

Bible Principles for Christian Giving: Living the Generous Life

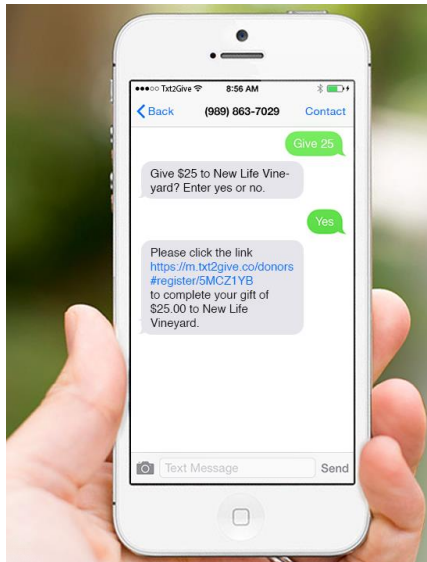
1. ***It's a matter of the heart*** – It starts and ends with that. *“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”* (Matthew 6:21). If we want to truly know where our heart is take a prayerful and careful look at where we spend our time, talent and money. Regardless of what we say or even believe, this will reveal the truth. The only thing Jesus spoke about more than money was love, because how we spend our money reveals our hearts.
2. ***It's all His***. *“...you are not your own, you were bought with a price. Therefore honor God with your body.”* (1 Corinthians 6:20). We ourselves, and everything we “own” are actually His (e.g. Psalm 24:1). He has made us stewards and as such we will give an account for how we managed that which he entrusted to us for his purposes.
3. ***It's a test***. Money promises to give us with the things we are to look for from God, provision, protection, power, and pleasure. Jesus said we can't serve both God and money (Matthew 6:24). By giving we break the grip that money can hold over us. *God doesn't need our money, but we need to give it.*
4. ***It's in the book***:
 - a. Over thirty times in the scriptures (e.g. Exodus 23:19) God commands us to give him the first and best of all we have. By giving the first and the best we demonstrate our trust in God to provide for us.
 - b. Nowhere in the Bible is an amount less than 10% (tithe) specified, though there are many instances where more is. In Malachi 3:6-15 God charged his people with robbing him for failing to bring in their tithe. In verse 11 he promises to, “pour open the floodgates of heaven” in response to their obedience.
 - c. While Jesus indeed “fulfilled the law”, he consistently across the board raised the bar and not lowered it. Consider the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5-7.
 - d. In the New Testament we are instructed and implored as follows: *“⁵So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to visit you in advance and finish the arrangements for the generous gift you had promised. Then it will be ready as a generous gift, not as one grudgingly given. ⁶Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. ⁷Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”* (2 Corinthians 9). Believers are applauded for their sacrificial giving. *“¹And now, brothers, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. ²Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. ³For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability.”* (2 Corinthians 8). Further we are commanded to, *“Seek first the Kingdom of God...”* (Matthew 6:33).

These principles should be reflected in our giving to the church. A believer who says “Amen!” to this and gives just a few dollars each week or tiny percentage of their income to the church is schizophrenic!

Finally a word about the, “What abouts?”. Frequently discussions on tithing drift to subjects like gross vs. net income, fringe benefits, missionaries, para-church ministries, helping individuals directly, etc. Sincere believers can come to different conclusions on these matters. We are happy to discuss them with you, but we have no desire to get into petty arguments. Sometimes people pursue these arguments simply to avoid giving (e.g. when was the last time you heard someone arguing to give *more* than 10%?). We live what we preach and teach. Your pastoral staff and most leaders tithe to this church (and support missionaries, and support para-church ministries, and help people directly, etc.). ***Remember in the end it's a matter of the heart. In conclusion we urge you to seriously consider and employ the principles outlined above and your giving will be pleasing to the Lord, bring him glory, and bring blessing to your life.***

How to Give

1. We have a variety of methods to assist you in giving at the Vineyard.
2. For checks and cash we offer the traditional giving envelopes in the chair backs and as a boxed set at the information center. Help yourself! Envelopes are a good way to remind yourself to be regular in your giving.
3. We also offer the convenience of online giving through our website (<http://midlandvineyard.com/vineyardgiving/>)
4. We even offer text to give – simply text the word “give” to 989-863-7029 and you’ll be guided through a short series of prompts. If you elect to save your information subsequent gifts can be made in a matter of seconds. Truly it’s that easy.



