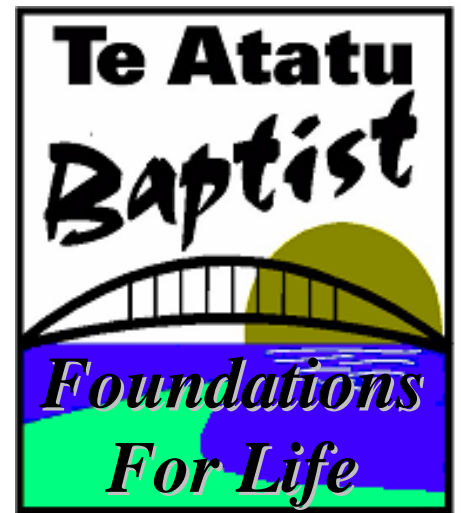
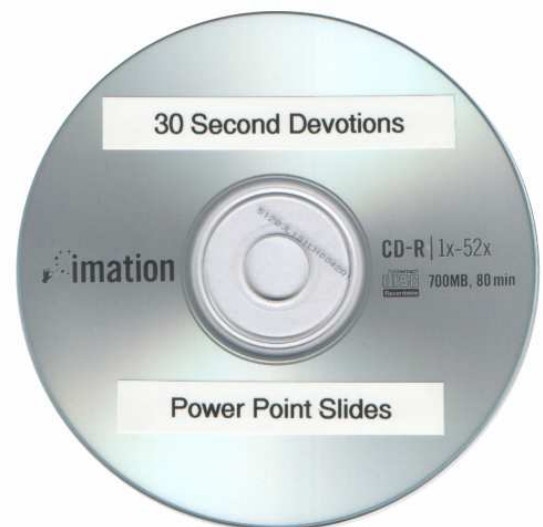


'30 second' Offering Devotions for Church Services!



Over one year worth of high quality '30 second devotions' on the topics of Tithing, Giving and Money, that you (or your service leaders) can present on Sunday without any prior reading or preparation!

Full Power Point Slides
included on CD for every
Offering Devotion



Compiled and adapted by:
Ps Roger Spackman
Te Atatu Baptist Church

© Research, References & Credit to:
NIV Life Application Study Bible

Greetings!

This collection of Offering Devotions arose out of my desire to find a book dedicated to short, punchy, Scriptural and motivational devotions that can be used during the ‘offering segment’ of Sunday church services and given to any leader of the service to use *immediately*, without any need of preparation or study on their behalf.

Unable to find such a booklet, I set about to collect, adapted and rewrite over 60 Biblical devotions on the topic of Tithing, Giving and Money – more than one devotion for each week of the year, most of them directly from the NIV Life Application Study Bible. All of them have Power Point slides with Scriptures and main points. Many have graphics as well. All the slides, as well as the devotions, are on the CD.

My prayer is that the effort taken in producing this booklet will be *multiplied* as you, your service leaders and congregation are encouraged each week to:

...bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it!"
(Malachi 3:10)

I usually Email each devotion to an Elder who is leading the service, and also have it photocopied when they arrive at church on Sunday. I also include the following paragraph for them to introduce the devotion:

‘As we come to give to the Lord of our tithes and offerings, let’s open the Bible and learn from God’s Spirit on the topic of’

We also have another copy of the devotion on the sound desk – for the data projectionist to use as they change the slides during the devotion.

Blessings

Roger Spackman
Senior Pastor
Te Atatu Baptist Church

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<p>Credit Given to: NIV Life Application Study Bible</p>

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Slide # 1

The point of tithing!

Deuteronomy 14:22-23

22 ¶ Be sure to set aside a tenth of all that your fields produce each year.

23 Eat the tithe of your grain, new wine and oil, and the firstborn of your herds and flocks in the presence of the LORD your God at the place he will choose as a dwelling for his Name, so that you may learn to revere the LORD your God always.

The Bible makes the purpose of tithing very clear—to put God first in our lives. That means we are to give God the first and best of what we earn.

This is important, for what we do first with our money shows what we value most. Giving the first part of our paycheck to God immediately focuses our attention on him, it also reminds us that all we have belongs to him.

Slide # 2

A habit of regular tithing can keep God at the top of our priority list and give us a proper perspective on everything else we have.

Let's pray!

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Four Foundations of Tithing!

2 Corinthians 8:10-15

10 And here is my advice about what is best for you in this matter: Last year you were the first not only to give but also to have the desire to do so. 11 Now finish the work, so that your eager willingness to do it may be matched by your completion of it, according to your means. 12 For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what he does not have. 13 Our desire is not that others might be relieved while you are hard pressed, but that there might be equality. 14 At the present time your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need. Then there will be equality, 15 as it is written: "He who gathered much did not have too much, and he who gathered little did not have too little."

The Corinthian church had plenty of money, and apparently they had planned to collect some of this money and give it to the Jerusalem churches a year previously. Paul challenges them to act on their plans. Four principles of giving emerge here:

- (1) your willingness to give cheerfully is more important than the amount you give;
- (2) you should strive to fulfill your financial commitments;
- (3) if you give to others in need, they will, in turn, help you when you are in need;
- (4) you should give as a response to Christ, not for anything you can get out of it. How you give reflects your devotion to Christ.

Let's pray!

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Your attitude towards giving!

Genesis 4:3-5

3 ¶ In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the LORD.

4 But Abel brought fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The LORD looked with favour on Abel and his offering,

5 but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favour. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast.

It's interesting to note that the Bible does not say why God rejected Cain's sacrifice. Perhaps Cain's attitude was improper, or perhaps his offering was not up to God's standards. Proverbs 21:27 says, "The sacrifice of the wicked is detestable—how much more so when brought with evil intent!" God evaluates both our motives and the quality of what we offer him.

