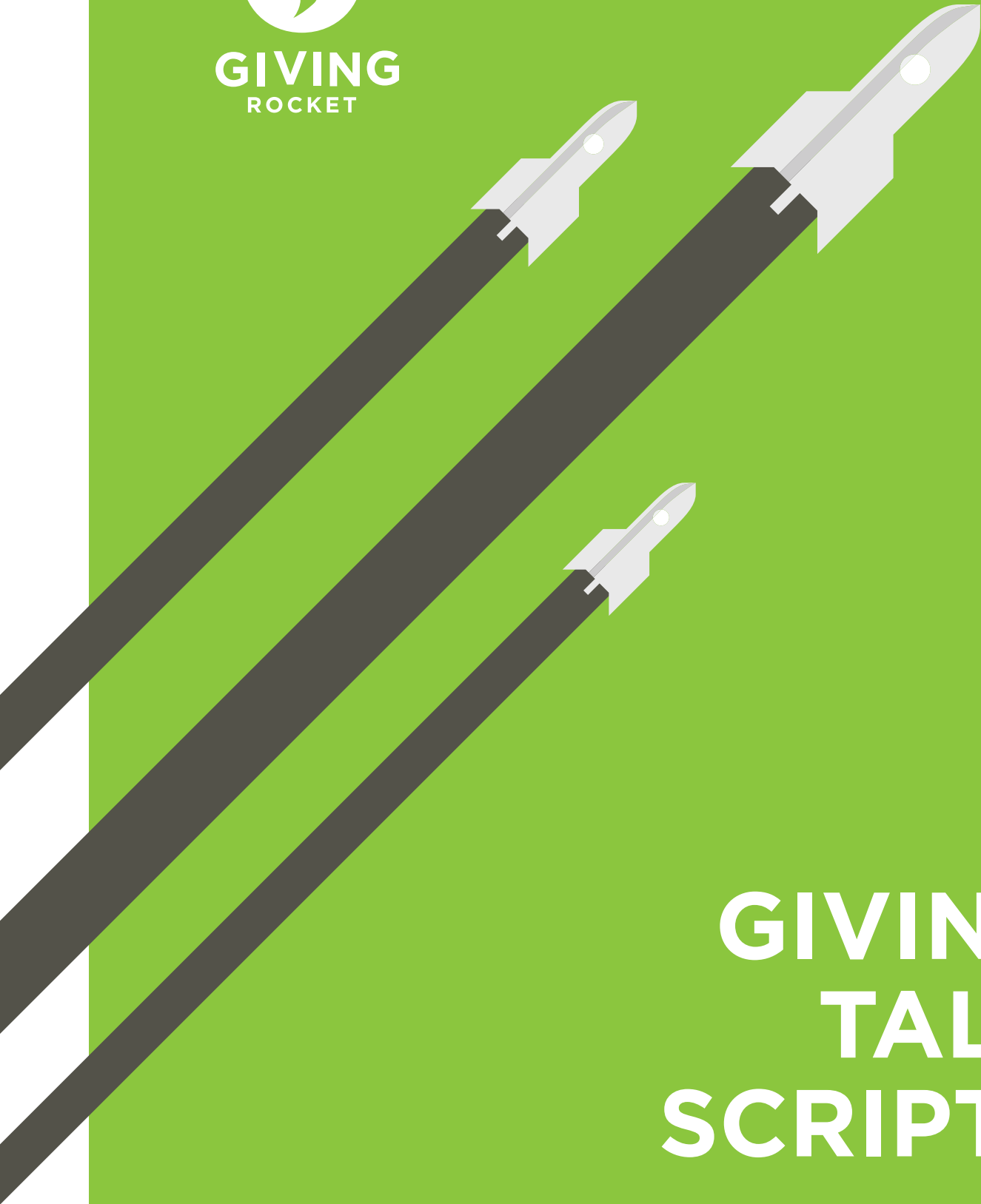




**GIVING**  
ROCKET



# GIVING TALK SCRIPTS

### WHAT IS A GIVING TALK?

A giving talk is a short talk to set up the offering in a church service. It combines inspiration and instruction, and helps people connect the dots. A giving talk is two of the most important minutes in every church service, because these minutes fund all the other ones.

#### BIGGEST GIVING TALK MISTAKES

1. Not doing it. You might not think it's necessary to explain the offering every week, but there's someone there who doesn't know how to participate.
2. Ad-libbing it. The pastor plans the sermon. The band rehearses the songs. And explaining how people can fund the ongoing mission of your church isn't the time to make things up on the spot. Plan these moments.
3. Rushing it. When you tell people what's about to happen, give them time to get ready. You might not do it, but some people write checks in church. Give people a few moments before buckets or felt-lined plates show up in their laps.
4. Doing it in the dark. Slow down, explain what's happening, give people time to get ready...and turn up the lights. It's hard for people to give in the dark.

#### EVERY GIVING TALK MUST HAVE THREE THINGS

1. Clear direction. This isn't a time for spiritual mumbo-jumbo. You need to be clear.
2. A "connect the dots" moment. This Giving Talk script will help you connect the dots and will keep you from making things up on the spot. Sharing a stat, telling a story, or explaining a Scripture passage is a great way to emphasize the offering and connect the dots. This particular Giving Talk script is based on Scripture found in 1 Samuel 1-2 and Malachi 3.
3. A call to action. This is the moment where you tell people exactly what you would like them to do. It's a clear and specific action step. Notice that the script directs you to call the ushers forward and invites people to get ready.

## 1. FATHER ABRAHAM

Had many sons. And many sons had Father Abraham. Do you remember that song? Do you have any idea what Abraham the Patriarch has to do with someone's right arm? This Giving Talk script is based on a Scripture. Use it to challenge your people to obey God even when it's tough

In just a few minutes, we're going to receive an offering, so go ahead and get ready for that. I know some of you have already given online, so I want to thank you for that, but this is a time in our service where people from all walks of life can financially support the mission of the church.

As you're getting ready to give, I want to tell you a story from the Bible. It's from Genesis 12 and it's about a guy named Abraham. Abraham is 75 years old, and has lived in this particular town all his life. He's got a nice life, nice family and he knows everyone in town. He's comfortable!

So God comes to him and says, "Abraham, I want you to leave your hometown, and I want you to travel to this land that I'm going to show you." God didn't even reveal the end destination – He just told Abraham to get moving. The Bible says that THE NEXT DAY, Abraham loaded up and moved. I want to teach you a principle that I see in this story, in fact, I see it all throughout the Bible.

The blessings of God always follow obedience. Let me say that one more time...the blessings of God always follow obedience. In other words, we obey first, then we're blessed.

I know you're thinking..."If God would give me a raise, then I would be generous." But it doesn't work

that way. I know you're thinking, "If God would give me some financial blessings, then I would obey the Bible." That's not how it happens.

We obey God, even when it's tough, even when it's hard, even when it makes us uncomfortable. That's how Christianity and faith work.

Abraham went on to become the father of a great nation – the Jewish people. He was famous, blessed and important. God blessed him with a family. In fact, the Bible says that all the people on the earth would be blessed through Abraham.

But none of that happened until after Abraham obeyed.

One of the big reasons we give is to obey God. We give generously because that's what the Bible teaches. Even if it makes us uncomfortable, we want to be obedient to God. The blessings of God will follow our obedience of God.

So let's pray and ask God to bless this offering, and I'm going to pray that God would bless everyone who obediently gives to His purposes.

## 2. CASH IN THE WALLS

This Giving Talk script is based on an interesting story about a man who found cash hidden in his walls. It's a great way to lead into Malachi 3 and a quick explanation of tithing.

In just a few minutes, we're going to receive an offering, so go ahead and get ready for that. But as we prepare, I want to tell you a story I read this past week.

There's this contractor in Cleveland, Ohio who was remodeling an old house, who actually found \$182,000 hidden in the walls. Turns out, the money was stashed there during the Great Depression. How amazing is that? Can you imagine cleaning out your attic or garage and just finding \$182,000. Money you didn't even know existed, but was there all the time.

This story reminds me of a Bible verse in the Old Testament. Malachi 3 says that if we give generously and sacrificially, then God will open up the windows of heaven and bless us in unimaginable ways. It's the only time in Scripture where God actually tells people to test him. "Give and see if I don't bless you," God tells people. Here's a principle from the Bible: Generous giving positions to receive blessings that we don't even know are waiting for us. Let me say that one more time... Generous giving positions us to receive blessings that we don't even know are out there.

When you give – generously, intentionally, sacrificially, you're putting yourself in position to receive blessings from God. When you hold on to things,

become stingy, and let life revolve around money – you cut yourself off from God's blessings. Just like this contractor found something he didn't know was out there, when you give, you'll receive blessings from God that you aren't even planning for. Incidentally, the contractor and property owner ended up in court, and 21 family members wanted to get involved, so after legal fees, everyone ended up with very little. Another life lesson for another time...

So as our ushers send around the offering buckets, I want you to give generously and position yourself to receive a blessing from God. Let's pray for the offering...

*Note: Here's a link to the online version of the story.*  
<http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,449114,00.html>

### 3. THREE BUCKETS

This Giving Talk script is an object lesson. You'll actually need three buckets on stage.

Good morning! My name is Casey & I'm a volunteer (it is great to have volunteers take the offering that are good at public speaking) here at Cross Church. We are about to receive the weekly offering and this is one of my favorite times during our service. As you prepare your offering, I wanted to share something with you that will change your life if you do it... Ready for this???

I've brought three buckets with me today. This first bucket is the spending bucket. I like the spending bucket personally. Spending is fun isn't it? I like to spend money on food, starbucks, vacations, and many other things. It would be no surprise that we love to spend money! Spending money is fun!

This second bucket is the saving bucket. Many of us want to save more we just never seem to get around to it. Savings is a good thing. We need to save for a car, college, down payment, retirement, and many other things. Savings isn't as fun as spending but over time it pays off.

This is my third bucket. This bucket is the giving bucket. Most people think giving is a good thing but it is usually giving if we have any after the spending and savings bucket. Most people probably wouldn't classify giving as "fun" would they?

Well here is the deal and the reason I wanted to introduce you to these three buckets. In God's economy we learn that if you want to ultimately be fulfilled in your spending and your saving, you must be giving. Here is why... Spending is like eating. Once you spend your money it is spent, gone forever. I don't know about you but being "spent" is not how I want to live my life. In God's economy he tells us to Give first, Save second, and Spend third.

The reason why is because when you giving, you never lose that money. The only way to truly keep something is to give it away! When you give today you make an investment into changing people's lives through the mission and vision of this church. So my question for you is, what order are your buckets in? Are you living "spent" or "fulfilled"? As the volunteers come forward, let's honor God today through giving first!

## 4. THE BUMBLE BEE

This Giving Talk script is a short lesson from nature and creation. It might technically impossible for the Bumble Bee to fly, but it does. It's a simple way to talk about faith and how it related to generosity.

Good morning everyone! I hope you're having a great weekend.

In just a minute, we're going to have a time of giving, so I want to invite you to do whatever you need to do to get ready. That means the lady that's always in front of me in the checkout line with 3 items totaling \$2.45 should get out her checkbook and start writing a check that will hold up the entire store. Just kidding. I promise I'm not bitter about that at all.

While you're getting ready, let me give you a little knowledge about the bumble bee. Did you know that bumble Bees are not supposed to fly? According to physics, science, and the laws of aerodynamics, it is impossible for them to become airborne. Their fat bodies and little wings mean that they should never be able to leave the ground.

I guess the scientists forgot to tell the bumble bee. Or else the bumble bee didn't pay attention in Physics class.

I love that fact because it illustrates something that we see in our world all the time: things that are supposed to be impossible happen right around us. Little creatures that aren't supposed to fly buzz through the air. People with dark pasts are called by God to do great things. Marriages beyond repair are restored and redeemed.

