

Managing our money is stressful – how much to spend, what to save, who to give to?

It is important to view our finances through God's eyes. When we see His plan, we can then put our faith into action as we give our money joyfully and graciously.

GRACE

Giving is a response to the grace that God extends to us. While we can never match the extent of God's giving, we should seek to respond to the grace God has given us through our actions and our attitudes.

Giving should never be a matter of guilt. None of us would like to receive a gift that is given grudgingly. God is no different. We should give generously and willingly. Giving is not a loss, it is an investment in the kingdom of God.

"YOU KNOW THE GRACE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST;
THOUGH HE WAS RICH, YET FOR YOUR SAKE HE BECAME POOR."
2 CORINTHIANS 8:9

PLACE

The vision of our local church is to share the Good News of Jesus with our community, to reach out to a world in need and to make disciples of all nations. We can all play our part in this vision by giving of our time and talents. But we can also impact the vision by giving our money. When more is given, more is possible.

The Bible teaches us that a church whose members sow generously can expect a rich harvest. There are many worthy causes for our money to go to, but the foremost place of giving should be the local church to which we belong.

"MUCH IS REQUIRED FROM THE PERSON TO WHOM MUCH IS GIVEN;
MUCH MORE IS REQUIRED FROM THE PERSON TO WHOM MUCH MORE IS GIVEN."
LUKE 12:48

PACE

Over 2000 verses in the Bible talk about money, wealth and possessions and around a third of Jesus' parables relate to it. This is as vital a part of being a disciple of Jesus. Our giving should be planned and regular, in addition to one-off projects at specific times of need. We should regularly evaluate our level of giving, in relation to our income.

Our giving should be proportionate to our resources. The Old Testament teaches the principle of tithing and this is a good starting base for New Testament generosity. Tithing simply means giving away at least 10% of our income to the kingdom of God. That still leaves us with 90% which is much more than most people in this world have to begin with.

"GIVING SHOULD BE A PRIORITY, REGULAR AND SUSTAINED –
SET SOMETHING ASIDE FOR GOD ON THE FIRST DAY OF EACH WEEK."
1 CORINTHIANS 16:2



First Portadown Presbyterian Church

HAYLEY CULLEN

As a student, I know that money is something that dominates our concerns. We rely on student loans, part-time jobs and endless input from parents, whilst focusing on the realisation that after graduations, repayment to these sources begin. However, when I take a moment to stop and look through my bank statement, I see monthly direct debits being paid out to the gym, O2 and Netflix. Surely I can't be in the situation to claim that I can't give back to my church! It's my opportunity to give a small proportion to the God who has provided me with all that I have.

It is very easy for me to state this in theory but the reality of deciding to give requires action. I believe that it is important to start small, with simple lifestyle changes – for example, buying one less cup of coffee a week and instead putting the money into the offering plate.

SUCCESS WILL LIE IN DEVELOPING A HABIT OF HOW TO ORGANISE MY FINANCES.

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What happens to what we give?
Your offering helps to fund the work of the church in the service of the kingdom of God. Some of it will go towards:

- **The Freewill Offering (FWO)** supports your local church and many central projects
- **The United Appeal for Mission** supports our local and global witness
- **The World Development Appeal** gives a hand up to the poorest of the earth.



The Grace of Giving
Be Joyful – Be Generous