

# BUILDING A CULTURE OF GENEROSITY



Generosity continues to grow in the United States. Generosity grew even in the pandemic with an upsurge in giving. However, the joy of generosity is a faith practice the church often fails to cultivate. Another study found that the median Protestant only gave 0.62% of their income to the church.

For most people the reason for this has less to do with their wealth or income and more to do with intentionality and regular systematic giving.

Over the course of a year, \$1 per day comes to a gift of \$365, which for about 35-40% of Americans would be significant growth in their giving to the church. The average Starbucks coffee costs \$2.75. This amounts to over \$1,000 if one is purchased each day of the year.

Regular, systematic giving can help all of us become more generous. We get overwhelmed when we think about larger numbers like \$1,000. However, most of us can find \$2.75 per day. As you think and pray about your generosity this year. Consider how systematic giving may help you become more generous.

Quote from a sister in Christ @ Peace:

***My husband and I both grew up in families that taught us to always remember and help others who were less fortunate than us. So giving a portion of our income, no matter how minimal it was, to our church homes was never something we questioned. Over the decades of our lives together we always tried to increase that percentage of our giving as we were able. I look back on that "mindset" of how we saw that our pledge to the church was our way of giving back to God what he had first given us. The result was that God blessed us with more and more. The more we gave, the more we received. Astonishingly! Not unlike the parable of the mustard seed, our earliest gifts to the church were tiny. But I learned that the mindset of trusting God was an adventure that would never disappoint.***

***Terry Westerman***

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## PLACE GOD FIRST IN YOUR BUDGETING AND SPENDING

The Ten Commandments stress that God must be first in our lives. And Jesus said, “Seek first God’s kingdom and righteousness and all these things shall be yours as well.” (*Matthew 6:33*)

Many experience difficulty giving generously despite the desire and pledge to do so, because they attempt to give from what is left over at the end of the week or month rather than from first fruits, from all they have received.

The simple practice of placing God and The Church first in budgeting and spending has helped many to experience joy in their giving. When you do this you are giving from all that a good and loving God has provided. And you are practicing stewardship, understanding that you are but a temporary trustee of what God has entrusted to you.