GIVE VIA TEXT MESSAGE

- 1 Text "**Give 25**" or **any other amount** to:
(989) 863-7029
- 2 Follow the prompts
- 3 Register your credit or debit card
(first time only)

5. The most cost effective way to give a set amount at specific intervals (e.g. monthly, bi-month, etc.) is through Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT). EFT's cost about 25 cents per transaction whereas methods involving a credit or debit card cost about 3%. The form follows on the next page. Return it to pastor Dave.

Direct Answers To Questions About Electronic Payment

Q. What is electronic giving?

A. Electronic giving is a direct debit program whereby your contribution is debited automatically from your checking or savings account.

Q. What are the advantages of electronic giving?

A. It makes it easy to fulfill stewardship commitments, even if you can't attend church. You never have to bring cash or checks to church. You can also help the church save money and improve its budget!

Q. How is my contribution automatically deducted from my account?

A. Once you complete and sign the authorization form below and return it to the church, the contribution amount you specify will automatically be transferred from your bank account to the church's bank account.

Q. When will my contribution be deducted from my account?

A. Your electronic contribution will be debited on the date you specify on the authorization form below.

Q. If I do not write checks, how do I keep my checkbook balance straight?

A. Since your contribution is made at a pre-established time, you simply record it in your check register on the appropriate date.

Q. Without a canceled check, how can I prove I made my contribution?

A. Your bank statement gives you an itemized list of electronic transactions. It is your proof of contributing.

Q. What if I change bank accounts?

A. Notify the church and we will give you a new authorization form to complete.

Q. Is electronic giving risky?

A. It's less risky than writing checks or bringing cash to church. Electronic contributions cannot be lost, stolen or destroyed and have an extremely high rate of accuracy.

Q. How much does electronic giving cost?

A. It costs you nothing, but if you would like to help the church cover administrative costs for electronic giving, keep in mind it costs us \$0.25 per transaction.

Q. What if I try electronic giving and don't like it?

A. You can cancel your authorization by notifying the church at any time.

Q. How do I sign up for electronic giving?

A. Complete and sign the authorization form below and return it to the church along with a voided check or savings deposit slip.

New Life Vineyard Church

ES5378

AUTHORIZATION AGREEMENT FOR AUTOMATIC WITHDRAWAL OF FUNDS

Envelope #: _____
(leave blank if not applicable)

Name on Bank Account (please print) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

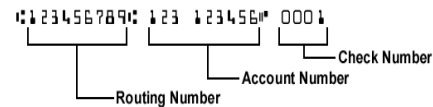
Please debit my ongoing contribution from my (check one):

- ☐ Checking Account – **attach a voided check over the Q & A section above**
- ☐ Savings Account – **contact your financial institution for the appropriate Routing Number**

Routing Number: _____

Valid Routing # must start with 0, 1, 2, or 3

Account Number: _____



CONTRIBUTION INFORMATION (Please indicate your contribution amount and frequency):

- \$ _____
- ☐ Weekly - Debited on Mondays
- ☐ Semimonthly - Debited on the 1st and the 15th
- ☐ Monthly - Debited on the 1st or the 15th (please circle one)

Please make my ongoing contribution effective _____ (date of first contribution).

I authorize **New Life Vineyard Church** and **Vanco Services, LLC** to process debit entries from my account according to the contribution information above. I understand that this authorization will remain in effect until I provide reasonable notification of its termination.

Authorized Signature: _____ Date: _____