

5 FORGOTTEN INGREDIENTS

IN YOUR CHURCH'S
GIVING MOMENTS





The two minutes before you ask people to give to your church during your services are vitally important financially, both for the future of your church and for your people.

Giving moments are an important part of your church's system for increasing generosity and pushing the mission of your church forward.

If your church is wrestling with how to meet its budget, looking carefully at what you're doing in your giving moments would be a logical place to begin making positive changes.

Too often, church leaders look for a “silver bullet” to increase the culture of generosity at their church when what is actually required is multiple sustained efforts over an extended period of time. Each of these areas contribute to increasing generosity and ultimately create a positive flywheel effect. **If you invest effort during every service to improve your giving moments, over time that will increase the effectiveness of this aspect of your church services.**

If you focus your time and effort on making the most of your giving moments, it will be possible for your people to experience greater levels of generosity, and your church will see increased revenue at the same time.

Further, you can craft giving moments that increase the generosity of your people without resorting to “sleazy-car-salesman” tactics. Communicating clearly during these few moments is incredibly important if we want to increase levels of generosity in our churches.

Over the years, I've had the opportunity to visit many churches, oftentimes working on [church growth](#) or [helping work on a plan to launch a campus](#). However, often when I'm in a church's services or watching it online, it's obvious that the church is leaving revenue on the table based on their giving moments. These moments can be a disregarded part of the service, something that we don't put time, effort, energy, or planning into. It's important that we maximize the potential of these few moments during our services.

It is a sad thing that these moments are not being used to their full potential, because churches are not only suffering from decreased revenue—they're also failing to lead their people into a lifestyle of ever-increasing generosity.

Over the years of my own life, I have benefited deeply from leading an increasingly generous life, and I want to see churches encourage this more with their people. Therefore, what we've done is pulled together five key ingredients that go into giving moments in churches that are often forgotten or disregarded.

DON'T FORGET TO SAY THANK YOU!

Remember what your mom said: "Every time someone gives to you ... say thank you!" *Why don't churches follow Mom's advice?*

Too often when we talk about money at our churches there's anxiety inside us, and we move too quickly through our giving moments. **One of the first things that gets missed is the opportunity to thank people—to slow down and to show appreciation for their generosity to our church.**

Your people have hundreds of other nonprofits and ministries that they could give to, and the fact that they've chosen to give to your church is amazing!

People also tend to repeat things that make them feel good. Taking time to thank your people during your services will generate positive emotions, ultimately encouraging them to repeat their giving.

Slow down and thank people every time you talk about money at your church. There's a bigger discussion we could have here around how to develop a culture of appreciation, but we'll save that for another day.

MAKE SURE YOU GET PERSONAL

When was the last time whoever was speaking about the offering at your church referenced their own giving?

These moments are a logical time to talk about how some of your own giving habits have positively impacted your life. Further, it's a chance to express gratitude for the fact that you get an opportunity to give to your church! You may want to articulate clearly that you have received so much more from giving to the church than you've ever lost from that transaction.

This raises a bigger issue. **The people who are facilitating these giving moments need to be generous people.** Folks can sniff it out if the people who are asking them to give are not being generous themselves.

Consider carefully the people who handle these giving moments to ensure that they're not given this role just because of some other function they have in the church. **Are they generous people?** Are they living out a generous lifestyle at your church? You want the people facilitating the giving moments in your church to be generous themselves. This needs to be a “red line” in the selection process regarding who is leading this portion of your service.

ADD SOME VARIETY

If you can recite your giving moment in your church by heart, then you're doing it wrong.

These moments need to be recrafted every single weekend. Each one needs to be new and fresh, and we need to find ways to be creative.

Also, don't fall back on verbal crutches.

Ensure that you're not just repeating the same lines over and over.

The human mind is literally a pattern recognition machine. This means that your people's brains are looking for patterns that they can predict and will actually shut off to conserve energy for other things if they can. **If you are constantly performing the exact same giving moment, your congregation's brains will simply turn off.**

Add some variety and go out of your way to ensure that people are hearing something different every time you talk during a giving moment.

SLOW DOWN. DON'T RUSH IT.

Can I speak to the musical worship people for a moment? Oftentimes, music people see the offering portion of our services as a distraction from what they're doing, and this is a giant mistake. Thus, they may want to push past this portion of the service or wonder why we do it all together (see my notes above about being generous in point 2).

One of the biggest mistakes that churches make is to speed through this element of their service. **Slow down. Ensure that it is a speed bump.** It should feel like a pattern interrupt in the service.

In other words, these moments shouldn't blend in so well that people don't notice them at all. **They need to be a distinct part of the service.**

If you've ever had a chance to visit a [Hillsong Church Service](#), you'll notice that every single weekend they take 10 minutes in each service to present a teaching on giving, where they open up the scripture and talk through generosity and why it's important for people. I don't think you necessarily need to go that far, but it is important that you catch the spirit of this practice, that the giving moment is a critical piece of your service that should be distinct and set apart. *So slow down—don't rush it.*

IT NEEDS TO BE VISUAL

65% of your congregation are visual learners. [ref] **This means that two-thirds of your people would rather look at a picture, a logo, or an image than listen to you talk!**

Leverage this fact during your giving moments. **Every giving moment every weekend needs a unique image to go along with it.** Show a picture of some of the amazing things going on in your kid's ministry. In the coming months, you could celebrate the good things that are happening to your church online, such as presenting some behind-the-scenes pictures or charts showing the growth in people engaging. At some point in the future, your students will get a chance to go on a trip again, maybe a missions trip or a retreat weekend. Show a picture of the trip and connect the dots for your people, demonstrating that good things happen at your church when they give. It needs to be visual.

Ensure that every single weekend, each giving moment has a different image to drive home the core message of your giving talk.

BONUS ROUND: MAKE SURE YOU WATCH YOUR LANGUAGE

It's amazing when you listen carefully to the words that people use during their giving talks and moments. Sometimes, some of the language we use can undermine everything else we're saying.

For instance, we might let people off the hook by saying, "Hey, please feel no pressure to give." **The reality of the situation is that we, as Christ-followers, believe that people who follow Jesus actually should give.** That is a part of what it means to be a Christian. So don't let people off the hook. You could modify that to something like, "Hey, if you're new here, don't feel under any obligation to give. This part of the service is for people who attend our church regularly, or who are a part of our ministry." What you're then doing is freeing people who are new to the church from pressure while emphasizing that those who attend your church regularly should actually give.

In addition, look for small verbal tics that undermine the message that you're trying to give. One that bugs me is when I hear something like, "In a moment, we're going to *collect our offering* for this service." Obviously, we said this sort of thing all the time when our services were just in person but those gatherings were never a collection service! **People are not paying a tax.** It's our joy to receive people's offerings, and to provide an opportunity for them to give back for the good things that God is doing.

It's amazing how confusing our instructions about giving can be. This has only increased over the last year, as we're wrestling with being both in-person and online. We can now give not only in our services but also through Text to Give or the church website. Make sure that you have precise language around exactly how people can give. Do not hide this from people. **Make it clear.**

ARE YOU LOOKING FOR MORE HELP FOR YOUR GIVING MOMENTS?

We've pulled together five example giving talk scripts with accompanying slides to help you inject some creativity into your giving moments.

These giving moments are just examples. **Don't copy and paste these and put them into your service, but use them as a guide as you craft these moments every weekend at your church.**



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