

Invited to Give:

A Compendium of Offertory
Sentences and Illustrations



Lionel D C Hartley

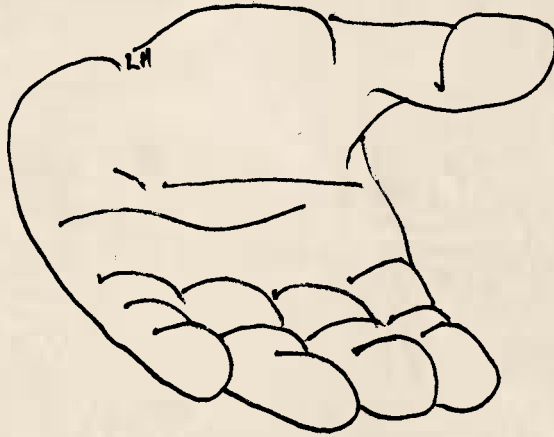


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1967

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From the Bible:

“... remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, for he himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”

— (Acts 20:35)

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“...all shall give as they are able, according to the blessing of the Lord your God that he has given you.”

— (Deuteronomy 16:17)

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“...for ‘the earth and its fullness are the Lord’s.’”

— (1 Corinthians 10:26)

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“...for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work.”

— (2 Corinthians 9:7b-8)

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“...the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.”

— (2 Corinthians 9:6)

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“A generous person will be enriched, and one who gives water will get water.”

— (Proverbs 11:25)

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“As for those who in the present age are rich, command them not to be haughty, or to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but rather on God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.”

— (1 Timothy 6:17)

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“Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength. Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name; bring an offering, and come into his courts.”

— (Psalm 96:7-8)

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“Bless the Lord, O my soul, and do not forget all his benefits.”

— (Psalm 103:2)

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“But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act—they will be blessed in their doing.”

— (James 1:25)

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“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.”

— (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

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“Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”

— (2 Corinthians 9:7)

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“For God is not unjust; he will not overlook your work and the love that you showed for his sake in serving the saints, as you still do.”

— (Hebrews 6:10)

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“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.”

— (John 3:16)

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“For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains. But as for you, man of God, shun all this;

pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness.”

— (1 Timothy 6:10-11)

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“For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life?”

— (Mark 8:35-36)

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“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

— (Matthew 6:21)

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“For you know the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet

for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich.”

— (2 Corinthians 8:9)

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“Honour the Lord with your substance and with the first fruits of all your produce.”

— (Proverbs 3:9)

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“How does God’s love abide in anyone who has the world’s goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help?”

— (1 John 3:17)

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“I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual

worship.”

— (Romans 12:1)

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“In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.”

— (Proverbs 3:6)

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“Know that the Lord is God. It is he that made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.”

— (Psalm 100:3)

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“Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.”

— (Matthew 5:16)

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“Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. Whoever speaks must do so as one speaking the very words of God; whoever serves must do so with the strength that God supplies, so that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ. To him belong the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.”

— (1 Peter 4:10-11)

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“So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up. So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith.”

— (Galatians 6:9-10)

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“So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift.”

— (Matthew 5:23-24)

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“Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!”

— (2 Corinthians 9:15)

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“Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.”

— (Ephesians 5:1-2)

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“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?”

— (Matthew 6:25)

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“They shall not appear before the Lord empty-handed; all shall give as they are able, according to the blessing of the Lord your God that he has given you.”

— (Deuteronomy 16:16b-17)

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“Think of us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of God’s mysteries. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy.”

— (1 Corinthians 4:1-2)

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“Through him, then, let us continually offer a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that confess his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.”

— (Hebrews 13:15-16)

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“What shall I return to the Lord for all his bounty to me? I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord, I will pay my vows to the Lord in the presence of all his people.”

— (Psalm 116:12-14)

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“Worthy is the Lamb that was slaughtered

**to receive power and wealth and wisdom
and might and honour and glory and
blessing!”**

— (Revelation 5:12)

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**“Yours, O Lord, are the greatness, the
power, the glory, the victory, and the
majesty; for all that is in the heavens and on
the earth is yours; yours is the kingdom, O
Lord, and you are exalted as head above
all.”**

— (1 Chronicles 29:11)

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**(Jesus said,) “From everyone to whom much
has been given, much will be required; and
from the one to whom much has been
entrusted, even more will be demanded.”**

— (Luke 12:48)

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(Jesus said,) ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’

— (Matthew 25:40)

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One man gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty.

— (Proverbs 11:24)

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And Jesus said to them, “Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of possessions.”

— (Luke 12:15)

Other Offertory Sentences:

Reading Mark 12:41-44 - Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a fraction of a penny. Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, “I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything — all she had to live on.”

Take out your purse or wallet and look inside. We measure our offering by what we give. God measures our offering by what we have left.

We invite the deacon/s to help us to give what we ought not to keep so that others will gain what they cannot lose.

— Lionel Hartley 26 April 2013

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As the desert may sharpen thought, so may the needs in our world sharpen compassion. May our gifts join others in God's way of love until all can share the song of His grace. We invite the deacons to gather our morning offering.