When we give to God and others, we should have a joyful heart because of what we are able to give. We should not worry about how much we are giving up, for all things are God's in the first place. Instead, we should joyfully give to God our best in time, money, possessions, and talents.

Let's pray!

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Slide # 1

A 'natural response' to God's love!

2 Corinthians 8:7-8

7 ¶ But just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us— see that you also excel in this grace of giving.

8 I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others.

The Corinthian believers excelled in everything—they had faith, good preaching (speech), much knowledge, much earnestness, much love. Paul wanted them to also be leaders in giving.

Giving is a natural response of love. Paul did not order the Corinthians to give, but he encouraged them to prove that their love was sincere.

When you love someone, you want to give him or her your time and attention and to provide for his or her needs.

Slide # 2

Giving to God is just one way we show how much we love Him and care for others!

Let's pray!

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

How much should I give Lord?

2 Corinthians 8:10-15

10 And here is my advice about what is best for you in this matter: Last year you were the first not only to give but also to have the desire to do so. 11 Now finish the work, so that your eager willingness to do it may be matched by your completion of it, according to your means.

12 For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what he does not have.

13 Our desire is not that others might be relieved while you are hard pressed, but that there might be equality.

14 At the present time your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need. Then there will be equality,

15 as it is written: "He who gathered much did not have too much, and he who gathered little did not have too little."

Here's a question that many Christians struggle with: How do you decide how much to give to the church? Paul gives the Corinthian church several principles to follow, and if we open our hearts to the Spirit of God, He will speak to us as well this morning:

- (1) each person should follow through on previous promises
 - (2) each person should give as much as he or she is able
 - (3) each person must make up his or her own mind how much to give
 - (4) and each person should give in proportion to what God has given him or her
- God gives to us so that we can give to others.

Let's pray!

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Slide # 1

Giving that hurts!

2 Corinthians 8:12

12 For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what he does not have.

Slide # 2

The Bible says that we should give of what we have, not what we don't have. Yet in saying this, sacrificial giving must be responsible. Paul wants believers to give generously, but not to the extent that those who depend on the givers (their families, for example) must go without having their basic needs met.

Slide # 3

Give until it hurts, but don't give so that it hurts your family and/or relatives who need your financial support.

Let's pray!

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Slide # 1

Overdue notices!

Exodus 22:29

29 "Do not hold back the offerings from your fields or your vineyards – you must give the Lord this measure of all your household

The Israelites were to be prompt in giving God their offerings. The first of the harvest was to be dedicated immediately to him.

Since God doesn't send payment overdue notices, it's often easy to take care of other financial responsibilities while letting our gifts to him slide.

Slide # 2

Giving to God *first* out of what he has allowed you to have demonstrates that he has first priority in your life.

Let's pray!

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Slide # 1

Tithing to support the Christian community!

Numbers 18:25-26

25 The LORD said to Moses,

26 "Speak to the Levites and say to them: 'When you receive from the Israelites the tithe I give you as your inheritance, you must present a tenth of that tithe as the LORD's offering.

Even the Levites, who were God's special ministers in the temple, had to tithe to support the Lord's work. No one was exempt from returning to God a portion of what was received. Though the Levites owned no land and operated no great enterprises, they were to treat their income the same as everyone else did by giving a portion to care for the needs of the other Levites and of the tabernacle.

Slide # 2

God's Word is alive and active – and this tithing principle is still relevant today – for all believers, including pastors and missionaries.

God also expects *all* his followers to supply the material needs of those who devote themselves to meeting the spiritual needs of the community of faith.

Let's pray!

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Slide # 1

Proportional Giving!

Deuteronomy 16:16-17

16 Three times a year all your men must appear before the LORD your God at the place he will choose: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks and the Feast of Tabernacles. No man should appear before the LORD empty-handed:

17 Each of you must bring a gift in proportion to the way the LORD your God has blessed you.

In Old Testament days, three times a year every male was to make a journey to the sanctuary in the city that would be designated as Israel's religious capital. At these festivals, each participant was encouraged to give what he could in proportion to what God had given him.

Slide # 2

God does not expect us to give more than we can, but we will be blessed when we give cheerfully.

For some, 10 percent may be a burden. For most of us, that would be far too little.

Look at what you have and then give in proportion to what you have been given.

Let's pray!

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Slide # 1

Tithing teaches us to give our best to God

Deuteronomy 17:1

1 ¶ Do not sacrifice to the LORD your God an ox or a sheep that has any defect or flaw in it, for that would be detestable to him.

The fact that this command was included in Scripture, probably indicates that some Israelites were sacrificing imperfect or deformed animals to God as their tithe and offering.

Then, as now, it is difficult and expensive to offer God our best (i.e., the first part of what we earn).

Slide # 2

It is always tempting to shortchange God because we think we won't get caught. But our giving shows our real priorities.

When we give God the leftovers, it is obvious that he is not at the center of our lives.

Give God the honor of having first claim on your money, time, and talents.

Let's pray!

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Slide # 1

Sacrificial giving

2 Corinthians 8:2-5

2 Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. 3 For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, 4 they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints.

5 And they did not do as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God's will.

During his third missionary journey, Paul had collected money for the impoverished believers in Jerusalem. The churches in Macedonia—Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea—had given money even though they were poor, and they had given more than Paul expected.

This was sacrificial giving—they were poor themselves, but they wanted to help. The point of giving is not so much the amount we give, but why and how we give. God does not want gifts given grudgingly.

Slide # 2

Instead, God wants us to give as these churches did—out of dedication to Christ, love for fellow believers, the joy of helping those in need, as well as the fact that it was simply the good and right thing to do.