Without faith, it is impossible to please God. That's what the Bible says in Hebrews 11.

One of the ways that we respond in faith to God's grace and God's goodness is in the area of generosity. When we sacrificially give, even in ways that don't make sense in the eyes of the world, we're honoring God with faith. When we listen to God's Word and God's voice more than we listen to the doomsday news and advice from people all around us, we're acting in faith.

I guess the bumble bee defies the laws of physics. And generosity defies the laws of selfishness. The way to have more is to give more. The way to be more blessed is to live generously.

I'm going to pray and then we're going to receive our offering today. Let's pray together.

## 5. FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

Here's a Giving Talk scrip based on a stat. You'll need to get the correct number for your church, but it's a really powerful way to show people how their money can make a difference.

In just a few minutes, we're going to receive an offering, so go ahead and get ready for that. But as we prepare, I want to share something with you. Right now, there are 57 elementary kids upstairs learning about Jesus.

Our staff us using an amazing curriculum. Volunteers have prepared amazing crafts that teach something. We're teaching Bible stories to your children that will lay a foundation for what God can do in their lives. See...we're not babysitting children... we're helping them follow Jesus.

And your giving makes that possible. Because you give, we're able to hire a staff, purchase supplies, have kid-friendly space, purchase curriculum and teach kids about Jesus. I'm so proud to be a part of a church that takes this part of the mission seriously. So when you give, I want you to understand that there's a whole bunch of children who will one day be thankful.

Think about that for a minute. Babies and elementary children may not be able to say thanks now, but later in life, they will be so grateful that they were a part of a church where they learned that Jesus makes a difference.

Maybe you don't have children – but your giving is equipping the next generation to know and follow

Jesus. There are future missionaries over there right now, and your generosity is going to impact the future.

So as we worship God through giving, think about the future impact of your generosity. It's making a huge difference. Let's pray that God will bless what's about to be given and that He would use it in a big way...

*Note: Scroll through some pictures of children in your church, or your children's ministry environments as you talk about this.*

## 6. IT'S TIME TO SAY THANKS

This Giving Talk focuses on thanking people for their generosity. It's good to stop and say thanks. Be sure to customize with the mission statement of your church.

We're about to receive the offering, so I want to invite our volunteers to come get into place and I want to encourage you to get ready to participate in the time of giving.

But before I ask you for something, I want to thank you for something.

Every weekend, people gather in this room for worship. You typically see me standing on the stage, you see the worship team leading music, you see that crazy person with her hands raised and wonder what she's thinking. You see greeters at the door handing out papers.

And then there's stuff going on right now that you may not see. You don't see all the people serving behind the scenes. You don't see moms, dads, college students and even teenagers working with preschoolers and elementary children RIGHT NOW.

While we're in here doing our thing, there are dozens and dozens of children learning about Jesus in a way they can understand. You can't see that, but it's just as important. It might even be MORE important than what's happening here.

You don't always see what happens here during the week. You don't see the volunteers that come in to fold those papers. You don't see the band rehearsing.

You don't see the prayers and practice. You don't see just how many people give money so all of this can happen. The sacrifices of the single mom who works hard throughout the week, but still gives to this church because this is where she and her kids learn about Jesus. The college student who makes \$8 an hour, but who still gives 10% of his paycheck to God because He wants to be faithful and thankful.

If you give to the ministry of this church, there's a good chance you do so behind the scenes. You drop stuff in these buckets without fanfare, or you give online without an audience. It's not seen, but it's noticed. It's not public, but it's appreciated.

I want you to know that I am so grateful for everyone who gives, because you make all of this...the seen and the unseen...possible. So THANK YOU for your generosity. THANK YOU for helping people far from Christ experience new life (insert your mission statement)

As we pass the buckets, I want to encourage you to be faithful and give. If you've already given online, thank you so much. And if you ever have any questions about giving, please just let us know. Let's pray.



### 7. ABANDON SHIP

Here's a Giving Talk from a new story. Current events are great ways to introduce the subject of giving.

In just a few minutes, we're going to receive our offering – something we do every weekend when we gather for church. I want to invite you to go ahead and get ready for that and ushers, you can get in place.

I was reading this week about the Costa Concordia. That's the cruise ship that sank last year. The ship hit rocks off Giglio and put a huge gash in its hull which ultimately sank it. At least 11 people are known to have died in the disaster, and 21 are still missing, according to the Italian Crisis Unit.

The captain, Francesco Schettino (say that 3 times fast), has publicly made all kinds of excuses as to why he abandoned ship. He even went so far as to say that he just accidentally fell into a lifeboat. How convenient!

For many people this is how it works when it comes to giving.

We make all kinds of excuses and use any little thing as a reason to jump ship. And the disaster is that as we make excuses, we put a huge gash in the hull of the local church. When the local church can't accomplish her mission, people die not knowing Jesus Christ.

I want you to know that I'm not abandoning this ship

when it comes to giving. The pastors and entire staff here at Everyday Church are serious about generosity. We live out what Jesus taught about the tithe and even the concept of giving above and beyond the tithe. I will never ask you to do what I don't do myself. Not only do I work here, but I give here.

Many of you support and fund the vision of this church regularly. Thank you for standing strong with us and not abandoning ship. Others of you are not giving. What if you jumped on board with us today so that we can go out and reach people with the Gospel at a new level?

Maybe you have never given a dime. Today is a great day to try it out.

Let's pray.

## 7. FAITHFUL WITH A LITTLE

This Giving Talk is based on a Scripture. It's a great way to challenge people from God's Word about generosity. Understanding Scripture is one of the reasons people give, so it's always appropriate to connect the dots from God's Word.

In just a few minutes, we're going to participate in a time of giving, which is an opportunity to support the mission and vision of this church. But before we pass the buckets, I wanted to read you part of a story Jesus told. It's found in Matthew 25.

*"[The Kingdom of Heaven] will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more. So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more. But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.*

*"After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.'*

*"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!' "The man with two bags of gold also came. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with two bags of gold; see, I have gained two more.'*

*"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!' "Then the man who had received one bag of gold came. 'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed.*

*So I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.' "His master replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? Well then, you should*

*have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest.*

*"So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags. For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'*

This story may seem a little odd to you, or just another example of how the rich get richer. But I think there's a deeper truth here. There's a principle at work that goes like this: If you're not faithful with a little, then why would God give you more?

It's true in the area of obedience...if we don't obey the parts of the Bible we do understand, why would God give us insight to more advanced things. And it's true in the area of finances...if we don't trust God with what He's ALREADY given us, why would he bless us with more.

Generosity has little to do with how much you have. It has everything to do with the attitude of your heart and your faithful obedience to God. As we pass the buckets, I want to encourage you to be faithful and give. If you've already given online, thank you so much. And if you ever have any questions about giving, please just let us know.

Let's pray.

## 8. THE MISERABLE INDEX

Here's an interesting news article and cultural phenomenon you can use to set up the offering. Though people have more and more stuff, as a whole, we're more miserable than we've been in 28 years.

I want to invite our ushers to come forward and get into position. We're about to participate in a time of giving, something we do every week here at Cross Church. While you're getting ready, let me share with you an interesting news story I came across this week.

You know our society is fascinated with lists and numbers. There's the Consumer Price Index, the AP college football poll, which will give way to the BCS rankings, the Forbes Wealthiest People list, and on and on.

Well there's another list I came across... something called the Misery Index. It takes all kind of negative numbers – unemployment, education, inflation, pollution, and comes up with a way to describe just how miserable people are feeling.

The misery index has reached 12.6, it's highest position in 28 years. So you've now got some semi-scientific data to remind us all that things could be better.

But you know what I've come to realize?

While happiness comes and goes with all kinds of factors, joy in life comes from a different perspective. I think misery has more to do with our perspective than jobs, bank accounts and pollution. I'm not suggesting that those things are unimportant; it's just

that they are not eternally important. It's not that the economy and the job market don't matter... they matter a lot. And apparently, they are making a lot of people miserable.

Generosity is one of those perspective-altering things... when we focus on the needs of others, we become less selfish and happier. When you only think about the things you don't have or how miserable things are, it's tough not to feel bad. But when you think about God's goodness and grace, in spite of our own mess-ups, our perspective changes.

Giving is a form of worship. It's a way that we say thanks to God and serve our community. But it's also a matter of perspective – keeping us grounded in the things that really matter.

Let's pray, and then we'll receive the offering.

Note:

Here's a link to the Time Magazine article on the Misery Index: <http://moneyland.time.com/2011/06/20/how-miserable-are-you/>

## 9. WHERE THE MONEY GOES

You'll need to do a little research to do this Giving Talk, but it's one of the most powerful one's we've ever seen. When you tell people where the money goes, their confidence will increase.

In just a few minutes, we're going to receive an offering, so go ahead and get ready for that. This is a time when all kinds of people from all walks of life support the mission and vision of this church. But before we do that, I wanted to let you know where the money goes. When you put a dollar in the offering plate, here's what happens.

- 46 cents of each dollar goes to pay the staff at this church. We have an incredible staff who leads ministry. They could all make more money doing something else, but they have given their lives to serve Jesus through this church.
- 25 cents of each dollar goes to cover the costs of this facility. God's blessed us with this amazing place to meet and worship Jesus.
- 27 cents of every dollar goes to ministry. We're teaching elementary children about Jesus, students are making decisions to follow Christ, people are connecting with groups. We're helping local organizations, helping people, and helping other churches. Real ministry is happening because you give.
- 11 cents covers the administrative costs of the church. If you research non-profit organizations, you'll find that this is a really low number. We work hard to keep the admin costs down so we can do more ministry.

So that's it...that's where the money goes. I just wanted you to see how your giving is really making a difference.

Our ushers are in place, so let me pray over this time...

## 10. TRUTH OR DARE

Remember Truth or Dare? I bet a lot of your congregation will remember that game as well. And it's a simple way to lead into a simple giving challenge before you receive an offering.

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm the Lead Pastor here at \_\_\_\_\_ Church. In just a moment we will continue in worship by celebrating our offering. If you haven't had a chance to prepare your offering, please do that now. For those of you who have already given online or through automated giving, I want to thank you!

Let me ask a simple question...Have you ever played Truth or Dare? You know the game where you have to either be "man enough" to take on a daring act of stupidity, or in many cases great bravery...Or, be bold enough to honestly answer a very tough question.

I have a feeling a good portion of this place has played at least one round in their lives. Truth or dare can be the most exciting game, the scariest game, and even the most uncomfortable. But, that's the thrill! If you play, you have the chance to experience some of human natures most intense emotions, toughest moments and true challenges.

Did you know God played a game of Truth or Dare with His people? In fact He's still at it!

Malachi 3:8-12 is where you can find it. God asks the truth question..."Will a man rob God?" Then he answers it, yes...through withholding our tithes! Then God presents the Dare...He says bring your full

tithes into the storehouse (the church) and "TEST me in this says the Lord". He says (my paraphrase) just give it a try...I dare you!

The truth, in this case, is surrounded by a curse... If we are truly robbing God, our finances are cursed. But, if we take the dare, and make it happen, our finances and our lives are blessed. It's a promise from God. It's the only place in the Bible where God really do say...I dare you!

Let me ask you this: Today will you choose the truth or the dare?

Are you daring enough to take the challenge to bring the tithe and allow God to bless you? In fact, are you brave enough to give the tithe and know that God will keep the devil from destroying what you have been given? Think about that as we plan to give back today.

Are you willing to experience one of life's greatest thrills...being obedient to God?

Let's pray.

## 11. YOU CAN PLAN TO BE GENEROUS

Spontaneous giving is a good thing. But you can teach your church to PLAN their generosity too. Here are a few Biblical examples and a giving talk script you can use to teach your church about giving.

In just a few minutes, we're going to receive our offering – something we do every weekend when we gather for church. I want to invite you to go ahead and get ready for that and ushers, you can get in place.