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The people of Haiti are known for their proverbs - simple but poignant sayings that often convey enormous wisdom and truth and sometimes teach powerful lessons of life and faith.

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One of the more unusual Haitian proverbs is: “Cooked food has no owner.” It is unusual, because for most Haitian people every day in this desperately impoverished country is a struggle just to find enough food to feed one’s family and oneself.

It is unusual, because in the midst of simply trying to survive, Haitian people do not fail to remember “from whom all blessings flow.”

Cooked food has no owner. In other words, what we have, meagre though it may be, is not really ours. We don’t own it.

Rather, all we have is from God and is entrusted to us by God to share with whoever is in need.

During this week we will sit at tables in our dining rooms or at restaurant tables overflowing with food - more food than we

need or want.

How we understand the true ownership of that food will speak volumes about who we are. Is it ours to eat as we please? To waste? To share with family and friends? Did we earn this bread? Do we deserve it? Or rather is the bread on our dinner plates, like the bread in our wallets, like everything else we claim to own, ultimately a gift entrusted to us to share with others a gift of grace given to us by the God who has owned us as His very own in Jesus Christ?

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As we give of out tithes, our gifts and our stewardship, what What will our offering say about us? What will it say about what we “have”? What will it say about about our God? Cooked food has no owner.

Illustrations:

Two fellows are talking religion.

One says to the other, “Sometimes I’d like to ask God why he allows poverty, famine and injustice when he could do something about it.”

“What’s stopping you?” asks the second.

And the first replies, “I’m afraid God might ask me the same question.”

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He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.

— Jim Elliot. Cited in Elizabeth Elliot,

“Shadow of the Almighty”, Hodder & Staughton, London, 1958, p15

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If you give your child coin for the church offering and later give him several dollars to go to the movies, you may be teaching him a set of values he will keep the rest of his life.

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We make a living by what we get and make a life by what we give.

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“What” you say, “Give again? Only last week I gave and you expect me to keep on giving? How long you expect me to keep on giving and giving? Until I have nothing left to give?”

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“Oh no, dear friend, only until God stops giving to you.”

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An old dollar bill and an even older \$20 arrive at a Federal Reserve Bank to be retired.

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**“I’ve had a pretty good life” the \$20 says.
“I’ve been to Las Vegas, the finest restaurants in New York, and even on a Caribbean cruise.”**

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**“You did have an exciting life!” the dollar says.
“Where have you been?” the \$20 asks.**

“Oh, I’ve been to the Methodist church, the Baptist church, spent some time with the Lutherans...”

“Wait” the \$20 interrupts. “What’s a church?”

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“There is a parable about a pig and a chicken that were discussing the needs of homeless people and the chicken, worried that she might be asked to contribute to chicken soup, suggested giving the homeless people bacon and eggs for breakfast.

The pig replied that for the chicken it would be just an interested contribution but for the pig it would be total commitment.”

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A little church was having a homecoming service to which ex-members, who had

moved away, were invited. One of the former members had become a millionaire.

When asked to speak, the wealthy man recounted his childhood experience. He had earned his first silver dollar which he had decided to keep forever.

“But when a visiting missionary preached about the urgent need for funds in his mission work, and the offering basket was passed, a great struggle took place within me.

As a result,” the wealthy man said, “I put my treasured silver dollar in the basket. I am convinced that the reason God has blessed me richly is that when I was a boy I gave God everything I possessed.”

The congregation was spellbound by the multi-millionaire’s tremendous statement until an elderly little man seated in the front

row rose and said, “Brother, I dare you to do it again.”

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One beautiful Sunday morning, Reverend Barnard announces to his congregation, ‘My good people, I have here in my hands three sermons.....

A \$100 sermon that lasts five minutes

A \$50 sermon that lasts fifteen minutes

And a \$20 sermon that lasts a full hour.

Now, we’ll take the collection and see which one I’ll deliver.’

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A man and his ten-year-old son were on a fishing trip miles from home. At the boy’s insistence, they decided to attend the Sunday worship service at a small rural church.

As they walked back to their car after the service, the father was filled with complaints. “The service was too long.” he lamented. “The sermon was boring, and the singing was off-key.”

Finally the boy said, “Daddy, I thought it was pretty good for a coin.”

— Lowell D. Streiker

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Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-1892) said we should feel for others, and then he added, “in your pocket”.

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Believe to the end, even if all men go astray and you are left the only one faithful; bring your offering even then and praise God in your loneliness.

— Fyodor Mikhaylovich Dostoyevski (1821-

1881)

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You do right when you offer faith to God; you do right when you offer works. But if you separate the two, then you do wrong. For faith without works is dead; and lack of charity in action murders faith, just as Cain murdered Abel, so that God cannot respect your offering.

— Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153)

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On his tenth birthday, a sensitive boy received 10 shiny silver coins from a thoughtful uncle.

The child was very appreciative. He immediately sat down on the floor and spread the coins before him. Then he began to plan how to use the money.