How well does your giving measure up to the standards set by the Macedonian churches?

Let's pray!

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Slide # 1

Help us to help others!

2 Corinthians 8:3-6

3 For I testify that the Christians of the church at Macedonia, gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability.

4 They even pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this ministry of 'helping Christians' in other parts of the world.

5 They were able to do this, because they first gave themselves to the Lord, and then their money followed.

The kingdom of God spreads through believers' concern and eagerness to help others. Here we see several churches joining to help others *beyond* their own circle of friends and their own city.

Explore ways that you might link up with a ministry outside your city, either through this church or through a Christian organization. By joining with other believers to do God's work, you increase Christian unity and help the kingdom grow.

Slide # 2

Your giving helps us to help others – and to reach this community – and beyond - for Christ!

Let's pray!

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

The practical benefits of tithing!

2 Corinthians 9:12-15

12 This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God.

13 Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else.

14 And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you.

15 Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

God's Word emphasizes the spiritual rewards for those who give generously to God's work.

It's important to realise that we should not expect to become wealthy through giving. Those who receive your gifts will be helped, will praise God, and will pray for you.

As you bless others, you will be blessed.

Let's pray!

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Slide # 1

Commitment to God and generous giving are closely related!

Exodus 35:21

21 and everyone who was willing and whose heart moved him came and brought an offering to the LORD for the work on the Tent of Meeting, for all its service, and for the sacred garments.

Those whose hearts were stirred gave cheerfully to the Tent of Meeting (also called the tabernacle). With great enthusiasm they gave because they knew how important their giving was to the completion of God's house.

Slide # 2

Airline pilots and computer operators can push test buttons to see if their equipment is functioning properly. God has a quick test button he can push to see the level of our commitment—our attitude towards giving to Him and those in need.

Slide #3

Generous people aren't necessarily faithful to God. But faithful people are always generous towards God and others!

Let's pray!

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Slide # 1

Being honest with God!

Leviticus 27:33

32 The entire tithe of the herd and flock—every tenth animal that passes under the shepherd's rod—will be holy to the LORD, and given to Him as an offering.

33 You must not pick and choose what you give, or how much you give to God, and be tempted to give to Him out of your leftovers or second rate sacrifices. All you have belongs to the Lord, including the best you have to offer, and also what you consider to be second rate - it all belongs to Him in the first place!

The outward actions of our giving to God often reveals our inward motivation and the attitude of our hearts.

If a person gives grudgingly to God, or only of his leftovers, he shows that he has a stingy heart.

God wants us to be cheerful givers - who give our tithes, and our lives to Him with a heart of joy and love.

Slide # 2

Let us count it a joy this morning to give our tithes and offerings to God, let it be an expression of thanksgiving for all He has done for us through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Let's pray!

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Slide # 1

Willing to give of your personal fortune!

1 Chronicles 29:3-5

3 Besides, in my devotion to the temple of my God I now give my personal treasures of gold and silver for the temple of my God, over and above everything I have provided for this holy temple:

4 three thousand talents of gold (gold of Ophir) and seven thousand talents of refined silver, for the overlaying of the walls of the buildings, 5 for the gold work and the silver work, and for all the work to be done by the craftsmen. Now, who is willing to consecrate himself today to the LORD?"

David gave from his personal fortune for the temple of God. He encouraged others to follow his example, and they willingly did. Both the tabernacle and the temple were built from the voluntary gifts of the people.

Like David, we can acknowledge that all we have comes from God.

Slide # 2

We may not have David's wealth, but we can develop his willingness to give. It is not what we have that counts with God, but our willingness to give it.

Let's pray!

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let’s open God’s Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Slide # 1

Reactionary giving!

Acts 11:29

29 The disciples, each according to his ability, decided to provide help for the brothers living in Judea.

The people of Antioch were motivated to give generously because they cared about the needs of others.

This is the “cheerful” giving that the Bible commends (2 Cor. 9:7).

Reluctant giving reflects a lack of concern for people.

Slide # 2

Focus your concern on the needy – not yourself, and you will be motivated to give.

Let’s pray!

As the stewards collect our offerings this morning, we want to acknowledge the many people who give through automatic payment, and want you to feel free of embarrassment to be able to simply ‘wave’ the offering bag aside as they are passed around this morning????

Thank you

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Slide # 1

True sacrifice is giving something of value

1 Chronicles 21:22-24

22 King David said "Let me have the site of your threshing-floor so that I can build an altar to the LORD, that the plague on the people may be stopped. Sell it to me at the full price." 23 Araunah said to David, "Take it! Let my lord the king do whatever pleases him. Look, I will give the oxen for the burnt offerings, the threshing-sledges for the wood, and the wheat for the grain offering. I will give all this." 24 But King David replied to Araunah, "No, I insist on paying the full price. I will not take for the LORD what is yours, or sacrifice a burnt offering that costs me nothing."

When David wanted to buy Araunah's land to build an altar, Araunah generously offered it as a gift. But David refused, saying, "I will not take for the LORD what is yours, or sacrifice a burnt offering that costs me nothing."

David wanted to offer a sacrifice to God. The word *sacrifice* implies giving something that costs the giver in terms of self, time, or money. To give sacrificially requires more than a token effort or gift.

God wants us to give voluntarily, but he wants it to mean something.

Slide # 2

Giving to God what costs you nothing does not really demonstrate commitment.

However, when God has captured our hearts – we will find it easy to give to Him, even when it is costly and sacrificial!

Let's pray!

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Slide # 1

Giving to God first!

Proverbs 3:9-10

9 Honour the LORD with your wealth, with the first fruits of all your crops;
10 then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.

