



THE GIVING TALK

HOW
TWO MINUTES A WEEK
CAN INCREASE GIVING

Welcome to The Giving Talk.

You are about to improve two of the most important minutes in your worship service.

Skilled preachers who are passionate about teaching God's Word spend time praying, reading and studying their sermon.

Musicians listen to songs, practice and rehearse on a weekly basis so they can lead the congregation in a way that honors God.

Neither of these things happen by accident. Since they are important parts of your church service every weekend, someone (or a group of people) spend a great deal of time in preparation.

A good church service requires planning. Since the sermon and the singing happen every week, you want them to be good.

But there's another element that happens in most church services – an element that's very important but often doesn't receive any advance thought.

I'm talking about the offering.

52 times a year, you have the opportunity to connect your people to God's heart for generosity and your church's mission in the community. But effectively connecting the dots requires planning. You **MUST** think about this in advance.

Too many churches tack this on. The worship leader mumbles some words after a song is complete and before you know it, ushers are sending buckets down the aisles. Or maybe the pastor moves into a brief explanation after the sermon, and all of a sudden, deacons are passing the plate.

Both of those scenarios are *typical*.

And both of those scenarios are *bad*.

Just like the preacher should pray, read and study – just like the musicians should be scheduled and rehearsed in advance – someone needs to plan what is going to be said and who is going to say it. You need to think about what's being said in your church service to set up the offering. You need to think about how you're going to prepare people's hearts for generosity. You need to think through what you are asking them to do.

What is a giving talk?

Here's a simple definition.

A giving talk is a short explanation of how the offering works plus a call to action.

It's a 60-second or two-minute talk from a pastor, staff member or volunteer, that sets up the offering, connects the dots for participants, and gets everyone ready for what's coming next.

It's an intentional, planned moment of explanation in your church service.

It's a really important moment that too many churches overlook.

Let's dive in a little deeper and talk about what your giving talk should look like.

Every Giving Talk Must Have:

CLEAR DIRECTION

This isn't a time for spiritual mumbo-jumbo. You need to be clear. And you're probably not as clear as you think you are.

Say something like: "In just a few minutes, we're going to pass buckets down the aisles and you're going to have the opportunity to financially support the mission and vision of this church." That's clear and direct, and lets everyone know what is about to happen.

Don't say: "We're going to have the offering." That's not clear to guests.

Don't say: "This is a time for God's people to bring their tithes and offerings." Those are words that people may not understand.

Don't say: "We invite you to give." Instead, be more specific and say, "Ushers are going to pass buckets down each aisle and you can drop your gift in the bucket."

Your goal here is to be as clear as possible.

A CONNECT THE DOTS MOMENT

Share a statistic, tell a story or read a Scripture passage that emphasizes why giving at your church is important.

Plan out what you're going to say. Do NOT make things up on the spot. Imagine a worship leader trying to make up a worship song on the spot as she is being "led by the spirit."



As a charitable organization, this is your opportunity to tell people WHY they should give. This is your chance to motivate, inspire and educate. You're not asking for people to help pay the bills – you're asking for them to live on mission

Just like you preach on different topics, your giving talks should have different themes. An effective giving talk requires a few minutes of preparation and practice. Don't let someone wing it – make sure they have something important to say.

Stats: Where does a dollar go? How many guests have attended church so far this year? How many children are in a particular environment? How much help have you given your community? How many volunteer hours does it take to execute a weekend service? Stats are a great way to highlight ministry and connect the ministry of the church to the time of giving in the service.

Stories: How has Jesus changed your life? How has your church helped a family? What marriage has been restored? What child has placed their faith in Christ? Who is going public with their faith in baptism? What lives are being changed? People who do not care about statistics often connect with a story.

Scripture: What does the Bible say about giving? What does God say about generosity? What's the difference between a tithe and an offering? What principles are mis-taught? Many people simply don't know what the Bible says about generosity and giving.

A CALL TO ACTION

This is the moment where you tell people exactly what you would like them to do. It's a clear and specific action step.

Say something like: "If you're a guest, you can drop your connection card in the buckets. If you'd like to give, then use the envelope located in your seat back and place your donation in the buckets."