He set aside the first coin saying, “This one is for Jesus.” He then went on to decide what to do with the second, and so on until he came to the last coin. “This one is for Jesus.” he said.

The boy’s mother interrupted, “But I thought you gave the first coin to Jesus.”

“I did,” the boy replied, “The first one really belongs to Him, but this one is a gift to Him from me.”

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“I was just a child,” related a retired Baptist preacher, “when one spring day my father called me to go with him to old man Russell’s blacksmith shop. He had left a rake and a hoe to be repaired and they were ready, fixed like new. Father handed over a

silver dollar for repairing them but Mr. Russell refused to take it.

‘No,’ he said, ‘there’s no charge for that little job.’

But father insisted. And if I live a thousand years,” said the preacher, “I’ll never forget that great blacksmith’s reply.

**‘Sid,’ he said to my father, ‘Can’t you let a man do somethin’ just to stretch his soul?’”
“There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.”**

— (Proverbs 11:24)

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Matthew Henry, commenting on Proverbs 11:24 wrote, “A man may grow poor by not paying just debts, not relieving the poor, not allowing needful expenses. Let men be ever

so saving of what they have, if God appoints, it comes to nothing.”

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A legend from medieval Europe tells us that there was a wealthy prince who hired architects and builders to construct a church on the hill above the local village. [This, entirely at his own expense.]

Eventually, hubris and pride got the better of him. When the imposing structure was completed, in spite of the team nature of the project, the prince wanted to take sole credit. He decided, therefore, to add a statue of himself and have a special niche carved out for his name.

However, on the day of dedication, the prince’s name was found to have mysteriously disappeared. Instead, in its place, was that of a poor widow [written,

according to a legend by the villagers, by an angel's hand].

The prince was astonished. He summoned the widow to his castle and asked what on earth she'd done to contribute to the building of his glorious church. She was alarmed and confessed that because they'd been working in such a noble cause, she'd given a few handfuls of hay to the cart horses as they'd hauled the heavy stones up the hill.

“His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.”

— (Mat 25:21, 23)

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The visiting preacher was really getting the

congregation moving. Near the end of his sermon he said, “This church has really got to walk,” to which someone in the back yelled, “Let her walk, preacher!”

The preacher then said, “If this church is going to go, it’s got to get up and run,” Someone again yelled with gusto, “Let her run preacher.”

Feeling the surge of the church, the preacher then said with even louder gusto, “If this church is going to go it’s got to really fly!” Once again with ever-greater gusto, someone yelled, “Let her fly, preacher, let her fly!”

The preacher then seized the moment and stated with even greater gusto, “If this church is really going to fly, it’s going to need money!” Someone in the back yelled, with gusto, “Let her walk, preacher, let her walk!”

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John Reynolds, in his ‘Anecdotes of the Rev. John Wesley’ (1828), tells the story of Wesley’s student days at Lincoln College in Oxford.

A porter knocked on Wesley’s door one evening and asked to speak with him. After some conversation, Wesley noted the man’s thin coat (it was a cold winter night), and suggested that he had better get a warmer one.

The porter replied: “This coat ... is the only coat I have in the world - and I thank God for it.”

When asked if he had eaten, he replied: “I have had nothing today but a draught of spring water ... and I thank God for that.”

Wesley, growing uneasy in the man’s

presence, reminded him that the headmaster would lock him out if he did not soon return to his quarters. “Then what shall you have to thank God for?” Wesley asked.

“I will thank Him.” replied the porter, “that I have dry stones to lie upon.”

Deeply moved by the man’s sincerity, Wesley said, “You thank God when you have nothing to wear; ... nothing to eat ... [and] no bed to lie on. I cannot see what you have to thank God for.”

The man replied: “I thank God... that he has given me life and being; a heart to love Him, and a desire to serve Him.”

The man left with a coat from Wesley’s closet, some money for food and words of appreciation for his living testimony.

Wesley later wrote these words in his

Journal: “I shall never forget that porter. He convinced me there is something in religion to which I am a stranger.”

Impressive, challenging, and begs the question, “Do I offer that kind of thanksgiving to God, or am I, as Wesley put it, a stranger to that side of religion?” (see Psalm 65:1-13)

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God owns everything. I’m His money manager. We are the managers of the assets God has entrusted—not given—to us.

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The place to “pass the buck” is in the offering.

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**After coming out of the waters of baptism, the new member exclaimed, “Good grief, preacher, I forgot to remove my wallet from these trousers. It’s dripping wet.”
“Hallelujah,” exulted the preacher, “We could stand more baptised wallets.”**

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An old Methodist preacher once offered this prayer in a meeting: “Lord, help us to trust Thee with our souls.”

Many voices responded with a hearty, old-fashioned “Amen!”

“Lord, help us to trust Thee with our bodies.” he continued. Again the response was a vociferous “Amen!”

“Then with still more warmth he said, “And, Lord, help us to trust Thee with our money.” Not an “amen” was heard in the house.

