

Stewardship Talk

Good morning. First of all, I want to say what a joy it is to be back at St. Anne's. Thank you for welcoming us back so graciously.

We look forward to being able to worship together again and see everyone in person soon.

My journey with tithing really began before David and I were married or had kids.

I first started tithing when I had my first job out of college and was making an income.

I'd never given before, so it was new to me. I didn't know how I felt about it or if I really wanted to do it... But after a while of attending church, I felt like God was telling me that it was time for me to begin.

So, I picked a small number that I felt comfortable with and that felt right to give to God each month. It ended up being about 1% of my income.

I continued at my church and learning about my faith, and the next year, I decided I could easily move it to 5% of my income, now that I had gotten used to giving and the initial shock of tithing had worn off.

Now, if you're anything like me, we all have things we enjoy doing and make room for spending. Before marriage and kids, mine were traveling and eating at nice restaurants. I made things work so I could spend in these areas. If I could find the money for these areas, I knew that I should find the room for giving back more to God and his church.

And if tithing should stretch me (even make me uncomfortable where I should really feel it), then I knew I needed to give more. So the next year, I doubled it and was at 10%. And I felt it, but I also knew that it had gone where it needed to go so that God's mission in the world could be carried out through my local church.

Now, I've been through different seasons of giving and income, like I'm sure many of you have too. I've had nice jobs with big paychecks, and then I've been a graduate student living on savings. As a couple David and I have pieced together part-time jobs; and we've even been without work.

But as I grew in my faith and tithing journey, it no longer became a question of if I should give or how much. We've committed to tithing 10% or more on whatever income we have.

So now I'm teaching our kids about giving to God. I tell them that it's not even our money, but that everything we have comes from God. He gives to us and he provides us with our opportunities in life, our passions, and our gifting and skills that allows us to earn money. It all comes from God. We give back to him a portion of it out of thanks and out of recognition that we wouldn't have it without him first giving it to us.

I encourage you to be prayerful about what it is that God is calling you to give for this upcoming year. Start where you are and move towards 10%... and beyond.