

Giving / Building / How we are going to do this

My heart in Finances, our Building, and our Family

I want to be clear...it does not matter where we gather. We are capable of being who He has called us to be in any situation.

I would also say that I believe the Lord is very involved in the *Where* aspect of gathering. We are in this building because He asked me to trust Him and put Vintage here.

What we face now is a growth problem, and it is real. Our options are not easy. But I can say with the same certainty, He is inviting us into a different direction than this space.

So, I want to address a topic that is in front of us: Raising Money in the church...

Q's:

Is there a biblical model?

I believe there is.

Is there a more modern approach?

There is, but I do not believe we are to superimpose what is modern and works over what is Scriptural.

What is at stake in this process?

Vision.
Future.
Calling.

All of these are at stake if we fail to keep the right focus. That focus is simple: the Lord is doing something beautiful with our gatherings and in our culture. He is doing something beautiful in our family. There is a culture of the supernatural developing. There is a culture of worship and His Presence developing. There is a hunger for Him like I have never experienced.

These are rare and beautiful. Our task is to move into the direction He is calling us without letting go of these, in fact, we are to see these increase.

Study: A biblical view on giving to a building / place of gathering: Exodus 35/36

v2, v4 -

Now Moses called a meeting of all the people and told them, "You must obey these instructions from the Lord... This is what the Lord has commanded, **Everyone is invited** to bring **these offerings** to the Lord: gold, silver, and bronze; blue, purple...

- a. Moses was declaring obedience to the WAY of God for them. Then, he moves into the invitation to give to the WORK of God. This relationship is important. God is FAR more concerned about our hearts than our giving. When He has our hearts, giving is a natural response.
- b. The key is the invitation. The people of God were invited to give, not forced, and not coerced.
- c. What was to be given was specified. This is key. It tells us there is a precedent for declaring WHAT we need.

v20 -

So all the people **left** Moses and went to their tents **to prepare** their gifts.

- a. The giving had a future time element attached to it. This is important for us to understand. The Lord is not honored by giving that relies on an emotional push in the moment.

- b. The preparation reveals a process that is important in the Kingdom. We are to consider, pray, and think about our giving. It is to be determined **with the Lord**.

-2 Corinthians 9v7, teaches a principle that we must understand.

You must each make up your own mind as to how much you should give. Don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. For God loves (or takes joy in) a person who gives cheerfully.

We are NOT to manipulate or emotionally push giving. We are to invite people to hear God, and respond. That is the giving in which He is pleased and honored.

v21-22 -

If their **hearts were stirred and they desired to do so**, they brought to the Lord their offerings of materials for the Tabernacle and its furnishings...Both men and women came, **all whose hearts were willing**. Some brought to the Lord their offerings of gold—medallions....

I want to focus on these verses for a moment. Look at the words:

*hearts were stirred and they desired
all whose hearts were willing
brought their offerings*

1. Moses led the people to SEEK God about giving an offering.

They were to position themselves before the Lord to HEAR. As they did, the Spirit of God moved and stirred their hearts to give.

This means giving was something the people did because they prayed through it, thought through it, and WANTED to.

2. Nothing in this giving is forced. The giving of an offering is an act of worship.

Yet, so often, we treat giving as just something we do out of obedience.

I want to be clear, there are mandates to give.

The Tithe (a tenth) is to be given faithfully. It is to be brought into the storehouse. The purpose of the tithe is to do the regular, or perpetual work of ministry.

I believe it is right and proper for us to be a people that tithe out of obedience and discipline.

But the giving of this type of offering is not required. **It is invited.**

I would go one step further and say that ALL giving is really an invitation from the Lord into His economic worldview.

There is a reality in the Kingdom that those who are generous grow in prosperity. (Proverbs 11v24)

v29 -

So the people of Israel—every man and woman who wanted to help in the work the Lord had given them through Moses—**brought their offerings to the Lord**.

The response to give was WORSHIP. Period. Giving is always worship. It is not to ever be something different.

In the narrative, there is a bringing of a gift, not a paying of a debt.

36v4 -

But finally the craftsmen left their work to meet with Moses. "We have more than enough materials on hand now to complete the job the Lord has given us to do!"

So Moses gave the command, and this message was sent throughout the camp: "***Bring no more materials! You have already given more than enough.***"

This is the goal of every church project. This is to be the victory cry of leadership.

What I see in this is a summation of a process we are to follow:

1. Leadership hears from the Lord, brings the need and direction to the people of God.
2. The people of God get alone with their God, hear His voice, and open their hearts to be stirred by the Lord.
3. The gifts and offerings are brought by the people, to the Leadership, and they are given as an act of worship. They are sacred.
4. Leadership manages the vision, and has the privilege of responding with the declaration of, "*Great Job, Enough is in.*"
5. The entire Family of God is credited with successfully following the voice of God...not just a portion. It is THEIR victory.