weekly attendance, meet the tangible needs of our community through <name programs here>, and see roughly X people baptized each year. We're incredibly grateful to God for His provision as our church has grown. We'd like to invite you to give toward the next X years of growth of the church as you prepare your tithes and offerings this morning.

WEEK 9: COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY

If you've been around our church for a while, you know we like to stay connected to what's going on in our local community. We believe that part of being the “hands and feet of Christ” is to meet the tangible needs of others. Sometimes that involves

providing groceries, other times it involves resume help or job training assistance. As we approach back-to-school season, we've contacted the local school districts to ask what they or their students may need as they prepare to head back to the classroom. The feedback they offered was two-fold: 1.) lower-income families could use help with school supplies; and 2.) at-risk youth could benefit from after-school tutors in reading and math.

Here's how we plan to meet these needs: 1.) We have identified sources where we can purchase items from the grade-appropriate supply lists at vastly reduced prices. Please consider donating toward that fund by texting "School" to XXXXXX or writing "School" on your offering envelope or check. 2.) If you could help as a tutor, please let us know by texting "Learn" to XXXXXX or visit the Information Booth after the service.

We're excited about these opportunities to invest in the next generation as they prepare to get back to the classroom.

WEEK 10: SOWING SEEDS

SCRIPTURE: 1 CORINTHIANS 3:6

Spring is a time for new life. We celebrate seeing fresh, green grass emerging in our lawns and even those of us who don't have "green thumbs" flock to Home Depot to buy seeds for a small garden or flowers for the front lawn. Planting seeds is playing the long game. You have to prepare the soil, plant tiny seeds, water them, and wait for the plants to emerge from the ground. However, the harvest of fresh fruits and vegetables is worth the wait (although your kids may disagree on the veggies).

Sowing financial seeds is very similar. We often tithe or give toward a special project, not knowing when or if we'll personally see the harvest. I'd like to encourage you with news about a few recent harvests we've experienced here at <Your Church Name>.

- <Insert the number of baptisms over the last year.>
- <Insert the number of new members over the last year.>
- <Insert the number of people helped through a recent outreach project.>

These are just a few examples of how your tithes and offerings have sown toward and reaped a harvest. Today you have another opportunity to give ... to sow more seeds that will reap a harvest. Let's pray ...

WEEK 11: LOVE TAKES ACTION

It's one thing to say "I love you." It's quite another to act on that love.

The father who sits down on the floor to read to his children after a long day at work is showing his love. The daughter who tends to her ailing mother is demonstrating her love. God provided the ultimate demonstration of love when He gave His only Son to die for our sins. We follow Jesus' example when we do something tangible that shows we truly mean it when we say, "I love you." When you love someone, you do many little (and sometimes big) things that help the other person feel your affection. Today, you can take action to show the love you have for our church and our community. As the offering plate goes by, let's give not out of a sense of duty or obligation but from our hearts.

WEEK 12: IT'S NOT ABOUT THE AMOUNT

SCRIPTURE: LUKE 21

As we prepare to give our tithes and offerings this morning, I want to draw your attention to something Jesus said about offerings. In Luke 21, we read, "He saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasure. He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins." Upon seeing this happen, Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all the others. All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on."

Now, we'd never ask anyone to give all they had to live on. However, the principle here is that the amount of the offering isn't the main issue. The motives of the heart and the sacrifice required by the giver are more meaningful than the dollar amount of the gift. Whatever the amount of your gift today, remember that God cares much more about the state of your heart as you give than the amount of the gift itself.

WEEK 13: START THE NEW YEAR OFF RIGHT

So, who made a few New Year's resolutions? Anyone already broken one yet? Yeah, it happens ... We all know the gyms will be packed for the next month or so, then back to normal.

There's nothing wrong with making resolutions at the start of a new year. In fact, a new year is a great time to evaluate how we spend our time, energy, and finances. Are we investing each wisely ... into people and efforts that will last beyond our lives? Making changes in this area will look different for everyone. It may involve spending a bit less time at work and more time with your children. It could mean starting a new business or volunteering once a month. Perhaps it means being more consistent in how often and how much you tithe. On this first Sunday of the new year, here's an opportunity to prepare your tithes and offerings and start the year off right.

WEEK 14: WHEN YOU GIVE ...

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 6:2

Sometimes God is very obvious with His instructions. The Ten Commandments are quite clear, after all. However, other instructions are a bit subtler. In Matthew 6:2, we read, “So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others. ... ”

Did you hear the instruction in that statement? Yes, it says to not announce your gift loudly, but there’s one more in that statement: “ ... when you give.” WHEN you give ... not if, but WHEN. Implied here is the idea that giving is something we should do. He doesn’t specify an amount, but Jesus makes it pretty clear that we are to give something. If you’ve already given online this month, thank you. If you’re preparing your tithe or offering now, we’ll pass around the offering plates in just a moment to receive your gifts. Let’s pray ...