Don't say, "If you're a guest, we don't want you to participate." First of all, that's probably not true. If a millionaire-guest was attending your church, I guarantee that you want them to participate in the offering. Secondly, it's not spiritually compatible. Giving is a spiritual issue, not just a financial one – and you want everyone to live generously. If the offering is about what you want for people, not just want from people, then you DO want first-time-guests to participate. You can put their mind at ease and let them know that participation isn't required, but you don't have to lie and tell them you don't want them to participate.



You need a PERSON to emphasize the offering this week, and they need to PLAN what they are going to say.

Now that you know what a giving talk is, and now that you understand the importance, let's talk about how you plan and schedule this important service element.

Planning the Giving Talk

1. One person needs to OWN the planning. Lots of people can do the giving talk, and others can get involved in scheduling people and choosing topics, but ONE PERSON should be ultimately responsible. If two people are in charge, then nobody is in charge. In most cases, the Lead Pastor or the Worship Pastor should be the point person. It needs to be somebody who knows what's happening during the weekend and has influence and authority over this element.
2. Plan in bulk. Pull your staff or a few key leaders together and plan giving talks six weeks at a time. Use a spreadsheet or a Google document to keep track of who is on deck and what topics you're covering. Don't let the calendar sneak up on you...plan them right now!
3. Every 2-3 weeks, mention online giving in the giving talk. Remember, people give to your church in other ways. Mention this from time to time. Not only will it remind people that they can automate their giving, it will serve as a form of appreciation for those who give digitally.

Who Can Do Giving Talks

1. The pastor. It's certainly appropriate for the senior pastor, lead elder or teaching pastor to do the offering talk. Hopefully, this person has the gift of communication and can explain what's happening with skill and passion. Schedule the lead pastor for the giving talk at least once a month.
2. A staff member. The lead pastor doesn't *always* need to do the giving talk. This is a great opportunity to give other staff members time on stage. Let the children's director, youth pastor, worship leader or small groups pastor do the giving talk. Not only will they do a great job (they may need coaching), but it's good for your church to see other staff members in the spotlight.
3. A volunteer. Schedule a volunteer or another leader from time to time. Volunteers do a great job (they will need coaching, too) explaining the offering. It's a powerful testimony to other attenders. I bet you and your team could come up with a list of ten people who would do a great job with the giving talk.

Executing the Giving Talk



Here are three last tips for executing the giving talk in your church service.

1. Don't tack it on. Think about how important these few minutes are to the life of your church. In most cases, the offering is what funds the rest of the ministry throughout the week. The offering pays the staff and covers the cost of ministry. It's very important to the overall health of your church. Whether you do it before the sermon (works best for emphasis because people aren't tired of hearing someone talk) or after the sermon (works best for giving people the opportunity to turn in connection cards), plan it with purpose. It deserves emphasis!
2. Don't rush it. If your giving talk comes after a worship set, give people a few moments to sit down and situate themselves. Don't rush from the song to a prayer for the offering. Don't rush through the explanation because your sermon went into overtime. Don't let a fast-talker explain this important element. Slow down and take your time. This is important!
3. Turn on the lights. A lot of churches try and create a mood during the worship music, and that's okay. Believe it or not, there are a few people who still write checks, and it's hard to do that in total darkness. Turn up the lights so people can see what's going on.

We've heard story after story from Giving Rocket clients about how making this one simple change has made a huge difference.

If you intentionally plan the time of giving in your services, you'll see better results. And the motivation isn't having more money – it's doing more ministry! When more people connect with giving, the gospel goes further.

ACTION STEPS

1. Decide on one person to OWN this process.
2. Get together with your worship planning team and talk about where the giving talk should happen in your service.
3. Brainstorm a list of ten people who can do the giving talk.
4. Schedule the next six weeks, rotating between stats, stories and Scripture.



SAMPLE GIVING TALK #1 (BASED ON A STAT)

My name is Joey and I'm one of the pastors here at Cross Church. In just a few minutes, we're going to receive an offering, so go ahead and get ready for that. But as we prepare, I want to share something with you.

Right now, there are [57] elementary kids upstairs learning about Jesus. Our staff is using an amazing curriculum. Volunteers have prepared amazing crafts that teach something. We're teaching Bible stories to your children that will lay a foundation for what God can do in their lives. See...we're not babysitting children...we're helping them follow Jesus.

And your giving makes that possible. Because you give, we're able to hire a staff, purchase supplies, have kid-friendly space, purchase curriculum and teach kids about Jesus. I'm so proud to be a part of a church that takes this part of the mission seriously.