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**Total commitment could turn your
“collection” into an “offering.”**

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**Some people put “zero” in the church
offering and complain that the church is too
cold.**

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**Our heart always goes where we put God’s
money. Watch what happens when we
reallocate our money from temporal things
to eternal things.**

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**The reason people put pennies in the
offering because there is no smaller coin.**

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A young student, was one day taking a walk with a professor, who was commonly called the students' friend, from his kindness to those who waited on his instructions.

As they went along, they saw lying in the path a pair of old shoes, which they supposed to belong to a poor man who was employed in a field close by, and who had nearly finished his day's work.

The student turned to the professor, saying: "Let us play the man a trick: we will hide his shoes, and conceal ourselves behind those bushes, and wait to see his perplexity when he cannot find them."

"My friend," answered the professor, "We should never amuse ourselves at the expense of the poor. But you are rich, and may give yourself a much greater pleasure by means

of the poor man. Put a coin into each shoe, and then we will hide ourselves and watch how the discovery affects him.”

The student did so, and they both placed themselves behind the bushes close by.

The poor man soon finished his work, and came across the field to the path where he had left his coat and shoes. While putting on his coat he slipped his foot into one of his shoes; but feeling something hard, he stooped down to feel what it was, and found the coin.

Astonishment and wonder were seen upon his countenance. He gazed upon the coin, turned it round, and looked at it again and again. He then looked around him on all sides, but no person was to be seen. He now put the money into his pocket, and proceeded to put on the other shoe; but his surprise was doubled on finding the other

coin.

His feelings overcame him; he fell upon his knees, looked up to heaven and uttered aloud a fervent thanksgiving, in which he spoke of his wife, sick and helpless, and his children without bread, whom the timely bounty, from some unknown hand, would save from perishing.

The student stood there deeply affected, and his eyes filled with tears.

“Now,” said the professor, “Are you not much better pleased than if you had played your intended trick?”

The youth replied, “You have taught me a lesson which I will never forget. I feel now the truth of those words, which I never understood before: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”

“I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.” - Acts 20:35)

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Some people pay tithes to the waitress, but tip God

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The trouble with some people who give till it hurts is that they have a very low pain threshold.

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Give God what is right, not what is left.

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**Giving is the only antidote to materialism.
Giving is a joyful surrender to a greater
person and a greater agenda. It dethrones
me and exalts Him.**

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**Some Christians suffer from Cirrhosis of the
Giver**

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**A vain man's motto is to win gold and wear
it.**

**A generous man's motto is to win gold and
share it.**

A Miser's motto is to win gold and retain it.

**A profligate's motto is to win gold and spend
it.**

A broker's motto is to win gold and lend it.

A fool's motto is to win gold and end it.

A gambler's motto is to win gold and lose it.

A wise man's motto is to win gold and tithe

**it “that there may be meat in mine house,
and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord
of hosts, if I will not open you the windows
of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that
there shall not be room enough to receive
it.” (Malachi 3:10)**

**— Lionel Hartley, adapted from a poem in
Southgate’s treasury (1859)**

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**Thinking about eternity helps us retrieve
[perspective].**

**I’m reminded of this every year when I
figure my taxes. During the year, I rejoice at
the paycheques and extra income, and
sometimes I flinch when I write out the tithe
and offering.**

**I do my best to be a joyful giver, but I
confess it is not always easy, especially when
there are other perceived needs and wants.**

At the end of the year, however, all of that changes. As I'm figuring my tax liability, I wince at every source of income and rejoice with every tithe and offering cheque.

More income means more tax, but every offering and tithe means less tax. Everything is turned upside down, or perhaps, more appropriately, right-side up. I suspect judgment day will be like that.

— Gary Thomas, Christianity Today Magazine

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People will judge you by your actions not your intentions.

You may have a heart of gold, but so does a hard-boiled egg.

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I should live not for the dot but for the line.

**From the dot—our present life on earth—
extends a line that goes on forever, which is
eternity in heaven.**

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**Heaven, not earth, is my home. We are
citizens of “a better country—a heavenly
one.”**

— (Hebrews 11:16)

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**The heart of the giver makes the gift dear
and precious**

— Martin Luther

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**“Well Pastor, the sermon didn’t quite fit my
needs. Where do I go to get a refund on my
offering?”**

— Cartoonist Lee Johnson, Leadership

Magazine

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God prospers me not to raise my standard of living, but to raise my standard of giving. God gives us more money than we need so we can give—generously.

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A young family regularly sits behind my parents during morning worship. Every Sunday when the offering is taken, the father gives each of his children a dollar to put in the collection plate.

One Sunday, their little boy Dusty brought a friend to church.

As my father passed the offering plate to his family, Dusty, without a second thought, tore his dollar bill in half, then handed a ‘half

**dollar' to his friend to place in the plate.
— Lucille Case**

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As Fragrant Incense

Experience shows that a spirit of benevolence is more frequently found among those of limited means than among the more wealthy. Many who greatly desire riches would be ruined by their possession. When such persons are entrusted with talents of means, they too often hoard or waste the Lord's money, until the Master says to them individually, "Thou shalt be no longer steward." They dishonestly use that which is another's as though it were their own.