The *first fruits* refers to the practice of giving to God's use the first and best portion of the harvest (Deut. 26:9-11).

Instead of giving to God our First fruits – many people give God their leftovers! These people may be sincere and contribute willingly, but their attitude is nonetheless backward.

It is better to give God the first part of our income. This demonstrates that God, not possessions, has first place in our lives and that our resources belong to him (we are only managers of God's resources).

Slide # 2

Giving to God first helps us conquer greed, helps us properly manage God's resources, and opens us up to receive God's special blessings.

Let's pray!

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Slide # 1

Giving God my very best!

Malachi 1:6 - 8

A son honors his father, and a servant honors his master. I am your Father and Master, yet you don't honor Me, O priests and leaders, and you despise My Name. 'Who us?' you say, 'How do we despise Your Name?' Every time you allow the people to offer second rate sacrifices, and fail to teach them to honor Me with the best of their tithes and offerings – you dishonor My Name! If you don't believe me – and how this dishonors my Name, then try giving a second rate effort or commitment to your earthly father or master, and see how they like it!

God's law required that only perfect animals, tithes and offerings should be offered to God. But these priests were allowing the people to offer blind, crippled, and diseased animals to God.

The leaders of God's people had failed to teach and inspire the people to honor God with the very best of their lives, of their tithes and offerings.

The actions of both the priests and the people was dishonoring to God.

Slide # 2

The New Testament says that our lives should be living sacrifices to God (Romans 12:1). If we give God only our leftover time, money, and energy, we repeat the same sin as these worshipers who didn't want to bring anything valuable to God.

What we give God reflects our true attitude toward him.

Let's pray and honor God with our tithes and offerings this morning!

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

God's perspective on giving!

Malachi 1:7 - 8

7 Listen My people: "You place defiled offerings on my altar. "But you ask, 'How have we defiled you?' "By acting as if I doesn't matter *what* you give, or *how* you give to the Lord!

8 When you bring blind animals for sacrifice, is that not wrong? When you sacrifice crippled or diseased animals, is that not wrong? Try offering them to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you?" says the LORD Almighty.

The people gave offerings to God out of a wrong heart and attitude.

- (1) Grudgingly — being as cheap as possible and giving the least amount
- (2) Neglectfully — not caring how they offered the sacrifice, and
- (3) Rebelliously — giving offerings to God *their own way* and not as God had commanded.

Their methods of giving showed their real attitudes toward God.

How about your attitude today?

Instead of giving grudgingly, neglectfully or rebelliously, God wants each of us to give to Him out of a willing and thankful heart.

Let's pray!

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Slide # 1

Giving only to get something in return!

Matthew 6:3-4

3 But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,

4 so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

When Jesus says not to let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, he is teaching that our motives for giving to God and to others must be pure.

It is easy to give with mixed motives, to do something for someone if it will benefit us in return.

But believers should avoid all scheming and give for the pleasure of giving and as a response to God's love.

Slide # 2

The question God's Word asks of us this today, is 'Why do *you* give?'

Let's pray together and give our tithes and offerings to the Lord with a grateful heart for all He has done for us!

Let's pray

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Slide # 1

Recognition that comes from giving!

Matthew 6:3-4

3 But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

It's easier to do what's right when we gain recognition and praise. To be sure our motives are not selfish, we should do our good deeds quietly or in secret, with no thought of reward. In the passage we just looked at, Jesus says we should check our motives in three areas:

Slide # 2

- 1. generosity (Matthew 6:4),
- 2. prayer (Matthew 6:6), and
- 3. fasting (Matthew 6:18).

Those acts should not be self-centered, but God-centered, done not to make us look good but to make God look good. The reward God promises is not material, and it is never given to those who seek it. Doing something only for ourselves is not a loving sacrifice.

Slide # 3

With your next good deed, ask, "Would I still do this if no one would ever know I did it?", and let God's Word encourage us to continue serving Him with the right heart and motive.

Let's pray!

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Slide #1

Following Jesus

Matthew 8:19-20

19 Then a teacher of the law came to him and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go."

20 Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head."

Following Jesus is not always easy or comfortable. Often it means great cost and sacrifice, with no earthly rewards or security.

Jesus didn't have a place to call home. You may find that following Christ costs you popularity, friendships, leisure time, or treasured habits.

It also costs us where it hurts at times – in our tithing and offering!

Slide # 2

But while the cost of following Christ is high, the value of being Christ's disciple is even higher. Discipleship is an investment that lasts for eternity and yields incredible rewards.

Let's pray as we give to the Lord of our tithes and offerings

Date used:
Speaker:

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Do I have to sell everything to follow Christ!

The answer is found in:

Matthew 19:21

21 Jesus answered, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

Should all believers sell everything they own? No.

We are responsible to care for our own needs and the needs of our families so as not to be a burden on others. We should, however, be willing to give up anything if God asks us to do so.

This kind of attitude allows nothing to come between us and God and keeps us from using our God-given wealth selfishly.

If you are comforted by the fact that Christ did not tell all his followers to sell all their possessions, then you may be too attached to what you have.

Let's pray and ask God to release us, and also bless the offering we bring to Him today:

Let's pray

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Leaving all for Him!

Matthew 19:29

29 And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life.

Jesus assured the disciples that anyone who gives up something valuable for his sake will be repaid many times over in this life, although not necessarily in the same form.

For example, a person may be rejected by his or her family for accepting Christ, but he or she will gain the larger family of believers.

We give to God freely from our finances, and in His wonderful provision,

He supplies everything else we need for life and godliness!

Let's pray!

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Jesus uses whatever we give him.

