



Guidelines for Giving

Information about supporting the work of the gospel at Sojourn and beyond

Many know the theory: that we should give money to support God's work in our local church, and in the world beyond our immediate community.

The aim of this leaflet is to help you work out what this means in practice. It will help you to evaluate (or re- evaluate):

1. the amount you would like to give, based on the biblical principles and your current income;
2. where you would like this amount to be directed;
3. the mechanics of how you would like this to happen.

Step 1 How much to give?

The principle

In the Old Testament, God's people gave a tenth of all their produce to God in response to his generous blessings to them (the tithe). The idea of giving a tenth is first seen in Abraham and Jacob (Genesis 14, 28), and is then made explicit in the Law of Moses. It was to be given generously with much rejoicing, not legalistically or begrudgingly (Numbers 18; Deuteronomy 12, 14, 26; 2 Chronicles 31; and Malachi 3).

Having received the tithe from Israel, God then redirects it to his work: to the priests and Levites, as well as to those in need, such as widows and orphans.

As New Testament believers, we are still to give back to God in response to His generous blessings to us (note the language of "an offering acceptable to God" in Philippians 4:18). Indeed we have received God's ultimate generosity to us in the death of his Son Jesus, who though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, so that through his poverty we might become rich (2 Corinthians 8:9). If we truly understand the gospel, we can cheerfully give as much as we can, and even beyond our ability (2 Corinthians 8-9).

So how much should we give to God? A tenth is a good starting point, but it should be the starting point for considering how generous we can be, rather than a legalistic figure we must absolutely stick to. We may give more or less depending on our circumstances. The more fundamental question to ponder is: how much have we received from God?

In practice

The first practical step is to honestly work out the income God provides us with. The table below is a simple way to do that (it is for your use only, please don't return it). It is based on the amount of income you actually get the benefit of (your after-tax salary, along with other income or benefits you receive).

	Me	My spouse (if applicable)
Annual Salary (after tax)		
Other income (interest, benefits, etc.)		
Totals		
	My/our total income:	

Prayerfully consider how much you would like to set aside from this amount to give. You can work out the actual amount using the table below.

Total income (from above)	
Percentage you would like to give	
Annual gift	

This process of working out how much to give will of course need to be repeated each year or so, or as your income changes.

Step 2 To whom to give?

The principle

In the Old Testament, Israel's tithe was channelled to those who needed it - to the priests and Levites who had no other source of income because of their duties, and to the poor.

We see a similar pattern in the New Testament, where Christian giving is directed to meeting the needs of those who labour among us in the Lord, as well as towards the poor. As Paul says, "Let him who is taught the word share all good things with him who teaches"; Galatians 6:6 and then a few verses later: "So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are the household of faith" (Galatians 6:10). In practical terms this means directing our money not only towards Sojourn, but to the wider work of the gospel in the world, and to the poor.

In Practise

a) Sojourn

The ministry of Sojourn receives all of its support from the giving of Sojourn members, and as ones regularly taught by the ministry of Sojourn, it is right for a large portion of our gift to go towards supporting this ministry. We'll leave you to work out the details of what 'a large portion' might mean in practice (the table below will help you do that).

b) And beyond

Sojourn also supports other missionary and aid organisations, and encourage our members to support them also. In fact, 13 per cent of your giving to Sojourn will go to mission/ aid agencies and helping establish new churches.

There may be other Christian organisations that you wish to support. We have provided a table at the end of this leaflet to help you work these things out.

Step 3 Which method of giving?

3 Ways to Give

There are three main methods:

1. Internet Banking

This is by far the most common method that sojourners use for giving.

This is where you in person, or through scheduled regular transfers give to Sojourn via the internet. Here are some of the most common questions regarding this method:

- How does Internet Banking work? To use Internet Banking to give to Sojourn you simply use the funds transfer facility, and once set up you can either schedule a regular transfer to Sojourn, or log on to give when you please.
- What are the benefits? It makes giving easier for you. You don't have to remember to bring the appropriate amount of money to church each week. It is more private and planned. It is also easier for Sojourn because it makes giving more stable, allowing us to better budget and pay bills and staff salaries.
- Is it anonymous? Yes, and we value it as a method because of that. Only the church treasurer will know about the electronic transfer, but not who it is from unless you tell him. Any information he has about those who give, he keeps strictly confidential. But better still, you can simply not attach your name to the transfer, and the treasurer will only see your account number ensuring confidentiality.
- How do I sign up? If you haven't signed up for Internet banking go to your bank (or their web site) and fill in the appropriate forms. If you already do Internet banking just use the funds transfer facility to set up a regular transfer (weekly, fortnightly, or monthly) for the desired amount. You can change this anytime you like.

2. Payroll Deduction

This is where you authorise your paymaster to deposit money directly into the Sojourn bank account. Talk to your paymaster about organising this with the Sojourn account details listed below. The advantage of this method over others is that it is free, and keeps you regular in your planned giving.