I was thinking this past week about going to the gym. Do you ever think about going to the gym? The gym is an interesting place – it's full of super-healthy people and people who aren't healthy at all! Seriously, there are those guys who look like they live in the free-weight area who can't put their arms straight down, and those people who are out of breath just from walking to the treadmill.

But there's a big difference between thinking about going to the gym and actually going to the gym. Thinking about working out doesn't really accomplish the end goal – you gotta actually do it. Then again...you don't really end up at the gym without planning to go there. That's because planning and action are connected.

It's the same way with giving.

I'd guess that you've probably given something spontaneously. You see a need or hear a story, and you're moved to give. So you give based on whatever you have at the moment. That's a good thing.

But if you only give spontaneously, when you feel led, then you're really putting a limit on what you're able to do. Another way to think about giving is to PLAN to give. In fact, the Bible actually encourages us to PLAN AHEAD when it comes to generosity.

- In the book of Genesis, Abraham thought ahead of time to send gifts with his servant for Isaac's future wife.
- In the Christmas story, the Magi planned ahead of time to bring extravagant gifts for God's son.
- God strategically showed His love for us by sending Christ while we were still sinning against Him.

Isaiah 32:8 says, "But generous people plan to do what is generous, and they stand firm in their generosity." In 2 Corinthians 9:7, Paul encourages people in the church to decide in advance how much they want to give.

So as we receive our offering, my prayer is that you would pray and think and decide in advance how to participate. And of course, if God speaks to you and moves you to spontaneously participate, well... that's okay too.

Let's pray.

## 12. THE \$7 MILLION COIN

Stories are all around us, and they create an emotional connection to truth. Here is a short story you can use to set up the time of giving in your church service.

Hey guys. I want to invite our ushers to come forward and get ready to receive the offering, and I want to invite you to get ready to participate in the time of giving. This is something we do every week here at Cross Church, and we are so grateful for so many of you who financially support this church.

But before we receive this week's offering, I want to tell you a story about a coin.

The most valuable coin in the world is in the lobby of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. It's in a bulletproof glass case with an alarm system. It's a 1933 Double Eagle, considered one of the rarest and most beautiful coins in America – one of the last gold coins ever minted by the US government, created to match the beauty of Ancient Greek coins.

They were minted in Philadelphia but never put into circulation. Somehow, a few of the coins slipped into the public and the US Secret Service has been trying to chase them down for the last 70 years, chasing coin dealers from America to Egypt. Books have been written about this. A TV documentary has been created...all around the mysterious hunt for these gold coins.

There are conspiracy theories about why the government really wants these coins so bad.

Here's what's interesting to me about this coin. It has a face value of \$20. That means when it was minted, it was worth \$20.

But today, it's worth \$7.6 million. If you happen to have one of these coins, you've got a \$7.6 million dollar coin.

Think about this for a minute. Face value is one thing...real value is another.

Did you know that your giving to this church is like that? When you give to the mission of this church, you are literally having an ETERNAL influence. What we're doing here doesn't just matter for today...it literally effects eternity. Your \$100 is worth far more than \$100 in God's economy. Your online donation is worth more than the amount that shows up on your bank statement.

Your generosity may have a face value...a dollar amount that will appear on a statement. But your generosity also has a real value, an eternal value that you may not realize until you get to heaven. As you give, think about the eternal difference you can make.

Let's pray, and then we'll receive the offering.

## 13. WE DON'T GOT TO GIVE, WE GET TO GIVE

A simple play on words is a great way to challenge your people to give, and to set up the offering. Remember, give clear directions...don't rush through this important part in your worship service.

There's a lot of things that we have to do with our money. We have to pay our bills. We have to pay our taxes. We have to buy groceries. And those things aren't bad – well...taxes...that's still up in the air.

I don't know about you, but I don't get a lot of personal satisfaction from spending my paycheck on those things of things. They are necessities – you gotta do it. But it's not like I'm smiling when I write the check to the power company.

But every now and then I GET to do something with my money. A little present I buy for my kids just because. Taking my wife out to dinner for an anniversary. Helping someone in need.

That's how I feel when I give to God through the ministry of this church. I don't feel like I have to give...I feel like I GET to give. And when I give freely, by choice, as I've decided to do...that gives me so much satisfaction.

I may not feel much when I pay bills online, but when I give to this church, I know I'm choosing to do something eternally good with money. Giving is a sign of faith and trust, but it also provides great satisfaction.

Truly, I've never regretted one dollar I've given to this church.

In just a few minutes, we're going to receive an offering, and you're going to have the opportunity to give to something that's making a difference. You have the opportunity to give generously to a church that is doing GOOD in this community. Ushers, go ahead and get ready. Let's pray.



### 14. THE WEIGHT OF IT ALL

Stats, stories and Scripture. These three things are common foundations of a good Giving Talk. This script is based on a stat. Not only is it interesting, it's a great way to connect the dots for people when it comes to the subject of priority giving.

In just a few moments, we're going to pass some buckets down each row and give you the opportunity to financially support the mission of this church by making a donation.

Some of you have already given online, and for that, we're so thankful. If you want to participate, you can use the envelope we provided or simply drop your donation in the bucket.

But before we do that, can I ask you a question?

Let me share something with you that might make you stop and think.

Did you know that in 2010, Americans spent over \$60 billion on weight-loss programs, pills and fads? That's right, \$60 billion! That is incredible. That is a ton of money to solve a problem that most countries never face. In fact most of the world struggles with too little food and being under weight, while in the US we struggle with the opposite.

Here's another crazy fact, according to the Borgen Project, annual expenditures of \$19 billion between now and 2014 could eliminate global starvation and malnutrition. That means that what with we spent in America in 2010 to quit being overweight, we could end hunger for the rest of world.

The reality is if we would stop and think, gain perspective and consider others, we could make an impact.

Philippians 2:4 calls us to look at the interest of others more than our own. One way that we do that is to give generously to impact others' lives. Today, you have the chance to participate in making that sort of impact as we give our tithes and offerings back to God!

As you prepare to give today, ask God to reveal your heart. Ask God to give you faith to shift your priorities. And most of all, ask God how you can honor Him with your giving.

Let's pray.

## 15. PERCEPTION

If people are skeptical about churches and money, it will affect their participation in the offering. In this Giving Talk, you'll address that principle head on.

My name is Jim and I'm the Lead Pastor here at Cross Church. I want to invite our volunteers to get into position as we prepare to receive the offering today. But before we do that, can I ask you a quick question?

What do you think about when you think about the offering? What image comes to mind when you think about passing the plate?

- Some of you think of your parents or grandparents, who always put \$20 in the offering plate every time they went to church.
- Some of you think about scandals in the church. You're skeptical about churches talking about money because you first-hand saw the abuse.
- Some of you think, "I would love to participate, but I don't have anything." You're thinking about what's in your checking account. Yeah, the church is doing some good things.
- Some of you think about someone else. Whenever something needs to be done, there's always "someone else" to step up and meet that need.

How you perceive something is often how you receive it?

Today, I recognize that there are a lot of thoughts about the offering time in church. And your perceptions are important, because how you perceive some-

thing affects your participation. If you perceive the offering to be a time when greedy churches led by greedy pastors ask for money, that will affect your participation. If you perceive the offering to be for someone else, that will affect your participation.

What if we all perceived this offering that we are about to receive as an OPPORTUNITY? What if you looked at your involvement as an opportunity? I mean...where else can you give money and the end result of that donation makes an ETERNAL difference? You have the opportunity to make a difference in the life of a child, who will feel hope even when life at home is not good. You have the opportunity to make a difference in the life of a teenager, who will be encouraged to make wise choices. You have the opportunity to make a difference in the life of a married couple, being pulled in all different directions in this world. You have the opportunity to make a difference in the life of seniors.

If you're new to church, or maybe this is your first time in a long time, God gives us opportunities to make a difference. I want to invite you to consider participating today. If today is your first time here, or maybe you're in church for a first time in a long time, then I want to invite you to consider participating. I'm going to pray, and then our ushers will pass the buckets down the aisles. Let's pray.

## 16. JESUS WAS GENEROUS

The Bible is full of riches. And today's Giving Talk is built on a rich verse. Take a moment to unpack 2 Corinthians 8:9 just before you pass the plate and remind people of God's goodness.

Giving Talk scripts connect the offering time in your church service to a stat, story or Scripture. Scripts rotate between those three areas. This week's Giving Talk script is built on a news story.

In just a minute, we're going to participate in a time of giving. If you've got a comment or prayer request, or if you're a guest and you'd like to let us know you're here, you can drop your connection card in the offering buckets when they come around. And if you want to financially support the mission and vision of the church, you can drop your donation in the buckets. So you can go ahead and prepare for that.

Before we give, I want to read you a verse from the Bible. It's found in 2 Corinthians chapter 8. Here's what it says:

2 Corinthians 8:9 – “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor so that you, through his poverty, might become rich.”

I love hanging out with generous people... sometimes because they pick up the tab at the restaurant, but mostly because of the way I feel when I'm with them.

There's just something about hanging out with friends and family who are thinking of other people. Generosity is contagious like that.

Over the years, I've known a lot of generous people, but there's never been anyone more generous than Jesus. In the verse we just read, we see Jesus leaving behind the riches of heaven and becoming poor for our sake.

From heaven to a stable. From angels to the carpentry shop. From royalty, to a cross. Jesus gave his life for you and for me.

What an amazing picture of grace and generosity.

I think one of the ways we can follow Jesus in the area of our own generosity. Because Jesus has been so generous towards us, we can be generous towards others. The offering time at church is a great time to put feet to that.

I'm going to invite our volunteers to come and get into position. I'm going to pray, and then we will receive today's offering.

Let's pray.

### 17. SPENDING MONEY

This is a really simple (and short) Giving Talk you can use to set up the offering. This one is perfect for a staff member or a volunteer.

Good morning Life Church, my name is Mike & I'm one of the pastors here.

In just a few minutes we are going to be receiving our offering. I would like to thank all of you who have given online & at the kiosks this week. We really appreciate that!

This week I spent money at Starbucks, the grocery store, the gas station & many other places. We all spend money; some spend a lot and some spend a little, but everyone in this room spends money. I want you to raise your hand if you have never spent a dollar? We all know how to spend and like it!

Most of the time when we spend money on things, we either eat them, use them, or drive them. We spend so we can experience something in the moment. Spending is a means to acquire something tangible.

As I was thinking about the offering this morning, I was thinking about spending money. Do you realize each week when we give money to this church, we actually get to see a tangible result. I want every person who has had their life touched, changed, or altered through this ministry to raise your hand right now. Look around, when we give to church, we see a tangible result - people's lives changed.

Here is a great stat for you to think about. 100% of the money you invest in God through a local church is yours to keep forever! You don't get to keep the burger, coffee, or car, but when you give to a church, your investment is into people who God is doing a work in.

We are about to receive our offering, and this is our chance to actually invest some money into something that is tangible here on earth and also for eternity: people.

I'm going to pray for us, and the ushers will come forward so we can receive this offering.

## 18. THE STARBUCKS SPIRAL

Starbucks is a cultural icon. Even if you don't like coffee (or Starbucks coffee), you can't deny their influence. This Giving Talk contains a talk from their founder and it's a great lead in to the offering time in church.

In just a few moments, we're going to pass some buckets down each row and give you the opportunity to financially support the mission of this church by making a donation. Some of you have already given online, and for that, we're so thankful. If you want to participate, you can use the envelope we provided or simply drop your donation in the bucket. But before we do that, I want to share a quote from a book I've been reading about Starbucks.

How many of you like Starbucks coffee? How many of you prefer McDonalds? (or another local favorite) Whether you like Starbucks or not, you gotta admit that they are an American icon. They were started by a guy named Howard Shultz, and then leadership was handed off to another team.