God will not entrust them with eternal riches. . . .Precious in God's Sight, among the professed children of God, there are men and women who love the world, and the

things of the world, and these souls are being corrupted by worldly influences.

The divine is being dropped out of their nature. As instruments of unrighteousness, they are working out the purposes of the enemy. In contrast with this class, stands the honest, industrious poor man, who is ready to help those who need help, and willing to suffer wrong rather than manifest the close, acquisitive spirit of the rich.

This man esteems a clear conscience and right principles above the value of gold. He is ready to do all the good in his power. If some benevolent enterprise calls for money or for his labour, he is the first to respond, and often he goes far beyond his real ability, denying himself some needed good in order to carry out his benevolent purpose.

This man may boast of but little earthly treasure; he may be looked upon as deficient

in judgment and wisdom; his influence may not be esteemed of special worth; but in the sight of God he is precious. He may be thought to have little perception, but he manifests a wisdom that is as far above that of the calculating, acquisitive mind as the divine is above the human; for is he not laying up for himself a treasure in the heavens, uncorrupted, undefiled, and that fadeth not away?

— Mrs E G White, 1899

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When we eat out, most of us expect to tip the waiter or waitress 15 percent.

When we suggest 10 percent as a minimum church offering, some folks are aghast.

— Felix A. Lorenz, Jr.

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Ties or Tithes?

One Sunday morning, my 6-year-old son, Joshua, was busy getting dressed for Sunday school. When it was time for us to leave, he came out of his room carrying his entire stock of neckties. When I asked him why he was doing this, he eagerly replied, “Cause, Mom, Reverend Wyser told us to put our ties in the offering!”

— Debbie Goff

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A Presbyterian missionary I visited from Ghana told me an interesting thing about the Presbyterian Church in Ghana.

The Presbyterians are the largest Christian group in that country. The church was established over a hundred years ago by Scottish Presbyterians, and their worship service is very much like a Scottish Presbyterian service.

Recently they have allowed the African traditional experience into the worship service at the offering.

At the offering, they let the people dance. That's a part of African culture in religious, spiritual worship. They let the people dance as they bring their offerings forward.

They really get down. The music is going, and they individually turn it into a production as they bring that offering to the offering plate. They take their time, too.

The offering could go on for a long time because they are dancing all the way down the aisle. It's the only time in the service when they smile.

I thought, How interesting. The only time in the service when they smile is when they're giving their money.

— Don McCullough, “Whom Do You

Serve?"

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One time a poor little boy saw all the big people putting money into the offering plate. He didn't have anything to give but five marbles in his pocket. He put them into the plate!

People around must have smiled as they saw the strange offering drop in. After the meeting, one of the deacons asked the child if he wanted his marbles back.

"Oh, no I gave them to the Lord Jesus."

As the story was told from one to another, a certain man said, "I'll give a hundred dollars for that boy's marbles."

That was another kind of miracle change, from a few cents to \$100.

— Ruth E. Dow

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“My aim never was, how much could I obtain, but rather, how much could I give.”

— George Muller

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There was a young boy who lived with his elderly grandmother in a small town. Every Sunday the grandmother would take the boy to Church and after they would go downtown and get an ice cream cone, which was a special treat.

On one particular Sunday, grandmother was not feeling well. She told the boy that he would have to go to Church by himself today and she gave him two coins, one for the offering plate and one for an ice cream after Church.

Now as it happened the boy needed to cross an old wooden bridge in order to get to Church. As he was crossing the bridge that Sunday, as boys will do he was watching the river below, skipping, hopping - generally not paying attention.

All of a sudden he dropped one of the coins. The coin fell to the bridge and as luck would have it found a small crack through which it fell into the river below.

The boy dropped down and put his eye to the crack. He watched helplessly as the coin fell into the river below.

As the boy got up and put the other coin in his pocket he said, to no one in particular, oh well, there goes God's coin.

— Rocci Hildrum

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My home church welcomes all denominations, but really prefers tens and twenties.

— Lowell D. Streiker

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What we give for Christ we gain and what we keep back is our real loss.

— Hudson Taylor, summarizing Phil. 3

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If you have many possessions, make your gift from them in proportion; if few, do not be afraid to give according to the little you have.

— Tobit 4:8

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The measure of compassion is not how much you give but how much you have left over

after you have given.

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“God will not merely judge us on the basis of what we gave but also on the basis of what we did with what we kept for ourselves”.

— Erwin W. Lutzer

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He who serves God for money will serve the devil for better wages.

— English Proverb

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**Train up a child in the way he should go:
and when he is old, he will not depart from
it. (Proverbs 22:6)**

**If you train up a child to give pennies, it is
likely that when he is old he will not depart**

from it.

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While Eric Hulstrand of Binford, North Dakota, was preaching one Sunday, an elderly woman, Mary, fainted and struck her head on the end of the pew. Immediately, an EMT in the congregation called an ambulance.