Matthew 14:19-21

19 And he directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people.

20 They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over.

21 The number of those who ate was about five thousand men, besides women and children.

Jesus multiplied five loaves and two fish to feed over 5,000 people. What he was originally given seemed insufficient, but in his hands it became more than enough.

We often feel that our contribution to Jesus is meager, but he can use and multiply whatever we give him, whether it is talent, time, or treasure.

It is when we give them to Jesus that our resources are multiplied.

Let's pray!

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Slide # 1

Multiplied blessings!

Matthew 14:19 - 21

19 And he directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people.

20 They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over.

21 The number of those who ate was about five thousand men, besides women and children.

The text states that there were 5,000 men present, *besides* women and children. Therefore, the total number of people Jesus fed could have been 10 to 15 thousand.

The number of men is listed separately because in the Jewish culture of the day, men and women usually ate separately when in public.

Slide # 2

When we give to God from the little we have – we might be amazed at how He multiplies it and blesses others – not just 100 fold – but sometimes eves 10,000 fold!

Let's pray! (*Include these areas: Tithes through automatic payment, and the Manna Basket*)

Date used:
Speaker:

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Slide # 1

Giving a little is better than nothing.

Slide # 2

John 6:8-9

8 Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up,
9 "Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?"

The disciples are compared with the youngster who brought what he had.

They certainly had more resources than the boy, but they knew they didn't have enough, so they didn't give anything at all.

The boy gave what little he had, and it made all the difference.

Slide # 3

If we offer nothing to God, he will have nothing to use. But he can take what little we have and turn it into something great.

Let's pray!

Date used:
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Even a little is enough!

Slide # 1

John 6:8-9

8 Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up,
9 "Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?"

In performing his miracles, Jesus usually preferred to work through people.

Here he took what a young child offered and used it to accomplish one of the most spectacular miracles recorded in the Gospels.

Age is no barrier to Christ.

Never think you are too young or old to be of service to him.

Slide # 2

We give to God from what we have – not from what we don't have – and in this case – even a little is enough to do God's work!

Let's pray!

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Slide # 1

Supporting ministers in the church!

Luke 10:7

7 Stay in that house, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house.

Jesus told his disciples to accept hospitality graciously because their work entitled them to it.

Ministers of the gospel deserve to be supported, and it is our responsibility to make sure they have what they need.

Slide # 2

There are several ways to encourage those who serve God in his church.

- First, see that they have an adequate salary.
- Second, see that they are supported emotionally; plan a time to express appreciation for something they have done.
- Third, lift their spirits with special surprises from time to time.

Our ministers deserve to know we are giving to them (and the church) cheerfully and generously. Giving to God is one way that we can bless our ministers too!

Let's pray!

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Speaker:

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Slide # 1

Being obedient in all areas of giving!

Matthew 23:23-24

23 "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You tithe right down to the last mint leaf in your garden, but ignore the important things – like justice, mercy and faith. YES – you should tithe! But you shouldn't leave the other important things undone either!

It's actually possible to live as a Christian, obey the details of the laws, but still be disobedient in our general behavior towards God and others.

The religious people of Jesus day were very careful to tithe, but they ignored other aspects of 'tithing', being obedient to God in all other areas of life

For example, we could be very precise and faithful about giving 10 percent of our money to God, but refuse to give one minute of our time in helping others, or loose our interest in coming to church, or serving Him in other ways.

Slide # 2

Tithing is important, but giving a tithe does not exempt us from fulfilling God's other directives.

Let's pray!

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Slide # 1

The spirit of giving!

Mark 12:41 – 44

- 41 ¶ 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.
- 42 But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a fraction of a penny.
- 43 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.
- 44 They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on."

In the Lord's eyes, this poor widow gave more than all the others put together, though her gift was by far the smallest.

The value of a gift is not determined by its amount, but by the spirit in which it is given.

A gift given grudgingly or for recognition loses its value.

Slide # 2

When you give, remember—gifts of any size are pleasing to God when they are given out of gratitude and a spirit of generosity.

Let's pray!

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come

forward

now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Slide # 1

Giving sacrificially!

Luke 21:1-4

- 1 ¶ As he looked up, Jesus saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury.
- 2 He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins.
- 3 "I tell you the truth," he said, "this poor widow has put in more than all the others.
- 4 All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on."

This widow gave all she had to live on, in contrast to the way most of us handle our money.

When we consider giving a certain percentage of our income a great accomplishment, we resemble those who gave "out of their wealth."

Here, Jesus was admiring generous and sacrificial giving.

Slide # 2

As believers, we should consider increasing our giving—whether of money, time, or talents—to a point beyond convenience or safety.

Let's pray!

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Slide # 1

The real joy of giving!

2 Corinthians 8:2-6

2 Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. 3 For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, 4 they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints. 5 And they did not do as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God's will. 6 So we urged Titus, since he had earlier made a beginning, to bring also to completion this act of grace on your part.

During his third missionary journey, Paul had collected money for the impoverished believers in Jerusalem. The churches in Macedonia—Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea—had given money even though they were poor, and they had given more than Paul expected. This was sacrificial giving—they were poor themselves, but they wanted to help.

The point of giving is not so much the amount we give, but why and how we give. God does not want gifts given grudgingly. Instead, he wants us to give as these churches did—out of dedication to Christ, love for fellow believers, the joy of helping those in need, as well as the fact that it was simply the good and right thing to do.

How well does your giving measure up to the standards set by the Macedonian churches?

Let's pray!

Date used:
Speaker:

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Slide # 1

Spreading the Kingdom through giving!

2nd Corinthians 8:3 - 6

3 For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, 4 they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints.

5 And they did not do as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God's will. 6 So we urged Titus, since he had earlier made a beginning, to bring also to completion this act of grace on your part.