A few years back, and after profits had declined, Shultz returned as the CEO. In his book, where he describes that journey, he says:

“The damage was slow and quiet, incremental, like a single loose thread that unravels a sweater inch by inch. Decision by decision, store by store, customer by customer, Starbucks was losing some of the signature traits it had been founded on.”

There wasn't one big thing, but a series of choices that led to their losses. In a way, I think financial

choices are like that. People don't wake up and say, “You know what...I think I would like to declare bankruptcy” or “Honey..let's get foreclosed on this week!” Instead, small decisions lead to bigger problems.

I think the reverse is true too. You may not think that you can give a lot of money, but in your heart, you want to be generous.

You know what you do...you make the decision to participate now. Not later...this week. Not one day...this month. If you will make those small strategic decisions, I wonder if years from now, you won't look back and see years of God's blessing in your life.

Our ushers are going to pass the budgets and I want to invite you to participate. Of course, you can always give online and if you've already done that...thanks!

Let's pray.

## 19. GOD FIRST

This Giving Talk explains how giving is a tangible sign of putting God first in our lives. It's a Giving Talk built on a Scripture, and a great way to set up the offering.

In just a few minutes, we're going to receive an offering, and you're going to have the opportunity to give to something that's making an eternal difference in this community. Ushers go ahead and get ready for that.

Before we do that, I wanted to share a powerful verse with you. Deuteronomy 14:23 (TLB) says "The purpose of tithing is to teach you always to put God first in your lives."

WOW.

It doesn't get much more straightforward than that. The tithe teaches me to put God first. I can't think of a more tangible and practical way in our lives to put God first than making a conscious choice with our money.

Right now the tithers are kicked back smiling and nodding, chilling, blessed, relaxed and the rest of you are going, "Crud. Holy cow. Wish we hadn't come today! Are you telling me 10%? Are you crazy? You have no idea!"

You might be going "Do you realize that's 10%? Do you know what that would take? I mean, we would have to rearrange everything! I would have to re-prioritize and make major changes to put God first! Is that what you are telling me?"

YES! THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I'M TELLING YOU!

Through the local church you have the honor and opportunity to rearrange and re-prioritize your life around God through the tithe. The tithe teaches us to put God first.

When it comes to me giving to this church, I give because I have made the choice to center my entire life around Jesus - even my wallet. I'm honored to be able to join God in what He is doing here and I'm happy to give with joy.

So as we receive the offering, think about that. Is your motivation to give guilt or is it a choice you have made because you have rearranged your life and put Jesus at the center of it all?

Let's pray and then the ushers will pass the buckets.

## 20. BAPTIZING YOUR WALLET

Here's a story from history you can use to set up your offering time and invite people to give. Remember, people have different passions and give for different reasons, so that's why we have a variety of topics for your Giving Talks.

Every weekend when we gather for this service, we do a few things. We usually sing some songs – which may seem a little strange if you didn't grow up in church. But the Bible says that we should worship God and singing is a great way to do that.

We open up the Bible and talk about knowing and following God during the sermon. We do that because what God says about something is more important than what we think, even me.

And we participate in a time of giving.

The Bible says that giving is the way that we worship God, demonstrate our trust in him, and live by faith. So as our ushers come forward and you get ready, let me tell you an interesting story that I read last week.

I read that during the middle ages, churches would sometimes hire mercenaries to fight their battles. Now that would be a little strange today, but it was common practice back then. The church or the priest needed to fight a battle, so they would hire some soldiers to do their dirty work. However,

before that mercenary could be sent into battle, the church needed to baptize them. Again, pretty strange and backwards if you think about it. But these mercenaries would hold their swords out of the water while the rest of their bodies were

submerged, so that God would not control their weapons. Isn't that interesting? The person was saying, God...you can do what you want with me, except with my sword...I'm in control of that.

A lot of people approach their faith like that. They want to follow God, only not in this area. And many times, finances is that one area. It's like we're being baptized, but holding our wallet out of the water...like we're saying "God...I'll follow you in all these areas...except when it comes to money."

I think those mercenaries missed something, and I think we miss something when we don't trust God and follow God in ALL the areas of our life. I'm so thankful for people in this church who obey God completely, and give generously and cheerfully. I'm not trying to guilt you into anything, but this is certainly something to think about.

Have you baptized your wallet?

I'm going to say a prayer and then we're going to participate in the time of giving. If God leads you to participate, I want to encourage you to do so.

Let's pray.

## 21. GREED IS NOT GOOD

The antidote to greed is generosity and Colossians 3:5-6 shows us the way. Here's a Giving Talk based on a Scripture - a mini-sermon to set up the offering.

I want to go ahead and invite our ushers to come forward because we're going to participate in a time of giving. This is a part of our service when we respond to God's grace and God's goodness and you have the opportunity to financially support the ministry of this church.

While you're doing whatever you need to do to get ready, I want to read a short verse that comes out of the book of Colossians. This is something that the Apostle Paul wrote to a church that existed way back in the first century. Here's what it says:

*Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. - Colossians 3:5-6*

It's interesting to me that Paul listed greed up there with all those other evil desires. I mean...some of those other things seem way worse than greed.

But when you think about it, greed is like an addiction. It functions just like addictions to drugs, alcohol, or sex - you never feel like you have enough and you always want more. It's like a socially acceptable addiction in our society.

You see people that have nicer cars and nicer houses or better jobs, and you want that. We all struggle with this, don't we?

The antidote to greed is generosity. When we live like it all belongs to God (that's stewardship) and give like it all belongs to God (that's generosity), we combat the addition of greed. We allow God the freedom to shape us into His image and do a work in our hearts.

I don't want you to be addicted to drugs. I don't want you to be addicted to alcohol or porn or approval or money or anything else. I want you to live free, in God's grace and knowing God's goodness.

So one of the reasons that I want you to give generously is to tear down the destructive addiction that greed has in your life. Cause when that addiction is broken, you'll live in greater freedom.

Let's pray.



### 22. KIDS

Here's a Giving Talk that's more about ministry than it is money. And it's a great opportunity for someone from your family ministry staff (or a volunteer) to take the stage and encourage people to give.

In just a few minutes, we're going to receive an offering, so go ahead and get ready for that. This is a time when all kinds of people from all walks of life support the mission and vision of this church. But before we do that, let me share something really exciting with you.

Several years ago, there was a great preacher named D.L. Moody. One evening, someone asked him if anyone made decisions for Christ after his sermon. Moody responded, "Two and half people."

The person replied, "Oh, two adults and one child." Moody answered, "No two children and one adult. The adult has already lived much of their life...the children still have most of theirs to follow Jesus."

Last Sunday, while we were in this room, did you know that there were seven other church services going on at the same time? You're thinking...wait a minute...is there some other service going on?

Maybe the preacher is better there?!

No, I'm talking about services designed especially for children. See, right now, while you're here worshipping Jesus and listening to the sermon, children are in another part of the building doing the same thing on their level.

Last Sunday, there were 45 elementary children that learned that Jesus is their best friend. We're not babysitting those kids – we're teaching them to know Jesus, love Jesus and follow Jesus with their whole life.

When you give, you're giving so that children – who have their whole lives before them – can learn to love Jesus. You're helping us lead children to love God – investing in the next generation who will be here longer that we will be here.

What an incredible opportunity. Thank you so much for your generosity. And the 45 kids upstairs thank you too.

## 23. TELL ME LIES

There's a little humor in this Giving Talk based on an informal survey. And humor is a great way to disarm people and set up the offering.

I'm so glad you're here today. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm one of the pastors here. I want to invite our ushers to come forward and I want to invite you to get ready for our time of giving. In just a minute, we're going to pass buckets down every row and give you the opportunity to support the mission and vision of this church. But before we do that, I want to share with you an interesting tidbit of information I read this past week.

According to World Net Daily News, surveys show the average person tells four lies a day, or 1,460 a year for a total of 88,000 by the age of 60. I don't know if there are any liars here today, but if that stat is true, this room is full of liars. Raise your hand if you're a liar (just kidding!).

The most common lie is: "I'm fine."

Ever say that one? Someone says, "Hey...how are you doing?" You lie and say, "I'm fine." Probably because it's weird to tell a stranger, "You know...I'm doing terrible...I've got this rash and my kids keep getting notes sent home from school...thanks for sasking."

Other lies on the list include.

"Nice to see you." You know that's not true about 90% of the time you say it.

"Sorry I missed your call." Again, usually not true.  
"This tastes delicious."

You ever tell any of those lies?

When it comes to giving in the church, can I tell you one of the most common lies I hear. It's this: "I can't afford to give right now." It may sound true, but 99% of the time, it's just a lie. For most of us, we can afford to do what we really want to do. We do whatever it takes to pay for what's most important. It's not that we can't give, it's that we choose NOT to give.

I'm so thankful that there are many people who CHOOSE to give to this church, whether they feel like it or not, because they believe in what's happening here and they trust God with their entire life. I want to challenge you to join those people – to trust God, to choose to believe in His grace and goodness and take action.

Let's pray and then we're going to receive our offering.

## 24. GENEROSITY IS AN ATTITUDE

There's some Bible teaching in this Giving Talk, and it's a great way to challenge your people that giving is both an attitude and an action.

In just a few minutes, we're going to receive an offering, so go ahead and do whatever you need to do to get ready for that. Ushers...you can go ahead and get ready too. This is a time when all kinds of people from all walks of life support the mission and vision of this church.

Before we give, I want to read a verse of Scripture for you. This comes from a book called 2 Corinthians. It was written by a guy named Paul and addressed to a church congregation, maybe a lot like ours.

Here's what Paul says in 2 Corinthians 8:7.

"But as you excel in everything – in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love or you – see that you excel in this act of grace also." 2 Corinthians 8:7

I love that. Paul tells this church that they are doing a great job in so many things. That's how I feel about our church. I'm so proud to be a part of a church that cares about the community, that does all she can to reach children, and is a safe place for people to hear about the life-changing message of Jesus.

Then Paul challenges this church to excel in the area of giving. One chapter later, Paul encourages the church with this verse:

"Each one must give as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." – 2 Corinthians 9:7

The offering time isn't about me guilt-tripping anyone into giving. Paul actually says that we shouldn't give reluctantly or because someone forced us. The preacher shouldn't try and scare people into giving – which is a tactic that works, but doesn't honor God. Instead, people should give cheerfully.

The Bible says this because generosity isn't just something you do – it's an attitude. God wants us to have a generous spirit, and a generous attitude. It's not that I have to give...it's that I GET to give. When it comes to me giving to this church, that's how I feel...I'm honored to be able to join God in what He is doing here, and I'm happy to give cheerfully.

So as we receive the offering, think about that. Are you giving out of guilt, or are you giving out of a generous heart?

Let's pray and then the ushers will pass the buckets.

## 25. ARISTOTLE

Maybe you've never talked about Aristotle in church, but this story from his life is a great way to talk about giving. It's a little deeper than others, but that's okay - some of your people are deeper than others!

Hey guys...my name is Pete and I'm one of the pastors here at First United Methodist Church I've been on staff here for two years, and I absolutely love working with you and your family. It's an honor to be a part of this team. In just a minute, our ushers are going to pass a plate down every row and you're going to have the opportunity to financially support this church with your donations. Go ahead and get ready for that, but before we actually receive the offering, I want to ask you a question.

How many of you have ever heard of Aristotle? (you could put a picture of Aristotle on the screen)

He was a Greek philosopher that lived in the 4th century – he was a student of Plato and a teacher of Alexander the great. He wrote all kinds of things – from physics to politics to biology to relationships. I think it's safe to assume he was a pretty smart guy. Aristotle actually wrote about the best age to get married. According to him, the appropriate age for girls to get married is 18. If you're a guy, you're not ready to get married until you're 37.

All the fathers in here are saying, “no way my daughter is old enough to get married at 18.” All the ladies in here are thinking, “yeah...I can see how men aren't mature enough for marriage until age 37.”