As they strapped her to a stretcher and got ready to head out the door, Mary regained consciousness. She motioned for her daughter to come near. Everyone thought she was summoning her strength to convey what could be her final words.

The daughter leaned over until her ear was at her mother's mouth. "My offering is in my purse," she whispered.

— From the editors of Leadership Magazine

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Anthony Campolo, sociology professor at Eastern Baptist College and popular speaker, told of his experience one year at a Women's Conference where he was making a major address.

At the point in the program when the women were being challenged with a several thousand dollar goal for their mission projects, the chairperson for the day turned to Dr. Campolo and asked him if he would pray for God's blessing upon the women as they considered what they might do to achieve the goal.

To her utter surprise, Dr. Campolo came to the podium and graciously declined her invitation.

“You already have the resources necessary to complete this mission project right here

within this room,” he continued. “It would be inappropriate to ask for God’s blessing, when God has already blessed you with abundance and the means to achieve this goal.

The necessary gifts are in your hands. As soon as we take the offering and underwrite this mission project, we will thank God for freeing us to be the generous, responsible and accountable stewards that we are called to be as Christian disciples.”

When the offering was taken, the mission challenge was oversubscribed, and Dr. Campolo led a joyous prayer of thanksgiving for God’s abundant blessings and for the faithful stewardship of God’s people.

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Don’t ask what the world needs. Ask what

**makes you come alive and go out and do it.
Because what the world needs is people who
have come alive.**

— Howard Thurman

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In our town's elementary school at the beginning of the year, the school secretary routinely collects the lunch money from the new kindergartners. This solves the problem of lost money. But for nervous 5-year-olds, it took a few days to understand what was happening.

For two days, the secretary would come into the room and ask in a loud voice, "Does anybody have any lunch money for me?" Her question was met with no response.

On the third day, one little boy came in at the bell, walked hesitantly to the teacher's desk, held out his hand and whispered,

**“Here is lunch money from my piggy bank
for the poor lady nobody gives money to.”
—June Spivey**

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**If we belong to Christ, it’s logical that
everything we have truly belongs to Him.**

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**If you want to feel rich, just count all the
things you have that money can’t buy.**

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**Christian stewardship begins with God at
the centre. When stewardship revolves
around any other centre, it is misconceived.**

**The institution of the church is an
inadequate substitute for the incarnate body
of Christ.**

The church as institution is a means to the end of the church as the fellowship of all believers.

Stewardship is servant-hood to God through the church, not to the church institution.

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**A chequebook is a theological document; it will tell you who and what you worship.
— Billy Graham**

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**Wealth shines in giving rather than in hoarding: for the miser is hateful, whereas the generous man is applauded.
— Boethius (480-524?)**

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Examples are few of men ruined by giving.

— **Christian Bovée**

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People go through three conversions: their head, their heart and their pocketbook. Unfortunately, not all at the same time.

— **Martin Luther (1483-1546)**

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Never measure your generosity by what you give, but rather by what you have left.

— **Bishop Fulton J. Sheen (1895-1979)**

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One verse in every six in the first three Gospels relates, either directly or indirectly, to money. Sixteen of our Lord's 44 parables deal with the use or misuse of money.

A loving, joyful, liberal giving to the Lord's

**work is an acid test of a spiritual heart,
pleasing to God.**

**— William E. Allen, Alliance Witness
Magazine**

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**Remember this. You can't serve God and
Money, but you can serve God with money.**

— Selwyn Hughes

**“No servant can serve two masters: for
either he will hate the one, and love the
other; or else he will hold to the one, and
despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and
mammon.” (Matthew 6:24 and Luke 16:13)**

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**A Christian is one who does not have to
consult his bankbook to see how wealthy he
really is.**

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Your use of money shows what you think of God.

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**The world asks: “What does a person own?”
God asks, “How does a person use what he or she has been given?”**

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**Some people say, “Give till it hurts.” But God recommends that we give until it feels good. God loves a cheerful giver!
— Brian Kluth**

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Real charity doesn't care if it's tax deductible or not.

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When a man becomes rich, either God gains a partner, or the man loses a soul.

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If a person gets his attitude toward money straight, it will help straighten out almost every other area in his life.

— Billy Graham

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One of the greatest missing teachings in the ... church today is the reminder to men and women that nothing we have belongs to us.

— Gordon MacDonald

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No church ever has a money problem, only a faithfulness problem.