The kingdom of God spreads through believers' concern and eagerness to help others. Here we see several churches joining to help others beyond their own circle of friends and their own city.

Explore ways that you might link up with a ministry outside your city, either through your church or through a Christian organization.

Slide # 2

By joining with other believers to do God's work, you increase Christian unity and help the kingdom grow. Our goal is to reach this community for Christ – your giving helps this become a reality!

Let's pray!

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Slide # 1

Giving - a natural response of love!

2 Corinthians 8:7-8

7 ¶ But just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us— see that you also excel in this grace of giving. 8 I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others.

The Corinthian believers excelled in everything—they had faith, good preaching (speech), much knowledge, much earnestness, much love. Paul wanted them to also be leaders in giving.

Giving is a natural response of love. Paul did not order the Corinthians to give, but he encouraged them to prove that their love was sincere.

When you love someone, you want to give him or her your time and attention and to provide for his or her needs. If you refuse to help, your love is not as genuine as you say.

Let's show God how much we love Him this morning, by freely giving of our tithes and offerings.

Let's pray together! (*Include these areas: Tithes through automatic payment, and the Manna Basket*)

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Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Slide # 1

Handling money reveals our character!

Slide # 2

Psalm 37:21

21 ¶ The wicked borrow and do not repay, but the righteous give generously;

You can tell a lot about a person's character by the way he or she handles money. The wicked person steals under the guise of borrowing.

Slide # 3

The righteous person gives generously to the needy.

The wicked person, therefore, focuses on himself, while the righteous person looks to the welfare of others.

Let's pray as we come to present out tithes and offerings to the Lord.

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Slide # 1

Obedience to God more is important than money!

Slide # 2

Psalm 119:36

36 Turn my heart towards your statutes and not towards selfish gain.

In today's world, people most often covet financial gain. Money represents power, influence, and success. For many people, money is a god. They think about little else.

True, money can buy certain comforts and offer some security. But far more valuable than wealth is obedience to God because it is a heavenly treasure rather than an earthly one (Luke 12:33). We should do what God wants, regardless of the financial implications.

Slide # 3

Make the psalmist's prayer your own, asking God to turn your heart toward his statutes and not toward making money; it's in your own best interest in the long run.

Let's pray!

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Speaker:

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Slide # 1

Balance between generosity and stewardship!

Proverbs 6:1-5

1 ¶ My son, if you have put up security for your neighbor, if you have struck hands in pledge for another, 2 if you have been trapped by what you said, ensnared by the words of your mouth, 3 then do this, my son, to free yourself, since you have fallen into your neighbor's hands: Go and humble yourself; press your plea with your neighbor! 4 Allow no sleep to your eyes, no slumber to your eyelids. 5 Free yourself, like a gazelle from the hand of the hunter, like a bird from the snare of the fowler.

These verses are not a plea against generosity, but against overextending one's financial resources and acting in irresponsible ways that could lead to poverty.

It is important to maintain a balance between generosity and good stewardship. God wants us to help our friends and the needy, but he does not promise to cover the costs of every unwise commitment we make.

Slide # 2

We should also act responsibly so that our family does not suffer. Our giving today will bless those within our new spiritual family of God!

Let's pray!

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Speaker:

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Slide # 1

Money cannot provide true safety!

Proverbs 18:11

11 ¶ The wealth of the rich is their fortified city; they imagine it an unscalable wall.

In imagining that their wealth is their strongest defense, rich people are sadly mistaken, and poorer people have believed a lie.

Money cannot provide safety—there are too many ways for it to lose its power.

The government may cease to back it; thieves may steal it; inflation may rob it of all value.

But God never loses his power.

He is always dependable, trustworthy and reliable.

Slide # 2

Where do you look for security and safety—uncertain wealth or God who is always faithful?

Let's pray!

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Speaker:

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Slide # 1

Money tempts us to sacrifice integrity!

Proverbs 19:1

Better be poor and honest, than rich and dishonest!

A blameless life is far more valuable than wealth, but most people don't act as if they believe this. Afraid of not getting everything they want, they will pay any price to increase their wealth—cheating on their taxes, stealing from stores or employers, withholding tithes, refusing to give.

But when we know and love God, we realize that a lower standard of living—or even poverty—is a small price to pay for personal integrity.

Slide # 2

Do your actions show that you sacrifice your integrity to increase your wealth?

What changes do you need to make in order to get your priorities straight?

Let's pray!

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Saving some money for the future!

Proverbs 21:20

20 ¶ In the house of the wise are stores of choice food and oil, but a foolish man devours all he has.

This proverb is about saving for the future.

Easy credit has many people living on the edge of bankruptcy. The desire to keep up and to accumulate more pushes them to spend every penny they earn, and they stretch their credit to the limit.

But anyone who spends all he has is spending more than he can afford. A wise person puts money aside for when he or she may have less.

God approves of foresight and restraint.

God's people need to examine their life-styles to see whether their spending is God-pleasing or merely self-pleasing.

Let's pray!

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Slide # 1

How money can deceives us!

Ecclesiastes 10:19

19 A feast is made for laughter, and wine makes life merry, but (the foolish say) money is the answer for everything.

Government leaders, businesses, families, even churches get trapped into thinking money is the answer to every problem. We throw money at our problems. But just as the thrill of wine is only temporary, the soothing effect of the last purchase soon wears off and we have to buy more.

Scripture recognizes that money is necessary for survival, but it warns against the love of money (see Matthew 6:24; 1 Tim. 6:10; Hebrews 13:5).

Money is dangerous because it deceives us into thinking that wealth is the easiest way to get everything we want. The love of money is sinful because we trust money rather than God to solve our problems.