In 344 BC, Aristotle married a girl named Pythias. Guess what? She was 18 and he was 37. I can't

say for certain, but it certainly looks like Aristotle developed his teaching on marriage based on what he actually did. It sounds like he came up with a philosophical teaching to justify the fact that he married someone 19 years younger.

Now before we're too hard on Aristotle, let's be honest. We do the same thing sometimes. We come up with a philosophy or a teaching after the fact to justify a decision that we made. We do this in our finances all the time. Have you ever bought something on your credit card, and then later tried to justify how you needed it? I've done that.

I think there's people in the church who don't give generously and then try and justify how hard it would be to live on less money. We let another Sunday go by without participating, get home and say “well, I'm really trying to pay off this debt, or we really need to save money for that, or when I get that raise...”

We come up with a way of financial living to justify our current behaviors, rather than orient our behaviors around what we KNOW God wants us to do. I know this is kind of deep. I mean...I'm talking about Aristotle and this is kind of heavy. I just want us to think a little bit today.

I'm going to pray and then we're going to receive the offering today. Let's pray.

## 26. GREED

Share your heart with your people using this giving talk script based on Colossians 3:5.

In just a few minutes, we're going to participate in a time of giving. As the ushers come forward and as you get ready, I want to talk about something for just a couple of minutes.

We're living in a pretty selfish society...would you agree with that? Everyone who has children or teenagers would definitely agree with that! I mean, my kids are pretty good kids but they sure do seem to want a lot of things. It's just so easy to focus on what we want and what we need. I think selfishness is just our default...we naturally think about ourselves.

If you think about this, that's really the definition of greed.

You might think that greed is about money, but it's much deeper than that. Greed is the impulse we all have to control everything for ourselves. Our pursuit of more stuff, more recognition, more safety...that goes back to the sin of greed.

Greed is like a sickness that spreads through our body. It takes over. It consumes us. Colossians 3:5 says that greed is idolatry. That's pretty strong language.

But did you know that there is only one cure for greed and selfishness?

It's generosity. When you act in generosity, it's like vaccinating yourself against the sickness of greed. We must learn to be more generous, and the way we do that is by acting in generosity

You know...if God wants something from you, He can just take it. Giving isn't about you giving something to God – it's not like he is poor and needs your money. We don't give because God needs something – we give because we need to give it. It's about our heart – it's about our motives.

So we're going to participate in a time of giving and I want to encourage you to examine your heart and give generously.

Let's pray.

## 27. IT'S NOT IN VAIN

You don't have to apologize for asking people to fund the mission and vision of the church. Remind them that their giving is not in vain, just as Paul did to the church at Corinth.

Good morning everyone. In just a few minutes, we're going to participate in a time of giving. We're going to receive an offering. This is something that we do every week as a part of our worship to God. As our ushers get into position and you do whatever you need to do to get ready to participate, I want to share with you a short phrase from one verse in the Bible

In 1 Corinthians 15:58 Paul says this:

*"Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain."*

Paul is writing this to a group of Christians that lived a long time ago in the city of Corinth. They were a part of a church, much like this. And Paul is remind them that the work they do and the contributions they make have a purpose.

We didn't get up this morning because there was nothing better to do. The people working with children this morning aren't doing so because they are bored and really love kids. Trust me...some of your kids are really annoying!

The band didn't rehearse all week and get here before anyone else because they don't have real jobs. I'm not

a pastor because I couldn't get a real job. No...everybody here today is serving and working because we believe that Jesus is alive and that the Gospel matters.

And when you give – when you financially support this church – we don't do that to buy God's favor or to mask some kind of guilt for past sins – we do so because what we do here on earth can literally have an eternal impact.

Our giving – in the name of the Lord – is not in vain. What Paul said to that church in Corinth is true for us today. When you give money to this church – you're serving our community, you're helping children and families, you are spreading the Gospel around the world. You're a part of something that's bigger than yourself. You are making an eternal difference.

That's why we don't apologize for asking you to get involved in this way. That's why we receive an offering every week.

Let's pray.

## 28. CELEBRATING BAPTISM

If you celebrate baptism in your church, that's a great way to talk about giving. This script comes from Chris Goepfner, the Lead Pastor of Riverbank Church.

In just a few minutes, we're going to continue worshipping Jesus and receive an offering, so go ahead and get ready for that. But as we prepare, I want to share something with you.

Just a couple of weeks ago we baptized 12 people! That is just amazing isn't it? Over the past month and a half we have seen more than 20 people receive Jesus and make a commitment to Him. It's undeniable that Jesus is doing something very unique here at Riverbank Church.

Your giving makes that possible. Because you give, we can provide an environment to hold our Sunday experience. Because you give we can properly communicate to those who are beginning this relationship. Because you give we can provide resources to those new believers. I'm so proud to be a part of a church that takes this part of the mission seriously.

So when you give, I want you to understand that there's a whole bunch of people who are being reached and connected to God. Think about that for a minute. Lives are being changed FOREVER because you give financially.

The Lord has called us to create environments and experiences so that we can effectively reach the Upper Valley with the message and love of Jesus. These pictures are proof that we are a part of a great God-

given vision. This is just the beginning!

So as we worship God through giving, think about the future impact of your generosity. It's making a huge difference. I'm going to pray, and then the Hosts are going to pass the buckets down each and every row.

You can participate by dropping your gift in one of those buckets. If you did not come prepared to give today, that's OK. You can give online at [riverbank-church.com](http://riverbank-church.com) OR you can take your envelope home with you and you can send your gift. We have taken care of the stamp!

Let's pray that God will bless what's about to be given and that He would use it in a big way...

## 29. CONFEDERATE MONEY

Here's a powerful giving talk based on a principle and an object lesson. You might find an actual confederate bill to hold up (try eBay, or that Civil War fanatic who scares you a little bit)

Hey guys. My name is Tom and I'm on staff here at First United. In just a minute, we're going to receive our weekly offering, but I wanted to show you something first.

Maybe you'll give one of these.

I'm holding a \$20 bill.

But this isn't a normal \$20 bill. It's actually a reprint of a \$20 bill from an interesting time in American history.

This is confederate money, printed by the southern states during the Civil War. States like Alabama, Tennessee, Arkansas and Virginia used this during the time of Jefferson Davis, Robert E. Lee and Abraham Lincoln.

For a period of three years about 150 years ago, you could use this money to buy stuff. It was worth something. But today, you can't use this money to buy anything. It's got no real value, because there's no such thing as the Confederate States of America.

When you think about it, ALL money is like confederate money because it's not going to last forever.

We've got to start looking at our money, possessions, and stuff as temporary. Our paycheck might be able to help us pay the mortgage and buy groceries today,

but who knows about tomorrow? Money isn't gonna last...it's like confederate money.

In Matthew 6:20, Jesus encouraged us to not store up money on earth, where it could be stolen or waste away. Instead, he said that we should build up treasures in heaven.

When you give to this church, you're not really giving money away...you're investing in eternity.

You're building up treasures in heaven.

Let's pray, and then our ushers will pass the buckets.



## 30. FIVE LOAVES

The story of the loaves and fish is a great reminder that God can accomplish a lot with a little. It's also a great way to encourage people to give.

My name is Joe and I'm one of the pastors here at Cross Church. I want to invite our volunteers to come forward because we're about to participate in the time of giving. In just a minute you'll have the opportunity to support the mission and vision of this church.

But before we pass the buckets, I wanted to share a quick story from the Bible. It's found in Mark 6:30-44. Rather than read it, I'll just summarize it.

*When Jesus was here, he became somewhat famous. Wherever he went crowds of people would follow him – some because they wanted to hear what he had to say and others because they wanted to be healed. On this particular occasion, Jesus was trying to get away to spend some time alone, but the people discovered his plan and came crowding around.*

*Jesus spent some time teaching them, and the day quickly became evening. And evening means dinner time. The disciples came to Jesus and said, "We need to send these people home so they can get something to eat." Jesus looked at his disciples and said, "I've got a better idea...let's give them some food."*

*This sounded like a great idea, but here's an important detail in the story: There were 5,000 people there. Can you imagine the chaos of feeding 5,000 people? The disciples didn't have a food truck, or a*

*grill. In fact, all they had was five loaves of bread and a couple of fish.*

*Big problem for you and me. No problem for Jesus.*

*Jesus took the food, blessed it, and the disciples began distributing. Amazingly, they didn't run out. It was a miracle.*

I love that story in the Bible because it reminds me that Jesus can do a lot with a little. Jesus took five small loaves of bread and two fish, and made it feed 5,000 people. And Jesus still does this miracle today. He takes a little, and turns it into a lot.

You might think that you only have a little to give. Well, Jesus can take that and turn it into a lot.

You might think that it's impossible to live on less money, but Jesus can take your less and bless it. I've often said that 90% of my income with God's blessing is more than 100% of my income without God's blessing.

As we pass the buckets today, I want to encourage you to give generously. If you're a guest, you're welcome to participate too. And as you give, my prayer is that God will bless your faithfulness, just like he blessed those loaves of bread and fish that day.

Let's pray.

## 31. LET'S DO THE MATH

You (or someone) will have to do some math before this Giving Talk will work, but it's a great way to be transparent with your congregation. Sharing stats like this speaks to a certain segment of your church.

Hey, my name is David and I'm one of the pastors here. In just a few moments we're going to receive an offering.

If you haven't had a chance to prepare your tithe or offering, I want to invite you to do so now. For those of you who have already given online or through automated giving, I want to say thanks for helping fund the mission and vision of our church.

Before we receive the offering, I want to share some numbers with you. Each week, we typically receive \$11,500 in our offering. Right now, we have been blessed to see close to 70 people make first-time commitments to follow Jesus Christ this year, over 200 adults involved in a small group, on an average Sunday morning we have in worship 500 children, youth, and adults.

As you know, the mission of our church is "making disciple making disciples." That means that per person, we give an average of \$23 every Sunday when the offering is received to fund the mission of the church. Did you know that an average household income in America is approximately \$52,000 or about \$1000/week.

Can you imagine what God could in our church and through our church if we brought a tithe of what we earn back to God? If you can't, check this out: If

everyone were an average income earner and gave a tithe, we could potentially see 350 people make first-time decisions for Christ, 1000 people in small groups, and 2500 children, youth, and adults in worship.

This morning, as we receive our offering, I want to thank you for helping reach all the people for Christ we're currently reaching and invite you to imagine how many more we could reach if we all continue to grow in our generosity towards God and the church.

Let's pray.

## 32. THE FARMER

Here's a Giving Talk based on a story about farming. Even those who think John Deere is a person will be able to relate to this one.

In just a few moments, we're going to pass some buckets down each row and give you the opportunity to financially support the mission of this church by making a donation. Some of you have already given online, and for that, we're so thankful. If you want to participate, you can use the envelope we provided or simply drop your donation in the bucket. But before we do that, can I ask you a question?

I don't know if you have ever been around a farm or not. Many of us have the story of being around a farm as a kid. We have seen our families, grandparents or friends who have farms. We've seen the fields of corn, rows of beans, tomatoes and more. We have seen some great farms and a ton great food that comes from those farms. How many of you love the farm? I do!

The reality is that the farm did not start out with all of that good stuff. The farm started with a field that had to be prepared and a farmer who was willing to work it. But, the farmer needs one very important thing he cannot create on his own. He needs the seeds to plant the crop. He needs the source that creates the abundance. Those seeds come from the outside, they come from the crops of other farms. And, without the planting of seeds a farm cannot keep producing the stuff that we love.

The same is true of the church. Many of us have seen

great churches; in fact, this is great church! We love the results and abundance we see in this church.

But the great things we see here did not start out this way. It started with a desire to start something and cultivate it. It started with planting seeds.

The things that you love about our church start with planting seeds. When you give to this church, you are planting seeds. You are part of planting seeds that produce saved lives, restored marriages and renewed hope for so many people. We want this to continue for generations to come, and today you get the chance to make that happen.

