

OUR FAITH CHALLENGE
General Ministry Fund - 2008

With the completion of our church's Building Project, we have now assumed a very significant mortgage payment into our General Ministry Fund Budget. The projected final cost of our Building Project will not exceed \$6.5 million with a final mortgage balance (at the conclusion of our 3-year Sacrificial Giving Emphasis in March 2009) of approximately \$2.5 million, resulting in an annual mortgage payment in 2008 of approximately \$200,000.

TOTAL GIVING - Total annual giving to Our Savior's has increased significantly the last five years during our Building Project from an average of \$884,000 for 1999-2002 to \$1,289,000 for 2003-2007—a 45% increase!

GIVING TO THE GENERAL MINISTRY FUND - However, as people have been giving so significantly to our Building Fund the past five years, the portion of the total giving that people have designated to our General Ministry Fund has decreased dramatically—from a high of \$904,000 in 2002 to \$658,000 in 2007.

REDUCING MINISTRY EXPENSES - To compensate for this drop in General Ministry Fund giving during the past five years, we have reduced our annual General Ministry Fund expenses by significantly reducing staff and cutting back on other ministry expenses. This explains a drop in our General Ministry Fund expenses from our high in 2002 of \$878,000 to our current budget of \$670,000.

THE FAITH CHALLENGE WE FACE - With us now assuming our significant mortgage payment of \$200,000 into our General Ministry Fund Budget, our new total General Ministry Fund Budget expenses are nearly back to the pre-building days—\$870,000 for 2008. This means that in 2008 we need a 35% increase in our General Ministry Fund giving to fully fund our ongoing ministry.

THE SOLUTION - The need of the hour is for each of us to prayerfully seek God and, by faith, to increase our giving to the General Ministry Fund. The best long-term solution is to reduce the cost of our mortgage through the fulfilling of our Building Fund pledges. For those of us who have fulfilled these pledges, it is crucial that we continue to do what God has taught us to do in recent years—give sacrificially—and that we redirect our giving back into the General Ministry Fund. Only in this way will we be able to maintain our current level of ministry staff and ministry activities. Please pray about what God would have you do—we can trust Him that He will honor such steps of faith!

TAKING THE “TRUST TEST”
How to Pass God's Test With Flying Colors

March 9, 2008

SV203

INTRODUCTION

In Your Bible:
Psalm 91

T _____

Psalm 139:23,24

Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

R _____

Revelation 5:13

Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing: “To Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!”

Deuteronomy 8:17-18

You may say to yourself, “My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.” 18 But remember the LORD your God, for it is He who gives you the ability to produce wealth...

Matthew 6:11

Give us this day our daily bread...

U _____

1. Who owns everything I have? _____ *Does!*
2. What am I to give back to God?
The _____ and the _____ Portion!
3. Why am I to give?
Because You Can't _____ God!
4. How am I to give? _____!
5. When am I to give? _____!

S _____

Luke 16:10

Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much.

John Maxwell:

"If only I had more...I would give more." How often we've all said that. But what did Jesus mean? He meant this: "If you aren't giving sacrificially with what you have now, you won't give sacrificially when you have more." Why? Because there is a spiritual principle at work in our lives. That principle has shown time and time again that it is not how much we have of the world that dictates our generosity toward God, but how much God has of us.

Jeremiah 17:5-8

This is what the Lord says: "Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who depends on flesh for his strength and whose heart turns away from the Lord. 6 He will be like a bush in the wastelands; he will not see prosperity when it comes. He will dwell in the parched places of the desert, in a salt land where no one lives. 7 But blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in Him. 8 He will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit."

T _____

1. He will _____ for us!

Malachi 3:10

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

2. He will _____ us!

Malachi 3:11

"I will **prevent pests from devouring** your crops, and **the vines in your fields will not cast their fruit,**" says the LORD Almighty.

3. He will _____ Himself through us!

Malachi 3:10

"Then **all the nations** will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land," says the LORD Almighty.

CONCLUSION