So when you give, I want you to understand that there's a whole bunch of children who will one day be thankful. Think about that for a minute. Babies and elementary children may not be able to say thanks now, but later in life, they will be so grateful that they were a part of a church where they learned that Jesus makes a difference.

Maybe you don't have children – but your giving is equipping the next generation to know and follow Jesus. There are future missionaries over there right now, and your generosity is going to impact the future.

So as we worship God through giving, think about the future impact of your generosity. It's making a huge difference. I'm going to pray, and then the ushers are going to pass the buckets down each and every row. You can participate by dropping your gift in one of those buckets. Let's pray that God will bless what's about to be given and that He would use it in a big way...

Note: Scroll through some pictures of children in your church, or your children's ministry environments as you talk about this.



SAMPLE GIVING TALK #2 (BASED ON A STORY)

Every weekend when we gather for this service, we do a few things. We usually sing some songs – which may seem a little strange if you didn't grow up in church. But the Bible says that we should worship God and singing is a great way to do that.

We open up the Bible and talk about knowing and following God during the sermon. We do that because what God says about something is more important than what we think, even me.

And we participate in a time of giving. The Bible says that giving is a way that we worship God, demonstrate our trust in him, and live by faith. So as our ushers come forward and you get ready, let me tell you an interesting story that I read last week.

I read that during the middle ages, churches would sometimes hire mercenaries to fight their battles. Now that would be a little strange today, but it was common practice back then. The church or the priest needed to fight a battle, so they would hire some soldiers to do their dirty work. However, before that mercenary could be sent into battle, the church needed to baptize them. Again, pretty strange and backwards if you think about it.

But these mercenaries would hold their swords out of the water while the rest of their bodies were submerged, so that God would not control their weapons. Isn't that interesting? The person was saying, God...you can do what you want with me, except with my sword...I'm in control of that.

A lot of people approach their faith like that. They want to follow God, only not in this area. And many times, finances is that one area. It's like we're being baptized, but holding our wallet out of the water...like we're saying "God...I'll follow you in all these areas...except when it comes to money."

I think those mercenaries missed something, and I think we miss something when we don't trust God and follow God in ALL the areas of our life. I'm so thankful for people in this church who obey God completely, and give generously and cheerfully. I'm not trying to guilt you into anything, but this is certainly something to think about.

Have you baptized your wallet?

I'm going to say a prayer and then our ushers are going to pass buckets around. If God leads you to participate, I want to encourage you to do so.

Let's pray.



SAMPLE GIVING TALK #3 (BASED ON A SCRIPTURE)

In just a few minutes, we're going to receive an offering, so go ahead and get ready for that. I know some of you have already given online, so I want to thank you for that, but this is a time in our service where people from all walks of life can financially support the mission of the church.

As you're getting ready to give, I want to tell you a story from the Bible. It's from Genesis 12 and it's about a guy named Abraham. Abraham is 75 years old, and has lived in this particular town all his life. He's got a nice life, nice family and he knows everyone in town. He's comfortable!

So God comes to him and says, "Abraham, I want you to leave your hometown, and I want you to travel to this land that I'm going to show you." God didn't even reveal the end destination – He just told Abraham to get moving. The Bible says that THE NEXT DAY, Abraham loaded up and moved. I want to teach you a principle that I see in this story, in fact, I see it all throughout the Bible.

The blessings of God always follow obedience. Let me say that one more time...the blessings of God always follow obedience. In other words, we obey first, then we're blessed.

I know you're thinking..."If God would give me a raise, then I would be generous." But it doesn't work that way. I know you're thinking, "If God would give me some financial blessings, then I would obey the Bible." That's not how it happens.

We obey God, even when it's tough, even when it's hard, even when it makes us uncomfortable. That's how Christianity and faith work.

Abraham went on to become the father of a great nation – the Jewish people. He was famous, blessed and important. God blessed him with a family. In fact, the Bible says that all the people on the earth would be blessed *through* Abraham. But none of that happened until after Abraham obeyed.

One of the big reasons we give is to obey God. We give generously because that's what the Bible teaches. Even if it makes us uncomfortable, we want to be obedient to God. The blessings of God will follow our obedience of God.

So let's pray and ask God to bless this offering, and I'm going to pray that God would bless everyone who obediently gives to His purposes.

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Join Giving Rocket today and increase giving from 11% - 39%. Membership includes:



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