We are all able to participate in planting seeds that will change the world! Just like Luke 8:4-15 we have the chance to cast our seeds and see what God grows as a result.

Let's pray together.

### 33. JOUST

I know what you're thinking: When are we going to have a Giving Talk based on video games from the 1980s? Well, today is your day. As you share this story with your congregation, put an image up on the screen to help people relive their glory years.

In just a few minutes, we're going to receive an offering – that's something we do every week here at Faith Church. Many of you have already given online or you've set up regular contributions from your bank, so thank you. For everyone else, this is a great time for you to support the church.

But before we pass the buckets down the rows, I wanted to show you a picture from an old video game. Do we have any video game fans here? Well, when I was younger, there was a pretty popular video game called JOUST. (Put the image on the screen). Anyone remember this game?

I read an interesting fact about this game. Seems that when programmers were making the game they noticed a glitch in the programming. When the character flew off the left side of the screen, he would come back on the right side of the screen. That wasn't supposed to happen.

But after they thought about it, they decided it was cool, so they kept it. What was a glitch, became a feature!

That reminds me of a verse in the Bible found in Genesis 50:20. A man named Joseph was betrayed by his brothers and sold into slavery.

Years later he was reunited with those brothers, and he said this:

*“You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.” – Genesis 50:20*

God took something that was bad, and worked it out for the good. That's what God does...He takes mess-ups and misfits and makes something out of it. He takes little things and turns them into God-sized things. He takes your contributions, and He turns them into ministry.

I'm so thankful that God has never given up on me. I'm grateful that God takes the bad and uses it for the good. That's something to think about as we give...not because we're trying to earn God's favor, but because we're grateful for his grace.

Let's pray and then we'll receive our offering.

## 34. YOU ARE RICH

People in your church might not think of themselves as rich. But compared to the rest of the world, we are all rich. Here's a simple Biblical reminder to challenge people to give.

In just a few moments, we're going to pass some buckets down each row and give you the opportunity to financially support the mission of this church by making a donation. Some of you have already given online, and for that, we're so thankful. If you want to participate, you can use the envelope we provided or simply drop your donation in the bucket.

But before we do that, I wanted to share a Bible verse from you. It's found in 1 Timothy 6:17-18, and it's the Apostle Paul teaching his student Timothy about how to lead the church.

Paul says, "As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share."

So the Bible speaks directly to rich people. Now I know you're thinking, "Well, that's not me...I'm not rich." Though you may not always feel rich, because you live in America you are among the richest people in the world. You are in the top 5% when it comes to wealth.

So Paul tells us not to put our home in money, in our retirement accounts, in the stock market, but to put our trust in God. That's really good advice these

days, isn't it? He goes on to tell us to be generous and ready to share.

That's why we have an offering every week. It's an opportunity for you to share God's blessings, to support the mission and vision of this church and bring about change in our community.

So I'm going to pray, and then our ushers are going to pass the buckets. If you've already given online or at the kiosk in the lobby, thank you so much. If you'd like to participate, just drop your donation in the bucket.

Let's pray.

## 35. FIVE FIGURE BONUSES

Here is a heart-warming news story that will make you feel good about people. Shocking, I know. But it's also a great way to set up the offering in your church this weekend.

In just a minute, we're going to participate in a time of giving. If you've got a comment or prayer request, or if you're a guest and you'd like to let us know you're here, you can drop your connection card in the offering buckets when they come around. And if you want to financially support the mission and vision of the church, you can drop your donation in the buckets. So you can go ahead and prepare for that.

Before our volunteers pass the buckets, I wanted to share a little bit of a story I heard from MSNBC. It's about a family from Waukegan, Illinois called the Spungen family. They own a ball bearing company that was actually bought out by larger company overseas.

Anyway, before the company was sold, the owners decided that they wanted to share the bonuses with employees. So Danny Spungen, and other family members, hand wrote two thank you notes to each employee (one in English and one in Spanish) and then split up \$6.6 million in bonuses.

Dave Tiderman got a \$35,000 bonus.

Jose Rojas got \$10,000 in his thank you card.

And the stories go on.

I don't know about you, but stories like this seem rare these days, but when I hear them, they always make me proud. I've never met the Spungen family, but I appreciate their generosity. You might think, yea...If I sold a company for millions of dollars then I would take care of people too, but the bottom line is they gave away more than \$6 million. They didn't have to do that...they **CHOSE** to bless their employees.

In my own life, I want to be generous with whatever I have. And I want to encourage you to be generous with whatever you have. God has blessed you in some way. Rather than hold tightly to those blessings, worrying they might be gone tomorrow, be a steward of them and share with others.

I'm going to invite our volunteers to come and get into position. I'm going to pray, and then we will receive today's offering.

Let's pray.

*Read the original news story here: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/27958458/?GT1=43001#.UE-S7I6kotYk>*

## 36. THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS

Summarize this Bible story and let God’s Word speak for itself. It’s a powerful way to set up the offering in your church this weekend.

My name is Jim and I’m the Lead Pastor here at Cross Church. In just a moment we will continue in worship by receiving an offering.

Before we do that, I want to read a few verses from the Bible. This comes from a story Jesus told, recorded in the book of Matthew chapter 25. It’s about a rich man who was going on a journey, so he called his top three employees in and gave them directions. He gave five bags of gold to one guy, two bags of gold to the second guy, and one bag of gold to the last guy. These were handed out on the basis of ability, but all three of these guys were instructions to “put the money to work.” The guy was gone for a long time, but eventually came home, called the three guys back, and checked on their progress. The first guy – with the five bags of gold, came in and said, “Sir, you gave me five bags of gold. . . I’ve worked hard and made five more.” “Well done my good and faithful servant,” said the master.

The second guy comes in and said, “You gave me two bags of gold, and I’ve worked hard and I’ve made you two more.” 100% return on your investment. “Well done my good and faithful servant,” said the master. Let me read straight from the Scripture about what happened with the third guy: “Then the man who had received one bag of gold came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. So I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.’

“His master replied, ‘You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest. “So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags. For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

On one hand, that seems kind of harsh, but on the other hand it makes sense, doesn’t it? I think one of the morals of this story is that God wants us to be faithful with what He’s given us. We don’t all have the same things – some of you have five bags of gold, some of you have two and some have one. But God wants us to be faithful and work hard with whatever we have.

Can I be so bold to ask you how you’re doing? Are you being faithful what God has given you, or are you living in fear, hiding what you’ve got left in the ground? I want to challenge you to work hard, do well, and honor God with all He’s given you. I’m going to pray and then we’re going to receive our offering.

Let’s pray.

## 37. OUR HOUSE BURNED DOWN

Here is a story about someone who was generous, even during tragic circumstances. That story serves as a modern backdrop to something Jesus said, recorded in Matthew 6.

In just a few moments, we're going to pass some buckets down each row and give you the opportunity to financially support the mission of this church by making a donation. Some of you have already given online, and for that, we're so thankful. If you want to participate, you can use the envelope we provided or simply drop your donation in the bucket.

I recently heard a story from a pastor of a family whose house burned down in Tennessee. Even though they had experienced an incredible loss (they lost everything), they had one thought through the process: How do we as a family honor God during a significant time of loss?

Their decision: to honor God, they were going to tithe on everything that they received from others during that time of loss.

They tithed on the money, on the clothing and even on the food! At the end of 9 months, they were living in a new house twice the size of their previous home with all new furnishings and a lower monthly house payment.

What a great reminder that God watches over us and takes care of us. Bad things still happen to good people, but God is always in control and God always has a plan.

As I heard this story, I was reminded of Matthew 6:

*“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or*

*about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?*

*“And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”*

As you consider giving or continuing to give today, remember that God cares for you – more than anything else in the world. You can trust Him.

Let's pray for the offering, and then our ushers will pass the baskets.



## 38. MINE-ITIS

Sunnny days...sweeping the...clouds away. If you remember those lyrics, you remember Sesame Street. And you're going to enjoy this weeks Giving Talk. Who would have guessed puppets could teach us about giving?

Good morning, my name is Pastor Billy. We are about to recieve an offering. This means that we will have a lot of you give of your financial resources to God and these resources will be used to extend his mission to reach more people.

Recently, Seesame Street ran an episode to help children understand a condition called, "mine-itis". (put a picture of some Sesame Street characters up on the screen if you can)

Mine-itis is well known from anyone that has watched two kids play. Kids have no problem saying, "That is MINE!" Ever had one of your kids run into the living room and say, "Johnny took MY truck (or Barbie doll or whatever the object might be)!"

The crazy thing is that Mine-itis never goes away; kids are just more honest about it. As adults, we say things like, "That is my money," or "Like my car?"

Scripture teaches that we really don't own anything. To say "mine" about anything is to not clearly understand the purpose of resources.

We are about to recieve an offering. During this time, it's the ultimate opportunity to say, "Jesus, this is not mine." As adults, we teach our children to share. When a kid shares, their life is better.

Today, you have the opportunity to make your life better through finding joy in saying, "It's not mine."

I'm going to pray and ask our Father to help us know what is His and what is ours, and then our ushers will pass the offering baskets. Thanks to everyone who has already given on-line or mailed in their recurring contributions.

Let's pray.

## 39. CREATING SPACE

Here is a simple object lesson to explain the idea of tithing or giving. Remember, people love to see things, not just hear things.

Hey, my name is pastor Casey and I want to thank you for taking the time out of your week-end to worship with us here at First Church.

We are about to go into a moment where we will be passing some baskets down the aisles, and we collect financial resources that fund all of the work God is doing here.

As I was thinking about this moment every weekend in our church, something hit me. I was thinking about how the offering time in the church service only takes a few minutes. We carve out space in our service to receive an offering, and it frankly is a miracle how God works through these few minutes.

In our lives, we usually are so busy, so stressed, so consumed with life that we forget that God can do more with a few minutes than we could do in our entire lives.

This offering time in our service is about creating space and asking God to do a miracle each week.

I brought ten \$1.00 bills up on the stage today, and I was thinking about how small a tithe is. God speaks in Scripture about giving one of these ten back to him. That means if I had \$100, I would give \$10 back to him. Or if I had \$1,000, I would give \$100 back to him.

For some of us that seems like a lot, but in reality, it's only one out of ten. Here is what I know about giving the one. For every one of these we give to God, we create room for Him to do what

only He can do. It's called creating space for God to work.

My question for you this week is: How much space are you creating in your finances for God to work? I don't ask this to make you feel bad; I ask this as a challenge to move you to a place of knowing the power of God in your life. How much space are you going to create today and this week?

I know some of you don't have cash or checks, and that is why we provide online giving and kiosks in the lobby.

Let's pray today for the courage to create space in our lives!

## 40. WHEN GIVING DOESN'T MAKE SENSE

There's a story in 1 Kings 17 about a poor widow who gave even though she had almost nothing left. This story from God's Word is a great way to encourage your people to give, even when it doesn't always make sense.

My name is Jimmy and I'm the Lead Pastor here at Cross Church. In just a moment we will continue in worship by celebrating our offering. If you haven't had a chance to prepare your offering, please do that now. For those of you who have already given online or through automated giving, I want to thank you!

Have you ever had a preacher ask you to give, and it just doesn't make sense? Have you ever felt like God is asking for your very last penny?

I know I have, many times!

The reality is that often giving doesn't make sense, doesn't add up and even seems scary. It's even tougher when you realize that God has asked you to give the first 10% to Him, before everything else! (That's what a tithe is, the 1st 10%)

I can tell you from experience that the concept of a tithe often doesn't make any sense. There have been times when I am afraid if I give the first 10% that I'll never be able to pay my bills. I have even had times when I feel like giving the first 10% means I will miss a few meals! It's in those moments I get a little scared, and often don't give. But, that's when I miss out on God's provision and blessing.