Slide # 2

Those who pursue its empty promises will one day discover that they have nothing because they are spiritually bankrupt.

Let's give with a willing heart that is more dependant on God, than the money we give to Him!

Let's pray!

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Ironies in how we use money!

Ezekiel 7:19

19 They will throw their silver into the streets, and their gold will be an unclean thing. Their silver and gold will not be able to save them in the day of the LORD's wrath. They will not satisfy their hunger or fill their stomachs with it, for it has made them stumble into sin.

God's people had allowed their love of money to lead them into sin. And for this, God would destroy them.

Money has a strange power to lead people into sin. Paul said that "the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil" (1 Tim. 6:10).

It is ironic that we use money—a gift of God—to buy things that separate us from him. It is tragic that we spend so much money seeking to satisfy ourselves, and so little time seeking God, the true source of satisfaction.

Let's pray!

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Using Our Money for God!

Ezekiel 7:20

20 They were proud of their beautiful jewelry and used it to make their detestable idols and vile images. Therefore I will turn these into an unclean thing for them.

God gave the people silver and gold, but they used that silver and gold to make idols.

The resources God gives us should be used to do his work and carry out his will, but too often we use them to satisfy our own desires.

When we abuse God's gifts or use resources selfishly, we miss the real purpose God had in mind.

This is as shortsighted as idolatry.

Let's pray and ask God to help each of us use our money for His glory!

Let's pray!

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Slide # 1

Keeping money from controlling you!

Matthew 6:24

24 "No-one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.

Jesus says we can have only one master.

We live in a materialistic society where many people serve money. They spend all their lives collecting and storing it, only to die and leave it behind. Their desire for money and what it can buy far outweighs their commitment to God and spiritual matters.

Whatever you store up, you will spend much of your time and energy thinking about. Don't fall into the materialistic trap, because "the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil" (1 Tim. 6:10).

Slide # 2

Can you honestly say that God, and not money, is your master? One test is to ask which one occupies more of your thoughts, time, and efforts.

Let's pray!

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Slide # 1

A right perspective on money!

Matthew 6:24

24 "No-one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.

Jesus contrasted heavenly values with earthly values when he explained that our first loyalty should be to those things that do not fade, cannot be stolen or used up, and never wear out.

We should not be fascinated with our possessions, lest *they* possess *us*. This means we may have to do some cutting back if our possessions are becoming too important to us.

Slide # 2

Jesus is calling for a decision that allows us to live contentedly with whatever he has blessed us with – and to give to him freely out of this!

Let's pray!

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Keys to using money wisely!

Luke 12:33

33 Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys.

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

Money seen as an end in itself quickly traps us and cuts us off from both God and the needy. The key to using money wisely is to see how much we can use for God's purposes, not how much we can accumulate for ourselves.

Does God's love touch your wallet? Does your money free you to help others? If so, you are storing up lasting treasures in heaven. If your financial goals and possessions hinder you from giving generously, loving others, or serving God, sell what you must to bring your life into perspective.

Let's pray!

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Directing our money wisely!

Luke 12:33

33 Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys.

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

If you concentrate your money in your business, your thoughts will center on making the business profitable.

If you direct it toward other people, you will become concerned with their welfare.

Where do you put your time, money, and energy?

What do you think about most?

How should you change the way you use your resources in order to reflect kingdom values more accurately?

Let's pray!

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Dealing with the love of money!

Mark 10:17-23

17 ¶ As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. "Good teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"
 18 "Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No-one is good— except God alone.
 19 You know the commandments: 'Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, do not defraud, honour your father and mother.'" 20 "Teacher," he declared, "all these I have kept since I was a boy."
 21 Jesus looked at him and loved him. "One thing you lack," he said. "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."
 22 At this the man's face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth.
 23 Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!"

This young man wanted to be sure he would get eternal life, so he asked what he could *do*. He said he'd never once broken any of the laws Jesus mentioned (Mark 10:19), and perhaps he had even kept the Pharisees' loophole-filled version of them. But Jesus lovingly broke through the young man's pride with a challenge that brought out his true motives: "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor." This challenge exposed the barrier that could keep this young man out of the kingdom: his love of money. Money represented his pride of accomplishment and self-effort. Ironically, his attitude made him unable to keep the first commandment, to let nothing be more important than God (Exodus 20:3). He could not meet the one requirement Jesus gave—to turn his whole heart and life over to God. The man came to Jesus wondering what he could do; he left seeing what he was unable to do. What barriers are keeping you from turning your life over to Christ?

Let's pray!

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Gaining a proper perspective of money!

Mark 10:21

21 Jesus looked at him and loved him. "One thing you lack," he said. "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

What does your money mean to you?

Although Jesus wanted this man to sell everything and give his money to the poor, this does not mean that all believers should sell all their possessions.

Most of his followers did not sell everything, although they used their possessions to serve others. Instead, this story shows us that we must not let anything we have or desire keep us from following Jesus. We must remove all barriers to serving him fully.

If Jesus asked, could you give up your house? your car? your level of income? your position on the ladder of promotion? Your reaction may show your attitude toward money—whether it is your servant or your master.

Let's pray!

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Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

How money makes us less dependent on God!

Mark 10:23

23 Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!"

Jesus said it was very difficult for the rich to enter the kingdom of God.

This is true because the rich, with most of their basic physical needs met, often become self-reliant.

When they feel empty, they can buy something new to dull the pain that was meant to drive them toward God.

Their abundance and self-sufficiency become their deficiency.

The person who has everything on earth can still lack what is most important—eternal life.

How does your giving today reflect your dependency on God?

Let's pray!

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Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

What goals do you have for your money!

Luke 12:18-20

18 "Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods.

19 And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry."

20 "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?'

