



When understood, the basic principles of partnership make the financial support of gospel ministry a blessing and privilege, rather than a weight like taxation or a leverage device to get something from God.

All we possess belongs to God. He has entrusted what He created to the human race for our sustenance, well-being, and comfort (Genesis 1:28).

Giving and generosity originated with God, not with us or Oprah Winfrey! God has given humanity life and His creation. Subsequent to that, He gave His one and only Son for the sins of the world.

Stewardship and financial partnership in the gospel begins with our response to the love of God which is

gratitude. "We love because he first loved us" (1John 4:19). Christian stewardship is not motivated by self-interest or by the demands of biblical law but by our gratitude for a loving, merciful God. We give to God because He first gave to us.

The Church has its gospel ministries supported by both tithes and offerings, even though the Old Testament tithing laws for Israelites are no longer in force.

Instead of giving tithe as an obligation of law, believers now give tithes and offerings in gratitude for God's bountiful and indescribable blessings and in recognition of God's ownership of all things.

Most of the world's economy is now based on a monetary system rather than on agricultural values as in biblical times. Thus, the Church considers a tithe to be a tenth of one's net earnings.



JESUS AND MONEY

Jesus said much about Christian stewardship, money and our material possessions.

- 1. He did not condemn material possessions.** Without hesitation, Jesus attended a great banquet, held in His honor by Levi — an obvious display of Levi's wealth (Luke 5:29).
- 2. Jesus warned against greed in the well-known parable of the rich fool (Luke 12:13-21):** "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions" (v. 15).
- 3. Jesus said our primary concern should be the kingdom of God.** He assured His followers that God would provide for life's needs. "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 you as well" (Matthew 6:31-33).
- 4. Jesus taught that our greatness is not measured by wealth but by our service to others.** "Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant" (Mark 10:43).
- 5. Jesus explained that total Christian stewardship is the complete surrender of ourselves to God.** "Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it" (Matthew 10:39) and "any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:33).
- 6. Jesus recognized and praised those who gave generously.** During a visit with the Master in his home, Zacchaeus declared, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor." Jesus responded, "Today salvation has come to this house" (Luke 19:8,9). When Jesus saw the poor widow put two small copper coins in the temple treasury, He commended her not because she gave a tenth but because "she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on" (21:4).
- 7. Jesus taught that giving material possessions in itself is inadequate to express our gratitude and devotion to God.** He said that although the tithe was required under the law there were other things that were of greater importance. Christian stewardship, in the mind of Christ, means we dedicate to God all we are as people and all we possess. Once we achieve this attitude in our hearts, we give spontaneously.
- 8. The means of financial partnership for Jesus ministry was not tithes but offerings of people that believed in Him and the ministry He was doing.** It is worth noting that this money was in such abundance it required a treasurer to handle it.

THE TEACHING OF PAUL “THE APOSTLE”

Paul gave us the most direct instruction found in the New Testament concerning the financial stewardship of the gospel ministry: *“Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its grapes? Who tends a flock and does not drink of the milk? Do I say this merely from a human point of view? Doesn’t the law say the same thing? For it is written in the Law of Moses: “Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain.” Is it about oxen that God is concerned? Surely he says this for us, doesn’t he? Yes, this was written for us, because when the plowman plows and the thresher threshes, they ought to do so in the hope of sharing in the harvest. If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you?”* (I Corinthians 9:7-11)

The Christian's support of the gospel missions ministry should stem from gratitude for God's grace, received through the preaching and teaching of the gospel. Support of the church's ministry is not an option. Paul emphasized the validity of this truth in his writing to Timothy: "The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, *'Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain,'* and *and*

It is necessary to point out that our generosity begins with the tithe to the local church. In addition to this believers can and should be encouraged to participate in giving towards the gospel.

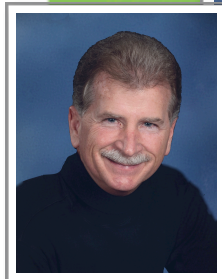
There is certainly more to the Mission than the space and time would permit us in these few letters. We have however discovered the some of the M&M's of our Mission!

- The **Mandate** of our **mission** is to entire world, every tribe, tongue and kindred.
 - Every believer is **member** of the Body of Christ and therefore has a **measure** of the **mission**, as a **missionary** Christian or a Christian Missionary.
 - The **message** of our Mission is the Gospel and is unchanging.
 - The **method** of accomplishing the Mission will vary depending on the culture and location of the specific Mission.
 - The **money** and the **means** to go are supplied by those who remain but participate through partnership.
- 



I have never met a generous Christian who was angry, bitter, and critical. I have observed that those who are generous towards their Pastor and other ministries seem to thrive and grow, having a positive influence in their communities.

19 *"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Matthew 6:18,19)*



Over the past 27 years, Steve and Cindy Shoop have invested their lives in ministering the Gospel of Jesus as missionaries. Their passion for helping people has provided them with the opportunity to serve in a variety of ministry positions, as well as the privilege of living in three different countries in Africa.

Today, Steve and Cindy reside in the state of Ohio after living 25 years in southern Africa. Steve continues to express his gift in ministry both in the United States and the nations of the world. Steve has a passion in developing leaders who are established in God's love, grace and peace that comes through the righteousness of faith. GTI's vision is found in their ministry slogan, "Training for Life, Training for Ministry". GTI exists to empower leaders by training them in doctrine that is solidly based in gospel truths combined with practical ministry experience.