There's a story in 1 Kings 17:8-16 about a poor widow who has almost nothing left. Elijah, God's prophet (a fancier word for pastor) comes to her place in his ministry journey. When he arrives he asks her for a little food and water; he asked her to give! She began to explain how she had almost

nothing. In fact, she says that she was going to prepare the very last meal ever for her and her son, and after eating it they knew they would starve to death! Elijah encouraged her to give anyway, even when it did not make sense.

I am sure it was a scary moment for her: life and death! But her request to give was not without a promise. Elijah explained that if she would give her first portion to God's work, God would supply all of her needs.

The woman decided to be obedient and gave the food to Elijah. She gave to God's work first, and then took for herself. That's God's design. But, God's promise was true.....from that day forward her oil and flour were enough. God met her needs. He blessed her, and He promises to bless us too.

God promises to meet our needs if we are faithful and obedient to give to Him even when doesn't make sense! There are times it will be scary, and won't make sense. God is not asking us to make sense of it all, but to be obedient. Will you give when it doesn't make sense?

Do you want to see God provide for you in amazing ways? Today is your opportunity to begin the journey of obediently giving.

Let's pray.

## 41. THE PACIFIER

Everybody likes to look at pictures of cute babies. So even if this Giving Talk flops, people will go “awww...” But the principle here can really challenge your congregation.

We’re so glad you’re here this morning. My name’s Cliff. I’m one of the pastors here. We’re about to move into a time of worship through giving. I know a lot of you already give online and at our giving kiosks. Thank you so much for that!

When I was thinking about this time of giving, something hit me. Have you ever thought about what a miraculous invention the pacifier is? Take a look at this:

[Pic of cute baby with pacifier in mouth]

The pacifier simply soothes the baby. It’s an amazing device!

Did you know that we have pacifiers as adults? Often times our pacifier is our stuff—new shirt, better car, nicer house, bigger TV, upgraded decorations, etc. When life gets stressful, we lean into this stuff in hopes that it will soothe our soul.

Stuff isn’t bad. But it can be harmful if we use it to pacify our discontentment in life.

During this time of giving, I want to submit a thought. This week, when you’re deciding whether or not to purchase more stuff, ask yourself this simple question.

Why do I buy?

Remember this—every spending decision is a spiritual decision. In Matthew, Jesus said that

where our treasure is, our hearts will follow. This morning we have an opportunity to give back to God just a slice of what He has provided for us. My prayer is that God would be honored in everything we have, and that we would look to Him—and nothing else—to soothe and comfort our souls.

Right now we’re going to have our ushers come forward and receive the offering. When you give today—or online this week—remember that everything we have is His. And our hearts will follow where our money goes.

Let’s honor Him now.

## 42. SEEK FIRST

You don't have to take a lot of time or use a lot of words to set up the offering. This is the shortest Giving Talk of them all, but it's a great way to set up the offering.

In Matthew 6:33 Jesus says, "Seek first." As I was preparing for this time of giving in our service, I thought about how this verse impacts our lives. Seek first—two words with so much power.

Jesus continues, "Seek first...the Kingdom of God." I have a question for you: what are you seeking first?

When I think about seeking, I picture a child running through the house trying to find someone during a game of Hide & Seek. They look until they find. Any Hide & Seek fans here today? Man, I used to love that game!

Jesus looks at the crowd and basically says, "If you want order, peace, and fulfillment in your life, you must seek my Father's kingdom first." There should be an order to your looking. He didn't say, "Never seek anything else," or, "Don't have ambition." He simply commanded, "Seek first the kingdom of God."

This morning we have the opportunity to seek first. Each week this time of offering provides us the chance to go after God's kingdom with our giving. It's very significant in our spiritual journey because it creates space for Him to work.

Our ushers will now come forward and pass the plates/buckets down the aisle. We would love for you to participate—either during this time of giving right now, or online at some point this week. Let's seek God first today in our finances!

## 43. KIDS

This Giving Talk is going to take a little advance planning, but trust me...it's worth it.

We are about to enter into a time of worship through giving financially. People have many different feelings about this time (and understandably so). Some claim, "The church just wants my money." For some of you, we're well aware that other pastors or TV evangelists may have ruined your views about money and the church.

On the other hand, many of you—if you were standing up here—would say, "I love giving to God. It's blessed my life so much." No matter where you are on the spectrum of giving in the church, we're glad you're here. And we're excited about what we get to share with you today.

In The New Testament, Jesus interacts with children many times. In a culture that had very little regard for children, Jesus treated them with respect. In fact, He went so far as to say that the kingdom of God is like them.

So this morning, we're going to do something different during our time of giving. We're going to hear from some of our kids!

*At this point, you have 3 options.*

*1). Invite some kids on stage. Interview them about your church. Ask them what they like about it.*

*2). Capture a video of kids talking about the church. At the end, encourage them to tell the adults in unison, "Thanks for giving!"*

*3). Share a cute letter written by a child, thanking the church for their generosity).*

*Again, this may take some work. But the payoff is powerful, and the adults get a chance to see how the church is helping kids know Jesus.*

Wasn't that awesome? Nothing is more powerful than listening to kids who understand that Jesus loves them. Each week during this time we give, not just so we can keep the lights on and pay the cleaning crew. We give so that each of the 200 kids that show up can grow to love Jesus and His church.

A lot of you already give online. That's awesome! Thanks so much. For the rest of you, we'd like to invite you to jump in and give today as we pass buckets down each row. We accept cash and checks, and we appreciate anything you give. Let's bless our kids—and our children's ministry—today!

## 44. WHY WE DO AN OFFERING EACH WEEK

There's a good chance you haven't taken time in a recent service to answer this question. Well, the time is now. Explain to people WHY you receive an offering each week. It may sound simple to you, but THEY may not know.

Welcome to Cross Church. My name's Batman. I'm one of the pastors here. Today as we enter into our time of worship through giving financially, I want to share with you why we do an offering in our service every week.

There are 3 reasons why we carve out a few minutes to talk about finances, and why we create an opportunity to give back to God.

1. Throughout the Bible, people honored God with their possessions.

The first book of the Bible is Genesis. We see many instances where people gave offerings to God. They took something of value to them and gave it back to Him.

So that's the first reason we give—to credit God as the provider of all that we have. Our tendency is to believe that since we work hard to get paid, we've earned it. While we should certainly work hard and earn payment, everything still belongs to God. As it says in James, "Every good gift comes from above."

2. Giving changes our hearts.

The mission of our church is to create disciples that seek God and serve people. Nothing puts us in that position more than loosening our grip on the stuff that's valuable to us. When we let go of stuff, we make space for God. We trust Him more. And in the midst of that trust, we experience intimacy with Him.

3. Giving fuels the church.

Inside the first church in the book of Acts, we read about believers who brought what they had to the church. The church, in turn, used it to do ministry. These days, a lot of people hesitate to give because they've seen how some churches manage their money. If you're skeptical in that area, we want you to know that we totally get it. In fact, that's why we have a finance team, elders, a board, and an open book policy with our money. We have so many checks and balances to ensure that when you give here, we will handle it well. We want to build your trust as a giver.

Our vision is big, and we need resources to accomplish it. We believe the local church is the hope of the world. Because of that, we use this time to help the church accomplish a lot for His kingdom!

That's why we do an offering each week. Today as we receive it, let's focus on the first reason—to honor God with everything we have. Let's recognize that all good things come from Him. I know many of you already give online. Thank you so much! I'm going to pray, and then we'll receive the offering.

## 45. LONG RANGE PLANNING

The story of the rich, young ruler is one of the most powerful stories Jesus told. That story, found in Matthew 19, provides the back drop for this “mini-sermon” on money. It’s a great way to challenge your people to give.

You may be familiar with the story of The Rich Young Ruler from Matthew 19. If not, I’ll bring you up to speed. Jesus encounters a young man who enjoys the best of life. He’s wealthy and powerful. He has everything. He isn’t a bad guy. In fact, he earnestly seeks to maintain a life of integrity. But he understands that something about his life is incomplete.

So he comes to Jesus and asks, “Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?” Jesus—knowing exactly where the conversation is going—responds by talking about obeying the commandments. More confidently than most of us could answer, the young ruler affirms that he has, in fact, obeyed.

But for all his rule keeping, something was still missing. “All these I have kept,” the young man said. “What do I still lack?”

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.”

The word perfect, in the Greek, is *teleios*. It doesn’t mean not any flaws like we usually think of perfect. A closer definition is complete—without lack, having reached fulfillment.

I had a thought about this rich young man—what he lacked was long-term planning and short-term direction. Both shortcomings could be addressed by letting go of possessions and latching on to Jesus. The man had treasure on

earth, but none in heaven. He had plans, but those plans didn’t fall under the authority of Christ.

As the story goes, the young man went away sad, because he had great wealth.

Apparently, he was unwilling to let go of today in order to invest in tomorrow. His stock wasn’t in eternity. His treasures weren’t in heaven. And he couldn’t live under Christ’s authority while he held so tightly to his wealth.

Let that not be true of us. Rather, let us express a kingdom generosity as we present our gifts to the Lord this morning. My prayer is that God will help us be complete as we give.

Let’s pray and then we will pass the buckets down the aisles and receive our offering.



## 46. GUILTY GIVING

Asking people to give isn't about wanting something FROM people. It's about wanting something FOR people. Use this simple Giving Talk to free people from guilt, and help them give through grace.

Good morning. I'm pastor John Deere. I'd like to thank you so much for being here this morning. Each week we take a few minutes and worship God through our giving and generosity. While our volunteers prepare to receive our offering, I want to share a quick thought with you about giving.

Giving is never about guilt.

In the past, churches have done an excellent job of guiltning people into giving. I want you to know that this church will never be about that! Here's why: guilt makes people bitter, not better.

We want something for you, not something from you. We want you to experience the life that Jesus promised in John 10:10, "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."

We refuse to motivate through guilt. Instead, we want to focus on God's grace. The reason we give isn't to keep God from getting mad at us. It's because we're so thankful for what He has done for us. Jesus laid His life down on the cross so that we can experience life.

Let's give out of gratitude today. Let's give out of an understanding of God's grace. Let's give out of the overflow of that grace in our lives. And let's give so that we may have life to the full!

## 47. STUDENTS MATTER

Money isn't just about finances. It's about ministry. We want you to have more money for ministry, and one of the most important ministries in any church is the family ministry. This Giving Talk script can really help connect the dots for people.

Welcome to Cross Church. My name's Captain Crunch. I'm one of the pastors here. I'm really excited about today's service.

Each week we take a few minutes to give financially to God through this church. I know a lot of you already give online. Many of you have set up recurring gifts through [www.crosschurch.com/give](http://www.crosschurch.com/give). We can't say thank you enough!

This past week I heard something incredible. Our student ministry is now reaching 75 students! I'm excited that we have an opportunity to influence teenagers for Jesus through this local church.

I don't know if you know this or not, but \_\_\_\_\_% of our budget is committed to family ministries. We believe that kids and students really, really matter!

Why am I telling you this? Because we're going to do something different today in our time of giving.

Here's what I'd like to challenge each of you to do: pray specifically that the resources we're investing in our student ministry will make a huge difference.

You may or may not know a student in our church. If you do, will you take a moment and pray for their development in Christ? You may know a student that has decided not be involved in church. Maybe he or she is making bad decisions. Pray for them to find peace through a

relationship with Christ. Pray that another student will reach out to them and help guide them to the right place.

I want us to pray for them, but I also want us to remember why we give. We don't just give to keep the lights on. We give so that we can provide ministries that will help students know Christ!

Ushers please come forward. Let's spend a few minutes praying for our students, and then we'll receive the offering.

## 48. TRAINING WHEELS

Bring a bike onto the stage as you set up the offering and show people how giving a little bit is like the training wheels on a bike.

How many of you remember your first bike? Was it a banana seat bike? Did it have tassels hanging from the handle bars? Did you have an overprotective father who installed a 10-foot orange flag? Did it have training wheels?