— **Brian Kluth**

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**When you give to God, you discover that
God gives to you.**

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**God looks at the heart, not the hand — the
giver, not the gift.**

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**In the Holy Land are two ancient bodies of
water. Both are fed by the Jordan River. In
one, fish play and roots find sustenance.**

**In the other, there is no splash of fish, no
sound of bird, no leaf around. The
difference is not in the Jordan, for it empties
into both, but in the Sea of Galilee: for every
drop taken in one goes out. It gives and lives.**

**The other gives nothing. And it is called the
Dead Sea.**

— William Sloane Coffin

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**Charity begins at home and generally dies
from lack of outdoor exercise.**

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**Do not give, as many rich men do, like a hen
that lays her eggs ... and then cackles.**

— Henry Ward Beecher (1813-87)

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**One of the reasons churches ... have trouble
guiding people about money is that the
church's economy is built on consumerism.**

**If churches see themselves as suppliers of
religious goods and services and their**

**congregants as consumers, then offerings
are ‘payment.’**

— Doug Pagitt

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**Choose rather to want less, than to have
more.**

— Thomas à Kempis (c1380-1471)

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**You can give without loving. But you cannot
love without giving.**

**— Amy Carmichael (1867-1951), missionary
(India)**

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**Two things ruin a church — loose living and
tight giving.**

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**Give naught, get same.
Give much, get same
— Malcolm Forbes (1919—)**

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**You have not lived until you have done
something for someone who can never repay
you.
— John Bunyan (1628-88)**

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**Christian stewards seek the heart of God in
faithfully, joyfully and gratefully managing
all the gifts God has given.**

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**My take on tithing in America is that it's a
middle-class way of robbing God. Tithing to
the church and spending the rest on your
family is not a Christian goal. It's a**

diversion.

The real issue is: How shall we use God's trust fund-namely, all we have-for His glory? In a world with so much misery, what lifestyle should we call our people to live? What example are we setting?

— John Piper (1946—) “Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings” (Malachi 3:8).

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I was once young and now I am old, but not once have I been witness to God's failure to supply my need when first I had given for the furtherance of His work.

He has never failed in His promise, so I cannot fail in my service to Him.

— William Carey (1761-1834)

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**We should travel light and live simply.
Our enemy is not possessions, but excess.
— John Stott (1921—)**

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**No one has ever become poor by giving.
— Anne Frank (1929-45)**

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**The principal hindrance to the advancement
of the kingdom of God is greed... It seems
that when the back of greed is broken, the
human spirit soars into regions of
unselfishness.**

**I believe that it is safe to say there can be no
continuous revival without ‘hilarious’
giving. And I fear no contradiction:
wherever there is ‘hilarious’ giving there**

will soon be revival!

— O. S. Hawkins

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**Dearest Lord, teach me to be generous;
teach me to serve you as you deserve; to give
and not to count the cost.**

— Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556)

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**If it is more blessed to give than to receive,
then most of us are content to let the other
fellow have the greater blessing.**

“It is more blessed to give than to receive.”

(Acts 20:35)

— Shailer Matthews (1863-1941)

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**I cannot think of a better definition of
Christianity than that: give, give, give.**

— **James I. McCord (1919—)**

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The only investment I ever made which has paid consistently increasing dividends is the money I have given to the Lord.

— **James L. Kraft (1874-1953)**

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Generosity is to materialism what kryptonite is to Superman.

— **Lloyd Shadrach**

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Think of giving not as a duty but as a privilege.

— **John D. Rockefeller, Jr. (1874-1960)**

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Generosity during life is a very different thing from generosity in the hour of death; one proceeds from genuine liberality and benevolence, the other from pride or fear. — Horace Mann (1796-1859)

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**Giving is true loving.
— Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-92)**

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**There cannot be a surer rule, nor a stronger exhortation to the observance of it, than when we are taught that all the endowments which we possess are divine deposits entrusted to us for the very purpose of being distributed for the good of our neighbour.
— John Calvin (1509-64)**

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Giving is more than a responsibility — it is a privilege; more than an act of obedience — it is evidence of our faith.

— William Arthur Ward (1921—)

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If there be any truer measure of a man than by what he does, it must be by what he gives.

— Robert South (1634-1716)

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**Even if I give the whole of my worth to Him,
He will find a way to give back to me much
more than I gave.**

— Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-92)

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**All you have shall someday be given:
Therefore give now, that the season of giving
may be yours and not your inheritors.**

— Kahlil Gibran (1883-1931)

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The measure of a life is not its duration, but its donation.

— Peter Marshall (1902-49)

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If I cannot give bountifully, yet will I give freely.

— Arthur Warwick

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It's not how much we give but how much love we put into giving.

Mother Teresa (1910—)

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What the Bible says is really true — it's

better to give than to receive.”

— Ted Turner (1938—) “I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.” (Acts 20:35)

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Empty pockets never held anyone back. It's only empty hearts that do it.

— Norman Vincent Peale

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Watch lest prosperity destroy generosity.

— Henry Ward Beecher (1813-87)

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If you haven't got any charity in your heart, you have the worst kind of heart trouble.

— American comedian Bob Hope (1903—)

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**When I die, if I leave behind me ten pounds
... you and all mankind [may] bear witness
against me, that I have lived and died a thief
and a robber.**

— John Wesley (1703-91)

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**He that gives all, though but little, gives
much; because God looks not to the quantity
of the gift, but to the quality of the givers.**

— Francis Quarles (1592-1644)

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**A lot of people are willing to give God the
credit, but not too many are willing to give
God the cash.**

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**I have held many things in my hands, and I have lost them all. But whatever I have placed in God's hands, that I still possess.
— Martin Luther (1483-1546)**

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**We are rich only through what we give: and poor only through what we refuse and keep.
— Anne Swetchine (1782-1857)**

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**Be charitable before wealth makes thee covetous.
— Sir Thomas Browne (1605-82)**

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Die Nächstenliebe macht reich; Habgier hortet sich arm.