WEEK 15: TWO ARE BETTER THAN ONE ...

SCRIPTURE: ECCLESIASTES 4:9-12

Have you ever heard of a GoFundMe fundraiser? Someone can set up an online fundraiser and ask for donations to help with medical expenses, recovery expenses from a natural disaster, and much more. Overall, GoFundMe has raised over \$9 billion from over 120 million donations. That averages out to about \$75 per donation. That’s less than a decent pizza party for the youth group!

Why do I bring this up? In Ecclesiastes, we read that “two are better than one” and that “a cord of three strands is not quickly broken.” As we see from fundraising sites like GoFundMe, a group of people can pull together and contribute what each is able ... and have a tremendous impact.

That’s what your tithes and offerings do here at <Your Church Name>. We’re able to use whatever amount you’re able to give to have an incredible impact within our congregation and in this community. Each week, we have roughly X children learning about Jesus and God’s plan for their lives. Every month, we host Celebrate Recovery programs for X people—helping them overcome serious challenges and move forward with God’s strength. Those are just a couple of examples of how your tithes and offerings pool together to make a difference. As you prepare to give this morning, know that your gifts make an impact. Let’s pray ...

WEEK 16: STEWARDSHIP

Stewardship ... that’s not a word we hear very often, but it’s an important one. Let’s consider what it means. According to Dictionary.com, stewardship is “the responsible

overseeing and protection of something considered worth caring for and preserving.”

When we think of things “worth caring for and preserving,” what does that bring to mind? A home, the church building, your car, etc.?

What about your finances? That’s certainly something to care for and preserve, right? One way we steward our finances is by deliberately deciding how to use the money we have. Whether you have \$10 or \$10,000 in your bank account right now, stewarding that money involves deciding what to do with it. Do you save it, spend it, or invest it? If you spend it ... what do you spend it on? God expects us to put Him first. As we decide what to do with the money He’s enabled us to earn, it only makes sense to use that money in a way that honors Him. One way to do that is through tithing ... essentially giving back to God some of what He’s entrusted to us. Today, as we prepare our tithes and offerings, consider how to become more deliberate in stewarding the finances He’s entrusted to your care. Let’s pray ...

WEEK 17: VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL OUTREACH

Hi! I’m <Your Name> and I’m the Children’s Director here at <Your Church Name>. As the school year wraps up, we’re getting ready to host kids from around our city at our Vacation Bible School program. We have a fun-filled week planned for kids to spend time with friends, to learn about how much God loves them, and to enjoy great activities.

Most families are able to pay the \$XX it costs for each child to attend. However, every year we have several families who simply can’t afford the registration fee. We want every child who wants to participate to be able to, so we’re creating a scholarship fund for those families. I’m inviting you to contribute this morning to that scholarship fund. If you can cover the costs for one child or ten children ... whatever you can contribute would be a huge help. We started planning for this year’s VBS months ago and look forward to seeing hundreds of kids praising God, making fun crafts, probably getting messy with a few games, and having a great time at church. As you prepare your tithes and offerings this morning, please consider donating toward this VBS scholarship fund. You can note that on your check or text “VBSFund” to XXXXXX. Thank you! Let’s pray ...

WEEK 18: SHARING THE GOOD NEWS AROUND THE GLOBE

You may know that, as a church, we support missionaries in <Countries (or name the missions conference/organization you support)>. Just as we’re dedicated to sharing the gospel and God’s love with those in our community, we also want to obey Jesus’ final command to His disciples and take the gospel to every part of the globe. Take a

few moments to hear about the impact these missionaries have in their communities. <Watch video or share testimonies if you don't have a video.>

This morning, I'd like to give you an opportunity to contribute to our Missions Fund. We've committed to support these missionaries with \$XXXXX per year. If you want to donate toward this fund, please write "Missions" on the memo line of your check or text "Missions" to XXXXX. Together, we're helping these missionaries serve their communities and share the Good News with people who otherwise may never hear about God's love for them. Thank you.

WEEK 19: RESPONDING TO AN IMMEDIATE NEED

NOTE: HOPEFULLY YOU'LL NEVER NEED THIS OFFERING TALK. JUST IN CASE, HERE'S ONE THAT ADDRESSES HELPING YOUR COMMUNITY IN THE EVENT OF A NATURAL DISASTER.

Obviously, you know our area got hit hard this week by <tornado, flooding, wildfires, an earthquake ... >. Thankfully, our church campus only received minor damage so we're able to meet today without issues. Unfortunately, many in our community are hurting. Their homes were either destroyed or severely damaged. Businesses were leveled and lives were lost. We've already sent volunteer teams out this week to help pick up debris and offer meals and supplies to those impacted. In surveying the damage, we expect that our city will need our help for weeks to come.