I learned how to ride a bike with the assistance of training wheels. Amazing little things you attach to the rear wheels that help you balance. You learn how to ride a bike, and as you get better, you remove the training wheels.

When it comes to generosity, I think the Bible talks about training wheels. In the Old Testament, there's this idea of the tithe. God's people were to set aside 10% of their income to support the work of the priests. They were to give the tithe first, before they gave. Here's one of the verses in the Bible that talks about the tithe:

Bring the whole tithe (tenth) 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

In the New Testament, Jesus talked a lot about money. But he taught people that they shouldn't treat the law like a checklist, but their obedience should reflect their heart. In different letters to different churches, the Apostle Paul talked about generous giving.

I think the tithe is the training wheels of generosity. It's how we learn to be generous, but it's not

the end. It's the starting point, not the finish line.

A kid riding a bike with training wheels is okay, but an adult...now that's a different story. My hope for you is that you would give generously, out of faith and love. A tithe is a great thing, but it's a starting point for generosity.

I want to invite the ushers to come forward and get into position because we're about to receive an offering. This is a time where you can worship God by giving your tithe, or your offerings.

Let's pray, and then the ushers will pass the buckets.

## 49. THE GENEROUS VILLAGE

Every little gift does make a difference, as this story illustrates. Stats, Scripture and stories like this are great ways to set up the offering in church.

In just a few minutes, we're going to receive an offering, and you're going to have the opportunity to give to something that's making an eternal difference in this community. Ushers go ahead and get ready for that.

I was reading a history book this week and came across an incredible true story of generosity. Just after World War II in a small French village there was a doctor who served the health needs of every man, woman, and child in the village.

He was about to retire and as his retirement approached, there was lots of talk among the townspeople about how they could express their gratitude and affection. They decided that since no one in the village had much money that each family would bring a pitcher of wine from their own cellar and pour it into a large barrel that had been placed in the village square once a week. When the barrel was full it was to be presented to the doctor as a generous gift of appreciation.

For weeks people were seen emptying their pitchers. Evening came and the presentation was made with lots of cheering and best wishes, and the wine-barrel was taken to the doctor's home where the old man was left with warm memories of the villagers' love.

He decided to sit down before his fire and to enjoy a glass of wine. He drew from the barrel and his first sip was quite a shock. It tasted like water! He sipped again--it was water. He went back to the barrel and drew another glass, thinking there must be some sort of problem or mistake. Even-

tually he opened the barrel to find out that he was right...the entire barrel was full of water. The doctor called the Mayor and the Mayor convened the Assemblymen. It wasn't long until the sad truth was figured out: everyone in the village had reasoned, "My little pitcher of wine really doesn't matter and won't be missed. I have so little for myself. Someone wealthier will take care of it. I'll just pour in some water and it won't change the taste of all that wine."

As we receive the offering, think about that. You might think that you don't have enough to give or that you can't possibly make a difference. You don't feel like you have so you don't give.

But God promises to meet our needs if we are faithful and obedient to give to Him even when doesn't make sense! God never promises us that it will make sense...only that He is faithful as we are obedient.

Will you give even when it doesn't make sense? Or will you just keep pouring pitchers of water into the wine barrel? Today is your opportunity to begin the journey of obediently giving.

Let's pray and then the ushers will pass the buckets.

## 50. THANKSGIVING

Thanksgiving is an American holiday. We're supposed to take time to be thankful, but mostly, we eat and watch football.

My name is David and I'm one of the pastors here. In just a few moments, we're going to continue worship by receiving an offering. If you haven't had a chance to prepare your tithe and offering, I want to invite you to do that now. For those of you who have already given online or through automated giving, I want to say thank you for your generosity.

Before we receive the offering, I wanted to take a second to remind you of the first "Thanksgiving." Most people relate thanksgiving to turkey, dressing, cranberry sauce (It only counts if it still has the markings from the can), and the Detroit Lions losing another NFL game.

However, Thanksgiving's origin was completely different. Although it was declared a national holiday by Abraham Lincoln in 1863, most attribute the first Thanksgiving to 1621. A year before, 102 English arrived in Plymouth Rock. Their first winter was brutal. Only 46 of the original 102 survived it. With help from 91 Native Americans, the harvest from the next year was bountiful.

So, the Pilgrims decided to celebrate their thanks with a three-day celebration. At this celebration, they gathered everything and brought their best fowl called turkey and a traditional dish called pumpkin pie for everyone to enjoy.

They understood a great principle of being grateful. When a person is grateful for what God and others have provided, they share. Those first pilgrims knew that without the assistance of the

Native Americans, they would not have survived it, and so they offered their best to them in celebration. Each week, we have an opportunity to do the same in worship as we receive our offering. In our offering, we return a portion of our resources to God, and as we do, we recognize that our resources wouldn't be ours without the grace/generosity.

This morning, I want to challenge you to bring your best to God. Let's pray!

## 51. FATHERS DAY

Here's a Father's Day themed Giving Talk you can use on....Father's Day!

I don't know what you think about when you think about "real" men. Maybe you're picturing a dude that's shaving with a chainsaw. Or a guy that builds a motorcycle. Maybe it's a guy who has 15 different shotguns, who wakes up at 4 in the morning to go sit in a tree-fort in silence to wait for Bambi to come strolling by. Maybe it's a guy that treats women with respect. Or a guy that spends time with his children.

Some people say real men never cry. Some people say real men are secure enough to cry. Some say real men don't do the dishes. Women say it's sexy when their man does the dishes. Some say real men drive Ford trucks. Heretics say that real men drive Chevys.

There's all kinds of guys. There are guys that express their masculinity by going fishing, and others that know how to defragment a hard drive. Even the Bible describes different kind of guys – you've got Sampson the long-haired, body-building guy who took out a whole Philistine brigade, and David, the shepherd musician who was called a man after God's own heart.

But here's a common denominator: Real men know what really matters. They act in faith, fight for their woman, and lead their families. It's not about testosterone or personality; it's about decisions and leadership.

Titus 2:6 says that real men "set an example by doing what is good."

James 1:27 says that true religion and the kind of

religion that God loves is to care for the widows and to keep yourself from being corrupted from the world. I don't think it's coincidence that God says that real religion...real faith... involves helping other people. And I think real men understand that masculinity isn't pretending to be stronger than everyone else, that it's helping those who need help.

When you give – and when you lead your family to be generous, you're acting like a real man, whose heart is in step with God's heart for the hurting. You have an opportunity to do that right here at church. When you give, we use that money to serve our community, to tell people about the grace and Goodness of God, and to make a difference in the world.

Go ahead and hunt, fish, ride Harleys, set up your HDTV or build a deck. But don't neglect the important things. Love your family. Lead your family. And help those who need help.

Let's pray, and then we will receive the offering.

## 52. VALENTINES DAY

Love it or hate it, Valentines Day is a cultural phenomenon. And when you consider just how much money is spent, you'll quickly realize it's an expensive cultural phenomenon. Use some of these stats to set up the time of giving in your church.

Hi, I'm Joe Smith, one of the pastors here at Cross Church. In just a few moments we're going to continue in worship by receiving an offering. If you haven't had an opportunity to prepare your gift for that offering, I want to invite you prepare that gift now. I also want to thank those of you who have already given online or through automated giving. Thank you for your consistency and your generosity.

In just two days, the world will celebrate a made-up holiday. It choose the phrase made-up instead of man-made because it was clearly made-up by women! That day, of course, is Valentine's Day.

Did you know that last year \$12.2 billion were spent on chocolate, which didn't include the \$7.1 Billion spent on non-chocolate candy. I'm guessing it's those nasty-tasting hearts with messages on them. In 2009, \$379 M was spent on flowers for Valentine's Day. \$3.5 Billion were spent on jewelry last year. One survey suggested that the average person spends \$116.21 on gifts for Valentine's Day. Celebrating romance and love is expensive, and it's clear that people don't mind expressing their love through gifts.

Each week we have an opportunity to express our love to God through gifts. We offer God gifts of singing and gifts of service. We also have the opportunity to express our love for God through monetary gifts.

I thought it'd be interesting to see if we expressed our love to God with the same monetary aver-

age that we express our love for someone else. Based on our average worship, each week we'd have an average offering of \$40,600 (to calculate this amount, multiply your average worship attendance by \$116.21). I'm not sure what it says about our love for God, but our average offering is approximately \$11,500 (substitute your own average offering here). An offering isn't the only way to express our love of God, but it's definitely a way.

Today, I want to invite you to express your love to God through giving! Let's pray.

## 53. EASTER

Love it or hate it, Valentines Day is a cultural phenomenon. And when you consider just how much money is spent, you'll quickly realize it's an expensive cultural phenomenon. Use some of these stats to set up the time of giving in your church.

This weekend, we're celebrating Easter, a celebration of Christ's resurrection and victory over death. In just a few minutes, we're going to receive our Easter offering – this is a time where you have the opportunity to support the mission and vision of this church. I want to invite you to prepare for the offering, and invite our ushers to go ahead and get in place.

Let me share this passage of Scripture with you before we give. It's from the book of Colossians.

*The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross. – Colossians 1:15-20*

In those verses, Paul talks about how the resurrection shows that Jesus has power over everything.

He says that Jesus is before all things, and that his death on the cross brought peace to us. When I think about the resurrection, it reminds me that

Jesus really does have power over the things that can control us or cause us fear. Jesus has authority over death itself.

Jesus also has authority over things like your job, your family, and your finances. The same Jesus that could not be ruled by death is big enough to intervene in your life's problems. If Jesus could rise from the grave, then he's powerful enough to help you through your financial troubles.

Giving involves faith, and it's a trust that God is in control. It's faith that the same God who has authority over the grave takes care of you. So I want to encourage you to give in faith, trusting God, and believing that He's in control of everything. Just like Paul said, "He holds all things together."

Let's pray.



## 54. INDEPENDENCE DAY

If you live in the United States, you probably love the 4th of July. We grill out and blow stuff up. And celebrate our nation's founding. Here's a firework themed Giving Talk you can use to set up the offering.

I want to invite our ushers to come forward as we get ready to participate in a time of giving. You guys can go ahead and do whatever you need to do to get ready as well.

This weekend, our nation is going to celebrate Independence Day. That means Will Smith alien movies replaying on TV, and we get to blow stuff up. I love American holidays...Easter we hunt for eggs, Thanksgiving we watch the Detroit lions lose, and on the 4th of July we blow things up. This holiday is a fun celebration of a serious moment though.

As we get ready to receive the offering, I want to read some words from our first president, written when before he was President. On December 9, 1775, most of the continental army was up for re-enlistment and Washington, along with Congress were afraid that many people would head home. The British army was the most powerful in the world, and the American army wasn't much to begin with. So Washington wrote these words: Your exertions in the cause of freedom, guided by wisdom and animated by zeal and courage, have gained you the love and confidence of your grateful countrymen; and they look to you, who are experienced veterans, and trust that you still be the guardians of America.

Although your private concerns may call for your assistance at home, yet the voice of your country is still louder, and it is painful to heroic minds to quit the field when liberty calls.

Never was a cause more important or glorious than that which you are engaged in; not only your wives, your children and distant posterity, but humanity at large, the world of mankind, are interested in it; for if tyranny should prevail in this great country, we may expect liberty will expire throughout the world.

General George Washington gave many more speeches like this to rally the troops and push our nation forward. A few months later, America would officially declare her independence. A little more than six years later, the battle for Independence would be complete.

Washington believed that the cause was worth fighting for. At Cross Church, we also have an important cause. You might not think of our mission with the same passion as George Washington thought about his country, but I propose that our mission is even more important. What we're doing here really does have eternal consequences.

This mission is worthy of our time, energy and money. When you give, you're not giving to keep the lights on or just pay the bills...you're funding a mission of eternal importance.

Let's pray, and then we'll participate in the time of giving.