

**ENOUGH**  
“Enough Generosity”  
March 6, 2016

1. What does God want me to give to make a difference?

*“Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob me. “But you ask, ‘How are we robbing you?’ “In tithes and offerings. You are under a curse—your whole nation—because you are robbing me. 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 there will not be room enough to store it,” says the Lord Almighty.”*  
Malachi 3:8-12 (NIV)

**3 things God expects:**

- For us to give a tithe regularly and offerings occasionally.
- For us to be blessed.

90% with God’s blessing goes further than 100% without his blessing!

- For us to test Him.

2. How does God want me to give to make a difference?

*“Now about the collection for God’s people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made. Then, when I arrive, I will give letters of introduction to the men you approve and send them with your gift to Jerusalem.”*

1 Corinthians 16:1-3 (NIV)

- Scheduled and Systematic (“...on the first day of every week”)
- Universal (“...each one of you”)
- Proportionate (“...in keeping with his income”)

Most Americans are susceptible to Emotional Giving.  
Percentage Giving changes the world.

**Possible Next Steps:**

- Begin giving
- Move from being an Occasional giver to a Percentage giver
- Move from being a Percentage giver to a Tither
- Move from being a Tither to also occasionally giving Offerings

3 Local Churches:

Awaken Church  
PO Box 41303, Norfolk VA 23541  
Pastor: Mike Pumphrey

Reality Church  
2429 Bowland Pkwy #118, Virginia Beach, VA 23454  
Pastor: Daniel Whitworth

Essential Church  
4020 Ware Neck Dr, Virginia Beach, VA 23456  
Pastor: Steve Swisher

**Leadership Tip!**

Talking about money in church can be hard. The world's view of money and the messages we are bombarded with every day often don't square with Jesus' teachings. Be sensitive if your LIFE Group is hesitant to be open about money. At the same time, don't ignore the reality that Jesus talked about money and possessions A LOT. Try and create a safe space that will lead your group to realize that God created and owns everything, and that our willingness to surrender our finances to Him is part of becoming a "better follower of Christ."

**Enough Generosity****STARTER QUESTION:**

**Have you ever been guilted into contributing to a cause, and then wondered later why that happened? How did that make you feel?**

**MAIN IDEA:**

This sermon series has focused on money and resources, but it hasn't been a plea for you to start giving to (or to give even more to) Coastal Community Church. It has been about your relationship with God and His teachings through Jesus Christ. Do you REALLY trust in what Jesus said, and are you willing to make a tangible change in your life as a result? That is what faith looks like.

**Why are so many people hesitant to trust a church leader, charitable group founder, or politician when they ask you to contribute to the cause they represent?**

Chances are your "Spidey Sense" tingles, or the hair on the back of your neck raises up, whenever a somewhat-stranger asks you to give up something that you've worked hard to get. That's understandable, because there are a lot of unscrupulous people in the world who are only out to line their own pockets by picking yours.

But here's the difference when we talk about giving to God's work through the local church. HE DOESN'T NEED YOUR MONEY. Unlike those who desperately beg for your contributions to make their plans come true, the God who created the entire universe has all that is required to accomplish His purposes. What He really wants is a relationship of trust with you.

**(Have someone read this passage out loud):**

**Malachi 3:8-12 (NIV)**

**Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob me. "But you ask, 'How are we robbing you?' "In tithes and offerings. You are under a curse—your whole nation—because you are robbing me. 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 there will not be room enough to store it," says the Lord Almighty.**

Pastor Hank explained in his message that this passage describes three things God expects when it comes to what we've been given. Let's look briefly at those three points:

1. God expects us to give a tithe regularly and offerings occasionally. Those are words that we often hear in church, but not many other places. **What's the difference between a tithe and an offering?**
2. God expects us to be blessed. **What do God's blessings look like?**
3. God expects us to test Him. **Can you describe a time in your life when you have been "put to the test" by someone else? How did you respond to that challenge?**

Once you come around to the idea that God wants you to serve Him through what you've been given, it can be difficult to discern what the next, right steps should be. This New Testament passage offers insights into what we can do today:

### **1 Cor. 16:1-3 (NIV)**

**Now about the collection for God's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made. Then, when I arrive, I will give letters of introduction to the men you approve and send them with your gift to Jerusalem.**

Here are three concepts that can change your approach to giving:

1. Be scheduled and systematic ("*...on the first day of every week...*")
2. Recognize that this challenge is universal ("*...each one of you...*")
3. Understand the concept of proportionality ("*...in keeping with his income...*")

**Which of these concepts is the most difficult for you to accept? Why do you think that is?**

No matter where you are on the "giving spectrum," God can test you and challenge you to trust Him even more. Here are some practical ideas to consider for expanding your faith in God's promises:

- Begin giving if you never have;
- Move from being an occasional giver to a percentage giver;
- Advance from being a percentage giver to a tither;
- and for those of you who already have committed to fully tithe, prayerfully consider moving from being a tither to also occasionally giving over and above your regular tithe to special offerings (when opportunities present themselves)

### **FINAL THOUGHTS:**

There are two ways to live when it comes to our resources. We can see them as **ours**—to use as we please—or we can see them as **God's**—to use as He pleases. God wants to use you to make a difference and he wants to bless you as you trust Him with your finances.

Close in prayer for all who struggle with money and finances, that they may be blessed through the next steps they choose to take.

## **FAMILY FOCUS:**

There's no doubt that giving is biblical. It's important to help children understand that even a small offering can be useful to God. (Remember the small lunch the boy presented Jesus? It fed 5000 men!) Begin this teaching by reading this verse or asking a volunteer to read it aloud.

"Bring you all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in my house, and prove me now herewith, said the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." (Malachi 3:10)

For the teaching, you'll need 10 bananas. (If you plan to serve them as snacks, you'll need one banana for each child for after the lesson.) Place the 10 bananas on a table in your teaching area.

Say, "Look everyone! This is one of my favorite snacks. Who loves bananas?" (Wait for children to respond.) "Well today, we are going to do some pretending. Let's pretend that in a world where bananas are used as money, we just get paid. We got paid a lot—we got ten bananas! Before we can gobble them up, we need to pay for a few things. For instance, we need to pay the rent; we have to have a home to live in. That's 3 bananas! Now we need to buy more food, we can't eat just bananas. That will cost us 2 bananas." (Put the bananas in a bag or somewhere they can't be found.)

"We need to pay for a few more things in 'Banana Land' like our car, that's 2 bananas, clothing, that's 3 bananas... Oh no! We have no more bananas! We didn't even give bananas to the church. Why would the church need our bananas? Because the church feeds the poor and gives clothing to those that need it. They also help families in need during the holidays or whenever a tragedy happens. However, if we don't give any bananas, they won't have any to meet all these needs."

Take all the bananas out of the bag. "Let's start over. The bible says we should give something to the church called the tithe before you give to anyone else. So let's count the bananas. We have ten—first let us give one to the church! Now we can do all the other things we want to do."

Who want's a banana?