

Faith Promise Missions Giving: A Partnership and Step of Faith

My reading of the Scriptures long ago brought me to the conclusion that the "tithe" (1/10 of one's income) belongs to the Lord. Before the Law, Abraham and Jacob acknowledged the tithe as their duty to God [Genesis 28:22 - "Of all that Thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto Thee"]. In Leviticus 27:30 we read, "The tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's" (Lev. 27:30). King Solomon taught his sons, "Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase" (Prov. 3:9).

The Biblical model for supporting the ministers and ministries of the New Testament Church is stated in 1 Corinthians 9:13-14 - "Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? And they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar [sacrifices that had been brought to the altar]? **14 Even so [following that same model] hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.**" The subject of this article is not a defense of tithing, but an exhortation for Christians to weigh the privilege of investing in the Great Commission over and above tithes and offerings in what we refer to as "**Faith Promise Missions Giving.**"

By definition, "Faith Promise Missions" is the New Testament model for advancing the Great Commission through the ministry of the local church, whereby individual members give systematically an amount God lays on their heart over and above their regular tithes and offerings.

"Faith Promise Giving" is an **act of faith** on the part of the believer whose sacrificial giving enables the church to support and send out missionaries around the world (Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:19-20). Giving to missions above tithes and offerings is a covenant, a commitment, a believer prayerfully makes between himself and the Lord (Psalm 76:11; Ecclesiastes 5:4-5).

Supporting missionaries through "Faith Promise Giving" is Scriptural, Supernatural, and Systematic. *Faith Promise Giving* is Scriptural because it is the pattern for supporting missions and missionaries in the New Testament. The Apostle Paul described giving to missions as a "Grace" - communicating God's "Grace" in your life to others in need (2 Corinthians 8). Paul challenged believers to excel in giving: "Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence [zeal], and in your love to us, see that ye abound [excel] in this grace [giving] also" (2 Corinthians 8:7). There is no greater investment than the prayerful support of those who have dedicated their lives to preaching the Gospel.

Faith Promise Giving is Supernatural - an act of Faith. Paul described the extraordinary faith giving of the Macedonian believers in these words: "For to their power [ability to give], I bear record, yea, and beyond their power [ability] they were willing of themselves [of their own accord]" (2 Corinthians 8:3). God blesses giving above the tithe and offerings. "But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully" (2 Corinthians 9:6). The Bible teaches that Faith Promise Giving is a private matter [a promise between you and God; not a pledge]. Paul instructs believers, "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity [distress or coercion]: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7).

Someone might ask, "Why ask the membership to fill out *Faith Promise Cards*?" The simple answer is, the budget for missions is set based

on the total amount promised on Faith Promise Cards. Your commitment will be acknowledged; however, your commitment is between you and the Lord.

Finally, *Faith Promise Giving* is Systematic. The church cannot maintain its commitment to support missionaries without a systematic program of giving. Paul urged the church to "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store [put aside an amount], as God hath prospered him... ¹perform [finish] the doing of it [the giving that had been promised]; that as there was a readiness [enthusiastic desire] to will, so there may be a performance [completion] also out of that which ye have [means and possessions]" (2 Corinthians 8:2, 11).

Why is Faith Promise Giving important? It helps the local church to fulfill the Great Commission, guarantees the needs of the church will be supplied (Philippians 4:17-19), grows a believer's faith (2 Thessalonians 1:3), and embraces God's promises (2 Corinthians 9:6).

So, how much is a soul worth? You and I will weigh that decision as we reconsider our vision for missions during our Missions Conference. I encourage you to make an honest assessment of where you spend discretionary dollars and what you can give to support those who are willing to take the Gospel to the nations.

Yours for souls,

Pastor Travis D. Smith
Senior Pastor

"Give, and it shall be given unto you;
good measure, pressed down,
and shaken together, and running over,
shall men give into your bosom.
For with the same measure
that ye mete withal
it shall be measured to you again."

Luke 6:38

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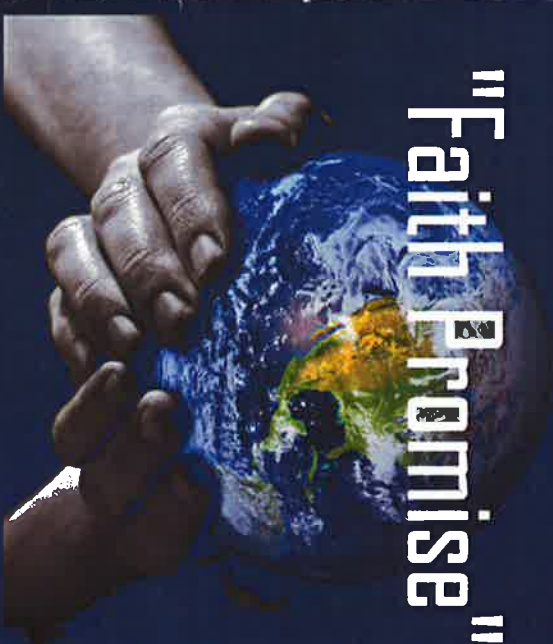
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6201 Ehrlich Road, Tampa, FL 33625 - 813-884-8250
Dr. Travis D. Smith, Sr. Pastor - www.hillsdalebaptist.org