SO, THREE THINGS THIS MORNING:

1. If you suffered injuries or property damage this week, please let us know at <email address/phone number/text>. We want to help however possible.
2. If you're able to help, please sign up here <text/website> to let us know you can serve as a volunteer. We'll contact you later today to connect you with a team.
3. Providing meals, supplies, and assistance obviously requires money. If you'd like to donate toward this relief effort, please text "Relief" to XXXXXX or write "Relief" on the memo line of your check.

Thank you to everyone who's already donated your time, talents, or money to serve our community. Let's keep it up and be the hands and feet of Christ as we help people recover.

WEEK 20: WHY GIVE?

If you've attended church here or elsewhere for any length of time, you know we'll receive an offering at some point during the service (spoiler alert ... now is that time). However, have you ever stopped to consider why? Why should we give? After all, the money that's in your bank account is money you worked hard to earn right? So, why shouldn't you use all of it for your own benefit?

CONSIDER THIS: Is that money really yours? Did you create the talents, knowledge, and skills needed to earn a paycheck? Did you make sure your heart was beating each day so you could go to work? Yeah ... probably not. While you certainly have a big role to play in earning a living, God is the one who provides us with the ability to work. That's one reason to give ... it's giving back to God something He provided for us in the first place.

How about this? How do you know what someone values? What they spend their time and money on, right? If a total stranger were to see your schedule or bank statement, what would that person say you value most? Would it be your family? Your vehicles? The latest tech gadget? Or ... would they see that you prioritize your relationship with God? One way we put God first is by honoring Him with our finances.

Giving is an act of worship—by offering something that requires your time and talent to earn. It's a reminder to yourself that God deserves to be first ... not us. Giving helps us to set aside our selfish tendencies and prefer others instead. No matter the amount you're giving today, remember that giving is part of how we worship God by preferring Him over ourselves. Let's pray ...

WEEK 21: OFFERINGS

SCRIPTURE: EXODUS 23:19

SCRIPTURE: GENESIS 8:20

Throughout the Old Testament, we see how the people of God offered burnt offerings on altars to honor and worship God. They presented offerings during annual festivals (Ex. 23:19), after God delivered them from harm (Genesis 8:20), and to ask for forgiveness. Thankfully we no longer need to present burnt offerings to the Lord. Jesus paid that price for us once and for all. However, the principle of coming to God with a sign of honor and sacrifice still makes sense.

Money represents the time and effort we've put in to earn a paycheck. We, in effect, give part of our lives to receive money. Therefore, when we give a financial offering to God we're giving part of our lives to Him. The incredible part is that the God of

the universe doesn't require us to give 100% of our finances. He simply asks us to give sacrificially. That will look different for each person here. For some, giving sacrificially may mean giving \$5 ... for others, that amount may be much higher. The amount isn't the point. The act of presenting an offering to God is what matters. As you prepare to give, let's ask God to receive our offerings and use them for His purposes. Let's pray.

WEEK 22: JESUS' BIRTHDAY

With Christmas coming next week, we're all gearing up for family dinners and celebrations. When the three Wise Men visited Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, they showed up unannounced (which seems a bit rude) but they didn't arrive empty handed (that helped). They gave gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. While those weren't exactly the baby rattles or swaddling blankets most people usually bring when they visit new parents, Mary and Joseph probably appreciated those gifts and the men's visit. Our tradition of giving gifts to someone on his/her birthday likely originates from this passage of Scripture. Today, let's take a moment to give in celebration of Jesus' birth—not gold, frankincense, and myrrh but our tithes and offerings.

WEEK 23: THE WIDOW'S OFFERING

SCRIPTURE: MARK 12:41

POINTS:

- The amount of your offering isn't the issue.
- It's easy to feel proud if you're able to give a high dollar amount.
- Some might feel embarrassed or ashamed if they're only able to give a small amount.
- Jesus didn't praise the rich people for their large offerings or criticize the widow for her smaller offering. Instead, Jesus commented on the widow's sacrifice.
- What are you sacrificing with your offering?

WEEK 24: DON'T TRY TO SERVE GOD AND MONEY

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 6:24

POINTS:

- You may have heard that "the love of money is the root of all evil" and, you may have been told you must hate money. But, money, by itself, isn't bad. After all, we need money to buy food, shelter, clothing, and many other necessities. However, if we pursue money at the expense of our relationship with God and our loved ones, we've

crossed over into the love of money ... which is a serious problem.

- As Jesus states in this verse, we can't serve both God and money. When we obey God first, we can trust Him with our finances and provision.

WEEK 25: SEEK FIRST HIS KINGDOM

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 6:25-34

POINTS:

- Most of us as children never wondered where our next meal would come from or if we would have clothes to wear. We trusted our parents to provide us with those things.
- In this passage, Jesus reminds us that our Heavenly Father will provide for us. After all, He provides for the birds and the flowers ... how much more will He ensure we have what we need?
- Trust God to provide for you financially.

WEEK 26: LET US DO GOOD TO ALL PEOPLE

SCRIPTURE: GALATIANS 6:9-10

POINTS:

- Tithing consistently may feel routine or boring sometimes. You may wonder if your faithfulness makes a difference. It does! We've helped X people this year with free groceries, job training, community clean-up projects, and more. We've seen X people get baptized, X join the church, and X complete Celebrate Recovery programs. That's quite a lot of impact.
- I'm thrilled we have these examples to share with you. However, we often have to be faithful over a long period of time to see any harvest (and sometimes it takes faithfulness into the next generation to see the full impact).
- If you're not seeing positive changes in your life as you're trusting God, please don't give up. Keep planting seeds, keep watering the soil, and continue to trust that God will enable you to reap a harvest.
- As we see in these verses, we're supposed to stay faithful to help others. There are many ways to serve each other and our community. One way is through tithing.

WEEK 27: BE GENEROUS AND READY TO SHARE

SCRIPTURE: 1 TIMOTHY 6:17-19

POINTS:

- Have you ever met someone who had a fair amount of wealth and then lost it all?
- How did that individual respond to that challenge? Of course, anyone would be disappointed and discouraged—especially at first. However, if that person’s hope truly was in Christ, he/she probably moved forward with the confidence that God would help him/her get through that difficult situation. On the other hand, if his/her hope was in wealth, he/she probably had a very hard time moving past the initial shock.
- From these verses, we’re reminded that what we have comes from God and that our hope should be in Him ... not in our finances.

Part of our responsibility is to steward our resources wisely—that includes giving generously to help others.

- These verses are also a great reminder that our treasure isn’t here ... it’s in heaven.
- You can’t take any of your material possessions or cash with you when you die. Why not use some of it to serve others and leave the world a better place for future generations? Why not use your resources to tell others about God so they too can enjoy a richer life both now and in eternity?
- When you’re a cheerful and generous giver, you’re honoring God with your finances.
- This act of worship helps you keep money in proper perspective and it helps others. That’s a combination that can have an incredible impact.

WEEK 28: THEY GAVE BECAUSE GOD HAD GIVEN THEM GREAT JOY

SCRIPTURE: NEHEMIAH 12:43

POINTS:

- The story of Nehemiah is pretty incredible. Nehemiah was a servant of a foreign king.
- When he heard that the walls of Jerusalem were in ruins, he felt that he had to do something about it. Amazingly, the king granted him permission to go to Jerusalem and work on the walls.

- Nehemiah and the Israelites worked diligently to rebuild the walls around Jerusalem.
- They faced opposition, threats to their very lives, and even some disputes among themselves. However, they prevailed and finished the rebuilding effort.
- Once the walls were rebuilt and the gates put into place, people started moving back into Jerusalem. Next, the Levites read the Law to the people. They had to encourage the people not to grieve at what they hadn't known until that moment, but to rejoice that this was a holy day.
- After Nehemiah and the people rebuilt the wall around Jerusalem, they threw a huge party. They wanted to celebrate. They wanted to praise God for bringing them together and enabling them to rebuild the wall in spite of great opposition. They gave (sacrificed) and rejoiced while doing so because they were so grateful to God.
- Let's give joyfully today as we consider all God has provided. He's given us new life, the freedom to worship, family and friends, shelter, financial resources, jobs, and so much more.

WEEK 29: A GENEROUS PERSON WILL PROSPER

SCRIPTURE: PROVERBS 11:24-25

POINTS:

- Sometimes God's instructions seem at odds with the natural way of doing things.
- Giving freely can lead to gaining even more? Keeping all of your money could lead to poverty? That doesn't make sense, does it? Well, not from a human perspective, perhaps.
- In these verses, we get a new perspective on generosity. Giving generously and serving others benefits the giver as well as the receiver.
- Giving generously may feel like a sacrifice in the moment. However, these verses tell us quite the opposite. Instead of being hurt financially by giving, we can expect to be better off as a result of giving generously.

WEEK 30: DO GOOD TO OTHERS

SCRIPTURE: HEBREWS 13:16

POINTS:

- At the end of Hebrews, there are several final instructions given to believers. Several of them center around loving and caring for one another as brothers and sisters.
- Part of following Christ means living according to His example. During His ministry, He provided for the practical needs of people including offering them food and healing the sick.
- God sees when you give and help others. He sees the attitude of your heart in those moments. He's more concerned with your motives than with the size of your gift.
- Jesus gave His life to pay for our sins. We follow in His example of self-sacrifice when we help others and when we give generously.

WEEK 31: GIVING HELPS US KEEP GOD FIRST.
SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 6:33

POINTS:

- Jesus admonishes us here to focus on God's kingdom and His righteousness above all else. In the previous verses, He tells us to not worry ... to trust our heavenly Father to provide for us.
- What are "all these things" that Jesus refers to in this passage? In the previous verses, He mentions clothing, food, and drink—some of the basic essentials for daily life. Jesus reminds us that God values His children and takes care of them. He's telling us to trust God to provide and to put Him first.
- Tithing is one way we remind ourselves to put God first and to trust Him for our daily needs.
- As we prepare to receive tithes and offerings this morning, think about this verse. Are you seeking God's kingdom first? Are you trusting God with your finances?

WEEK 32: HONOR GOD WITH YOUR FINANCES
SCRIPTURE: PROVERBS 3:9-10

POINTS:

- Many, if not most, of the verses in Proverbs include a command or instruction followed up by a promise. "If you do this ... then this will happen." What could happen might be good or bad, depending on the action taken.

- In these verses, we're instructed to honor God with our wealth ... with our finances. If we choose to honor God with the firstfruits of our income, we're told that our "barns will be overflowing" (or, in current-day language, that we will have more than enough).
- Today, the "firstfruits of all your crops" could mean that you make the tithe the first expenditure that comes from your monthly income. It could mean that you simply prioritize tithing by scheduling that payment to occur at the beginning of each month. The basic idea here is that we honor God first with our finances.
- Trusting God with our finances isn't always easy. However, this is a very practical way we can exercise our faith.

WEEK 33: TAKING CARE OF EACH OTHER

SCRIPTURE: ACTS 2:42-45

POINTS:

- The early church that gathered right after Jesus went back to heaven saw incredible growth in a short period of time. These new believers were excited about what they'd just experienced and what they were seeing from the disciples.
- One thing they did was to take care of each other ... to the point of selling their possessions to help those in need. That's an incredible commitment to your brother and sister in Christ, isn't it?
- While selling your possessions may not be necessary, that example is something to remember as we consider whether (or how much) to give. The followers of Christ who actually knew Jesus—who'd seen Him and heard Him teach—they were moved to take care of each other to the point of selling what they owned to help their new family. That's a powerful example to follow.
- As we prepare to receive our tithes and offerings, let's follow the example of the early church and give generously to help those in need.

WEEK 34: GOD WILL PROVIDE

SCRIPTURE: 1 KINGS 17:8-15

POINTS:

- God can, and often does, use the most unlikely people to accomplish His will. In this case, He chose a widow who was on her last scraps of food to feed His servant Elijah.

- Don't underestimate the impact your gift can have. The widow in this story had next to nothing, yet she was obedient to what Elijah instructed her to do. As she made bread from the last flour and oil she had, God provided for her family and for Elijah. While you may not see a miracle exactly like this one, what we learn from this passage is that our obedience makes a difference.
- As you prepare your tithes and offerings, think about how God may use your gift. Whose life will He change? What impact will those individuals have in our community and beyond? We may not know the details on this side of eternity, but we can trust that God will use our gifts to accomplish His purposes (and His purposes are always to benefit His children in some way).
- Let's prepare to give, knowing that God can and will use any gift.

WEEK 35: TO LOVE MEANS TO DO SOMETHING

SCRIPTURE: 1 JOHN 3:17-18

POINTS:

It's easy to say we care about others. However, our words don't mean much if they aren't backed up with action. While none of us alone can erase poverty, each of us can do something to help someone in need. That might mean paying the difference if someone is short on cash when paying for groceries. It could look like helping someone with their resume as they look for work. Loving someone might mean bringing by meals when they're sick. Showing love doesn't have to be complicated or expensive ... but it does mean it should involve action.

One tangible way you can show love today is by giving your tithes and offerings. Each week we pool our resources to further the gospel and serve our community. Let's work together to put action to our words today.

WEEK 36: GIVING IN SECRET

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 6:1-4

POINTS:

- Giving is an act of worship. It's one way we can communicate to God that we put Him first and that we trust Him with our finances.
- Sometimes worship is public. When we sing together as a congregation, that's a very public act of worship.
- Other times, worship is private. Praying alone at home or giving are a couple of examples.

- In this passage, Jesus tells us to give without making a big deal out of it. In fact, we shouldn't seek the applause and approval of anyone but God when we give.
- For those of you who schedule recurring gifts online, you already know what it means to "give in secret." You may feel a bit awkward not putting anything into the offering plate each week, but don't worry about it—God knows you gave.
- Let's pray and prepare to receive the offering.

WEEK 37: EVERYTHING COMES FROM GOD

SCRIPTURE: 1 CHRONICLES 29:10-19

POINTS:

In this passage, King David praises God for the ability to give toward building the temple. David recognizes that all his wealth and his kingdom came from God in the first place.

Before this prayer of King David, he tells the people what he is giving to help build the temple. He then challenges them to give as well and they respond overwhelmingly to his appeal. They followed the example of their leadership and gave generously to build God's temple.

Please know that, as your pastors, we don't ask you to do something we won't do ourselves. We give and tithe to this local church as part of our worship to God. We encourage you to do likewise as God leads you.

WEEK 38: EVERYONE WHO WAS WILLING

SCRIPTURE: EXODUS 35:20-29

POINTS:

- In this passage, the Israelites came together to build the tabernacle. Note the phrase, "All who were willing." God didn't demand that they bring gold, fine linen, spices, and gems. They offered these things and their labor willingly out of devotion to God.
- The Israelites combined their talents, skills, and resources to build a place to worship God.
- We also have the opportunity to use our talents, skills, and resources to sustain our church campus and provide a place to worship God.

- As we prepare to receive the offering this morning, this isn't a time to feel obligated or pressured to give. We want all who are willing to present tithes and offerings to God.

WEEK 39: GIVING THANKS

In a few weeks, we'll continue the honored tradition of taking time away from our usual routines to eat lots of food, watch football, and shop in the midst of huge crowds at the crack of dawn.

What is this honored tradition you may ask? Why it's Thanksgiving, of course!

Joking aside, Thanksgiving is a time to pause and reflect ... to appreciate what God has provided and enjoy time with loved ones. Unfortunately, many families in our community are unable to afford meals on a regular week, much less anything extra for Thanksgiving. Part of following Christ means to be His hands and feet on earth ... to follow His example in loving and helping others. This year, we have the opportunity to share the love of Christ with people in our area who could use a little extra help. We'd like to provide XXXX families with the ingredients needed for a Thanksgiving meal plus an additional week's worth of groceries. Please join us in making this holiday a lot brighter for those in need. Text "Thanks" to XXXX to give toward this fund or write "Thanksgiving" on the offering envelope or check memo line.

WEEK 40: DIGITAL GIVING

Who here shops online? How about paying bills online? Perhaps you even schedule your bills to pay automatically each month. Why do we do so much online ... even to the point of automation? Because it's convenient, right?

Why can't giving be convenient too? Who here has their checkbook with them today? Yeah, not a lot of you. People don't carry much cash around with them either. That's why giving online has become more popular over the last few years. It's convenient, easy, secure, and you don't need a checkbook or cash (that you don't have on you anyway) to give.

This morning, I'd like to invite you to give digitally. You can give by texting the amount you want to give to XXXXX. The first time you do this, you'll need to enter your card information and create an account (if you'd rather not have to enter that info each time). Another option is to go to <website URL>, click on "Give," and donate that way. You can even schedule a recurring tithe on a weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly basis. Thank you for giving—whatever method you choose.

WEEK 41: LET'S TALK ABOUT MONEY

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 6:24

Money tends to be a sensitive topic, doesn't it? If you've ever worked in customer service or at a bank, you know how passionate people get about their finances. It's understandable ... after all, money is a representation of the time and effort expended to earn it. Hours of our life that we can never get back are wrapped up in those dollars and cents.

Many believe that church leaders talk about money too much. However, why shouldn't we discuss something that we all feel pretty strongly about AND that God addresses quite frequently in Scripture? There are over 2,000 verses about generosity, money, and possessions in the Bible. That's twice the number of references to faith and prayer combined.

God has a good reason for addressing the topic of money. It's actually one of the most prominent idols we face in our relationship with God (Matthew 6:24).

God wants our devotion and He knows we will either worship with our wealth or we will worship our wealth.

Regardless of what you think about money, what struggles you're facing, or your financial worries, I want to encourage you to work to glorify God with your possessions. Trust and honor Him with your finances and rest in the confidence that He'll take care of you.

WEEK 42: THE KEY TO BEING GENEROUS ISN'T WHAT YOU THINK

SCRIPTURE: LUKE 19:1-10

POINTS:

- Jesus is the most generous person who ever lived.
- He left the comforts of heaven, took on human flesh, and gave His life on the cross so that we might live in him.
- In response to Jesus' generosity, we are called to be generous.
- There's only one way we can be generous like Jesus: pursue Jesus.
- This is exactly what happened to Zaccheaus when he met Jesus.

- Zacchaeus may have been a man of small stature (Luke 19:3), but he was a man of great wealth (Luke 19:2).
- He was despised by the people of his time. Not because he was a man of financial means. But because he presumably used his position as chief tax collector for collecting more than he should.
- But Zacchaeus was transformed into a generous giver.
- He was inspired to give half of his possessions to the poor and pay back what he took from others fourfold (Luke 19:8).
- Zacchaeus was transformed when he met Jesus (Luke 19:3–6). Jesus gave him a new life and a new heart (Luke 19:9–10). He led Zacchaeus to become a giver. The hands he once used to take money are now being used to generously give money.

WEEK 43: TRUST GOD FOR YOUR NEEDS

SCRIPTURE: PSALM 23

POINTS:

- Everyone is dependent on God.
You may not believe or feel this. But no matter if you're rich or poor, strong or weak, you need air to breathe, water to drink, and food to eat. You need shelter to protect you from the weather and clothes to cover your body. You are in need of safety, love, family, and friends.
- God is not dependent upon anything. He is completely and wholly satisfied in himself. While God is in need of nothing, everything and everyone is in need of God. It is said, "all things were created through him and for him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together" (Colossians 1:16–17).
- Thankfully, God doesn't avoid us because we're needy. He is a good Father and a generous giver who welcomes us to ask for anything. Your Father in heaven knows that you have needs, and He will perfectly meet them.
- God is more than enough. In our neediness, God promises to meet our needs, and I pray your cup may overflow.

WEEK 44: FAITHFUL WITH LITTLE

SCRIPTURE: LUKE 16:10

POINTS:

- All of us set limits on ourselves and what we can and cannot do. We tell ourselves that we don't have enough time or money. We may think we don't really know what we're doing or that we're too old (or too young).
- Regardless of what you own, how much you earn, the skills you possess, or your age, you can be faithful to God today with what you have—even if you think it's little.
- Recently, a little boy's family adopted a kitten for him from a local animal shelter for his birthday. Inspired by the work at the shelter, this young boy asked his parents to help him donate to the shelter. Over the course of a week, he was able to round up food, toys, blankets, and other supplies the shelter desperately needed. [Click here for reference.](#)
- Serve God with what you have. Commit to Him.

WEEK 45: FATHER'S DAY

Daddy ... Pops ... Father ... Papa ... whatever your children call you, it's a sweet sound (unless they're asking for the same thing for the 50th time today, perhaps ...). The really great dads take after their Heavenly Father.

- You put your children's needs over your own.
- You sacrifice for your kids.
- You strive to teach them how to be men and women of God by modelling godly character yourself.

On this Father's Day, we'd like to honor the dads who are here today. Thank you for bringing your family to church this morning. Thank you for striving to be the role model your children need to become faithful followers of Christ. You probably mess up from time to time (we all do), but by being faithful to God and to your family, you're helping to raise up a generation of believers who'll make a positive impact on the world. That's no small task, but with God's grace and wisdom, you've got this.

As we honor dads today, let's take a moment to honor our Heavenly Father through our tithes and offerings.

WEEK 46: EASTER

Today we're celebrating the resurrection of our Savior and that we can receive forgiveness and have a relationship with God as a result of Jesus' sacrifice. As we reflect on what today represents, this is the part of our service where we have the opportunity to give. If you're visiting today, please don't feel pressured to give. You are our guest and we're thrilled to have you with us today. Our members are generous givers and we take this time during the service to provide them with the opportunity to give. Their generosity has resulted in X people receiving help during the recent <insert natural disaster or other need here> ... X people completing a Celebrate Recovery program, and X children attending VBS last summer on scholarship. Thank you to all of our faithful givers. Let's pray and receive the offering this morning.

WEEK 47: PASTOR APPRECIATION

NOTE: WE RECOMMEND THAT YOU HAVE SOMEONE OTHER THAN THE PASTOR GIVE THIS OFFERING TALK.

You might not know this, but October is Pastor Appreciation Month. The second Sunday of October, specifically, is Pastor (or Clergy) Appreciation Day.

In general, we ask a lot of our pastors. They're present for our greatest celebrations and biggest life challenges. Each week, they offer wisdom from Scripture, admonishments, and encouragement. During the week, they lead the church staff, prepare their sermons, visit the sick, officiate weddings and funerals, provide counseling, and much more. With all that in mind, it certainly makes sense to take time out to focus on letting them know how much we appreciate them.

Now, Pastor <Name> doesn't know this (and we kindly kicked him out of this part of the service to keep it that way), but we'd like to do something special for him this Pastor Appreciation Month. We've done some clandestine research to learn what he'd enjoy most as an appreciation gift (in other words, we asked his wife ...). <Note: Feel free to share what the gift is and how much money you need to raise, if that fits your situation.>

If you'd like to donate toward this Pastor Appreciation gift, text "Pastor" to XXXXX or write "Pastor" on the memo line of your check. We're excited to pool our resources and honor our pastor with something that will make him feel valued and appreciated.

WEEK 48: PUTTING GOD FIRST

SCRIPTURE: LUKE 17:33

I have some shocking news for you this morning as we prepare to receive our tithes and offerings. God doesn't need your money. He doesn't. He's doing quite well without a single penny.

Giving financially to your local church isn't about giving God money that He needs. It's not even about giving money to the church so it can continue to pay the mortgage and utility bills.

Tithing is about changing how we view money and our relationship with our finances. What does that mean? Well, especially if you've experienced a dry financial season it feels like you have to hold on to every dollar. You can't afford to be generous. That's an understandable, human way of seeing that situation. However, God sees it very differently. In His view, you can't afford NOT to be generous. In Luke 17:33, we read the words of Jesus, "Whoever tries to keep their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life will preserve it." God asks us to trust Him with our finances by putting Him first. We choose to give, to tithe, as a way of reminding ourselves that God comes first in our lives. As we give this morning, let's remember to put God first with our finances and to trust Him for everything we need. We trust Him with our eternity ... let's trust Him with today too.

WEEK 49: SOWING

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 13:18-23

In Matthew 13, Jesus tells the Parable of the Sower. You might be familiar with this one. Jesus talks about how a farmer went out to sow his seed. Not all of the seed landed on good soil so it could produce a crop. After the crowds left, the disciples asked Jesus what the parable meant. He replied and said:

"Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in their heart. This is the seed sown along the path. The seed falling on rocky ground refers to someone who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful. But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown" (Matthew 13:18-23).

Notice one characteristic of unfruitful soil: “The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful.” It’s easy to become so focused on what we don’t have, on what we need, on how to provide for our families, that we neglect the condition of our heart and our receptiveness to God’s Word. A key reason for giving is to remind ourselves to put God first and to trust Him with our needs. Let’s put action to our faith this morning by trusting God with our finances as we give.

WEEK 50: YOU’RE MAKING AN IMPACT

NOTE: PULL TOGETHER A FEW PICTURES OR VIDEOS OF VARIOUS PROGRAMS OR OUTREACHES THAT YOUR CHURCH HAS DONE LATELY. SHOWING THESE WILL HELP DRIVE HOME THE POINT THAT THESE MOMENTS WOULDN’T HAPPEN WITHOUT A GENEROUS CONGREGATION.

Check out this picture of last weeks’ marriage retreat. I loved seeing so many couples invest time to strengthen their relationships. Then there’s this photo from Wednesday’s youth group. We had over X teens in small groups, talking about some challenging questions regarding faith. They didn’t hold back but really dug in to think through some tough topics and learn from the youth leaders and each other. Watch this short video about our recent community outreach. <Show video.>

Do you know how these moments happen? There’s a lot of prayer, planning, and work that goes into each event or service. That’s all made possible by your support. I am so grateful for the faithful generosity of this church family. Thank you for giving consistently. The offering you give each week ... and the one we’re about to receive now ... makes these moments happen. Thank you.

WEEK 51: BENEVOLENCE FUND

You might not know this, but we have what’s called a Benevolence Fund. It’s a set amount we put aside each month to help people who have an urgent financial need. Maybe they had a health emergency and the hospital bill, even after insurance, is bigger than they can afford. Perhaps they’re out of work and their car needs repair work done. Sometimes people fall on hard times through no fault of their own. We want to step in and help whenever possible. If you happen to need financial assistance, you can make that request here (mention the form or process involved). We have leaders appointed to review each request and determine if the church can help meet that need.

Obviously, we need to replenish this fund on a regular basis. In light of a recent

increase in requests, we'd like to increase the amount set aside per month so we can help more people. If you'd like to contribute directly to the benevolence fund, please text "HELP" to XXXXX or write "HELP" on your giving envelope. Over the last year, we've helped X people handle urgent financial needs. This is one way as a church family we're serving as the hands and feet of Christ to those in need.

WEEK 52: LEAST OF THESE ...

SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 25:34-40

I'd like to share this passage of Scripture this morning:

"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'

"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me'" (Matthew 25:34-40).

In this passage, Jesus challenges us to demonstrate our love for Him through how we care for others. Faith and following Christ isn't a theory or some nebulous concept. There are very tangible, practical things we can do that reveal our beliefs and commitment to God. One of those areas is in how we look after each other. There are times when a family has a sick child and needs help with medical expenses. Perhaps a breadwinner got laid off and is having a hard time finding work. These are moments where we can honor and serve our Savior by "doing for the least of these."

I encourage you to find ways to help others. As you hear about a family going through a hard time or someone who could use a bit of a hand up, consider what you can do to help. As a church family, we often learn of people or groups within our community who need assistance. As you give generously, we're able to pool our resources together to make an impact in these challenging situations. As you prepare your tithes and offerings this morning, please know that we're careful to steward that money wisely so we can help as many people as possible. Thank you for being generous with your finances and honoring God in that way. Let's pray.

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