— German Proverb (Charity makes you rich; Greed hoards itself poor.)

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God has given us two hands—one to receive with and the other to give with. We are not cisterns made for hoarding; we are channels made for sharing.

— Billy Graham

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The most important aspect of tithing and stewardship is not the raising of money for the church, but the development of devoted Christians.

— Fred M. Wood

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You can't take it with you, but you can send it on ahead.

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There are many hearing me who now know well that they are not Christians because they do not love to give. To give largely and liberally, not grudging at all, requires a new heart.

— Robert Murray McCheyne (1813-43)

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Qui alios hortatur ad dandum, se ipsum det.
— Latin Proverb (He who encourages others to give, gives himself.)

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Nothing that you have not given away will ever be really yours.
— Sinclair Lewis (1885-1951)

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I do not believe one can settle how much we ought to give. I am afraid the only safe rule is to give more than we can spare.

In other words, if our expenditure on comforts, luxuries, amusements, etc., is up to the standard common among those with the same income as our own, we are probably giving away too little.

If our charities do not at all pinch or hamper us, I should say they are too small.

There ought to be things we should like to do and cannot do because our charitable expenditures excludes them.”

— C.S. Lewis (1898-1963)

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To give without any reward, or any notice, has a special quality of its own.

— Anne Morrow Lindbergh (1906—)

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**If it is more blessed to give than to receive,
then most of us are content to let the other
fellow have the greater blessing.**

— Shailer Matthews (1863-1941)

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**Give what you have. To someone it may be
better than you dare to think.**

— Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-82)

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**Giving is more than a responsibility. It is a
privilege; more than an act of obedience. It
is evidence of our faith.**

— William Arthur Ward (1921—)

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In the total expanse of human life there is

**not a single square inch of which the Christ,
who alone is sovereign, does not declare,
'That is mine!'**

— Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920)

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**It is an anomaly of modern life that many
find giving to be a burden. Such persons
have omitted a preliminary giving.**

**If one first gives himself to the Lord, all
other giving is easy.**

John S. Bonnell (1893—)

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**In his book *The Cycle of Victorious Giving*
(Beacon Hill Press), Stan Toler tells about
the time when he was a college student and
attended the annual missions conference at
his church.**

“I felt impressed by God to give \$100 as a pledge of faith. At that time, it certainly was a faith pledge. College expenses had put a colossal crimp on my finances. I paid the pledge promptly, but it took the last of my cash. After the offering, I was broke. Good old-fashioned worry weighed heavily on my mind.

“Soon after, while I was working part-time as a barber at the North Court Barber Shop in Circleville, Ohio, my boss said he wanted to talk to me. More worry.

‘Stan,’ he began, ‘[because you’re only working part-time] all the other barbers in this shop have a chance to get more tips and profits from the sale of hair products than you; but you’re doing a great job! Here’s a bonus of \$100 — just don’t tell the others.’

“If it weren’t for two things, I would have danced around the shop and hugged my

boss's neck. First, back then students at the college I attended weren't allowed to dance. Second, pedestrians passing by the big plate glass storefront of the shop probably wouldn't understand why I was hugging my boss.

“God taught me something that day. I discovered I never could beat Him in a giving competition. God honours obedience, and He loves it when we learn to trust.”

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In 1815 Napoleon was defeated in the battle of Waterloo, and the hero of that battle was the Duke of Wellington.

The duke's most recent biographer claims to have an advantage over all the other previous biographers.

His advantage was that he had found an old

account ledger that showed how the duke had spent his money: that, says the biographer, was a far better clue to what the duke thought was really important than reading his letters or his speeches.

Can you imagine that? If someone wrote your biography on the basis of your chequebook or your income-tax return, what might it say about you, your loyalties, your focus, and about whom you serve? — Heidi Husted, “The Sermon on the Amount.”

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Prayers after the offering:

Lord, you are still watching those putting money into the treasury. May what we have given today, along with the returning of our tithes and stewardship, be multiplied with exponentiation to Your glory. We ask this in Jesus’ name, Amen.

— Lionel Hartley

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We thank you, Lord, for your creation: for the wonders of this world; for the earth and all that is nourished by it; for the teeming ocean depths which maintain our planet's life. For the green and blue of our earthly home, we praise your holy name. You are a God who gives. Lord, You blessed even the widow's small coin, so receive the slender wealth of our lives, using them for Your service, we pray in Jesus' Name, Amen.

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“Lord, we thank you that we could participate in worship through the giving of our offerings, stewardship and tithes. As You multiplied the loaves and fishes, we ask that you would multiply the effectiveness of these gifts as they assist in furtherance of Your

work. We ask this in Jesus' name, Amen.”
— Lionel Hartley

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Lionel D C Hartley

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