Why do you save money? To retire? To buy more expensive cars or toys? To be secure?

Jesus challenges us to think beyond earthbound goals and to use what we have been given for God's kingdom.

Faith, service, and obedience are the way to become rich toward God.

Let's pray!

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Speaker:

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Money tests our integrity!

Luke 16:10-11

10 "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much.

11 So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches?

Our integrity often meets its match in money matters.

God calls us to be honest even in small details we could easily rationalize away.

Heaven's riches are far more valuable than earthly wealth. But if we are not trustworthy with our money here (no matter how much or little we have), we will be unfit to handle the vast riches of God's kingdom.

Don't let your integrity slip in small matters, and it will not fail you in crucial decisions either.

Let's pray!

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Has money become your first priority!

Luke 16:13

13 "No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.

Money has the power to take God's place in your life. It can become your master. How can you tell if you are a slave to Money?

- (1) Do you think and worry about it frequently?
- (2) Do you give up doing what you should do or would like to do in order to make more money?
- (3) Do you spend a great deal of your time caring for your possessions?
- (4) Is it hard for you to give money away?
- (5) Are you in debt?

Money is a hard master and a deceptive one. Wealth promises power and control, but often it cannot deliver. Great fortunes can be made—and lost—overnight, and no amount of money can provide health, happiness, or eternal life. How much better it is to let God be your Master. His servants have peace of mind and security, both now and forever.

Let's pray!

Date used:
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Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

How money deceives us!

Luke 18:24-30

24 Jesus looked at him and said, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God! 25 Indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." 26 Those who heard this asked, "Who then can be saved?" 27 Jesus replied, "What is impossible with men is possible with God." 28 Peter said to him, "We have left all we had to follow you!" 29 "I tell you the truth," Jesus said to them, "no-one who has left home or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God 30 will fail to receive many times as much in this age and, in the age to come, eternal life."

Because money represents power, authority, and success, often it is difficult for wealthy people to realize their need and their powerlessness to save themselves. The rich in talent or intelligence suffer the same difficulty. Unless God reaches down into their lives, they will not come to him. Jesus surprised some of his hearers by offering salvation to the poor; he may surprise some people today by offering it to the rich.

It is difficult for a self-sufficient person to realize his or her need and come to Jesus, but "What is impossible with men is possible with God."

Let's pray!

Date used:	.....
Speaker:	.....

Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

You can't out-give God!

Luke 18:26-30

26 Those who heard this asked, "Who then can be saved?"
 27 Jesus replied, "What is impossible with men is possible with God."
 28 Peter said to him, "We have left all we had to follow you!"
 29 "I tell you the truth," Jesus said to them, "no-one who has left home or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God
 30 will fail to receive many times as much in this age and, in the age to come, eternal life."

Peter and the other disciples had paid a high price—leaving their homes and jobs—to follow Jesus. But Jesus reminded Peter that following him has its benefits as well as its sacrifices. Any believer who has had to give up something to follow Christ will be paid back in this life as well as in the next. For example, if you must give up a secure job, you will find that God offers a secure relationship with himself now and forever.

If you must give up your family's approval, you will gain the love of the family of God. The disciples had begun to pay the price of following Jesus, and Jesus said they would be rewarded. Don't dwell on what you have given up; think about what you have gained and give thanks for it. You can never out-give God.

Let's pray!

Date used:
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Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

Money cannot bring true happiness!

1 Timothy 6:6-10

6 ¶ But godliness with contentment is great gain. 7 For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. 8 But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. 9 People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. 10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many grief's.

Despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary, most people still believe that money brings happiness. Rich people craving greater riches can be caught in an endless cycle that only ends in ruin and destruction. How can you keep away from the love of money?

Paul gives us some guidelines:

- (1) realize that one day riches will all be gone
- (2) be content with what you have
- (3) monitor what you are willing to do to get more money
- (4) love people more than money
- (5) love God's work more than money
- (6) freely share what you have with others

Let's pray!

Date used:
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Can I ask the offering stewards to come forward now, and bring the Manna Basket with them to the front of the church. Let's open God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to teach us on the topic of:

He will supply needs – not greeds!

1 Timothy 6:6-10

6 ¶ But godliness with contentment is great gain.

7 For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it.

8 But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that.

It is often helpful to distinguish between *needs* and *wants*.

We may have all we need to live but let ourselves become anxious and discontented over what we merely want. Like Paul, we can choose to be content without having all that we want.

The only alternative is to be a slave to our desires.

Let's show out contentment with what God has given us – by giving to him freely this morning!

Let's pray!

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Money versus the love of it!

James 5:1-6

1 ¶ Now listen, you rich people, weep and wail because of the misery that is coming upon you. 2 Your wealth has rotted, and moths have eaten your clothes. 3 Your gold and silver are corroded. Their corrosion will testify against you and eat your flesh like fire. You have hoarded wealth in the last days. 4 Look! The wages you failed to pay the workmen who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty. 5 You have lived on earth in luxury and self-indulgence. You have fattened yourselves in the day of slaughter. 6 You have condemned and murdered innocent men, who were not opposing you.

James proclaims the worthlessness of riches, not the worthlessness of the rich. Today's money will be worthless when Christ returns, so we should spend our time accumulating the kind of treasures that will be worthwhile in God's eternal kingdom. Money is not the problem; Christian leaders need money to live and to support their families; missionaries need money to help them spread the gospel; churches need money to do their work effectively.

It is the *love* of money that leads to evil and causes some people to oppress others in order to get more. This is a warning to all Christians who are tempted to adopt worldly standards rather than God's standards as well as an encouragement to all those who are oppressed by the rich.

Let's pray!

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Speaker:

