



God's Financial Plan *for* Southern Baptists

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Every phase of local work in our churches, and every interest of the Kingdom, from the local community out to the ends of the earth, can be adequately supported, and all present debts paid soon, through the simple expedient of the adoption and carrying out of the Scriptural plan of church finances on the part of the Baptist churches of the South.

What is that admirable plan, you inquire? Briefly summarized, it provides that Every member give every week to every cause, in proportion to his ability, through his church. "A beautiful, theoretical ideal, but wholly impracticable," you say?

But would you dare call God's plan impracticable? Of course that ideal can be reached only as a church or individual attains the highest efficiency in service, but is not God entitled to our very best? Another proof that the plan is not impracticable is the fact that a constantly growing number of churches are enlisting from 70 to 95 per cent of their members in this Scriptural method of finances. If a few churches can do this, many can. Not all will succeed in the same degree, of course, but that the finances of the denomination could be transformed in a single year through the adequate instruction of the membership of all the churches on the Scriptural plan of giving, and the enlistment of the members in the support of that plan, through a thorough Every-Member Canvass, no Baptist who has thoroughly studied the question doubts for a moment.

SCRIPTURAL PLAN IS REASONABLE

Note carefully the five main points in this Scriptural plan of finances: 1. Every Member Giving. 2. Weekly Giving. 3. Giving to Every Cause. 4. Giving According to One's Ability. 5. Giving Through the Church Rather Than Through Promiscuous Channels. The plan is simple, straight-forward, reasonable. It involves nothing more than every Christian should count it a privilege to do as an expression of his love for God and His causes.

Every point in this program has back of it the authority of God's Word:

I. EVERY MEMBER GIVING:

Bring an offering and come into his courts.
Ps. 96: 8.

Every man shall give.—Deut. 16: 17.

Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store.—1 Cor. 16: 2.

There is no escaping the fact that it is just as much a Christian's duty to honor the Lord with his substance as it is to read the Bible, pray, attend upon public worship, or support his own family. Nor can one Christian do another's giving for him any more than he can do the other's Bible study, praying, and public worship. "Each one of us shall give an account of himself to God." (Rom. 14: 12.)

II. EVERY MEMBER GIVING EVERY WEEK:

Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store.—1 Cor. 16: 2.

Regularity in giving makes giving easy, promotes the spirit of worship, develops Christian character, aids growth in grace, and, where this plan is generally observed, it enables the churches, mission boards and other Kingdom agencies to carry forward their work from month to month without borrowing the money with which to tide them over what, without the operation of this plan, are the lean financial periods. If the regular weekly plan of giving had not

been the very best the Bible would not have commended it.

Baptists need to stress this plan more and more, for practically all our people have some money the year round, and can be enlisted in regular giving if faithfully instructed and tactfully enlisted in this method. Probably not more than 1,000,000 of our nearly 4,000,000 church members in the South follow this plank in the Bible's financial platform.

III. EVERY MEMBER GIVING TO EVERY CAUSE:

Every cause embraced in the Co-operative Program of Southern Baptists is not only worthy, but has ample Scriptural injunction or example as a basis of existence, and is, therefore, entitled to the support of all Baptists. Read the Scripture passages:

COMMANDING CITY, STATE, HOME AND FOREIGN MISSIONS:

And ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.—Acts 1: 8.

EXAMPLE IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION:

And walking by the sea of Galilee, he saw two brethren, Simon who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you fishers of men.—Matt. 4: 18, 19. Since Christ found it necessary to train all His disciples for service, Baptists need no other example.

APPROVING MINISTERIAL RELIEF:

Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth.—Ps. 71: 9.

Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.—1 Cor. 9: 14.

JUSTIFYING HOSPITALS:

Luke 10: 25-37. (Story of the Good Samaritan.)

AUTHORIZING ORPHANAGES:

Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction and to keep himself unspotted from the world.—Jas. 1: 27.

The easy, logical manner in which Baptists should support all these causes is by means of a liberal subscription, payable weekly, to the Co-operative Program, which represents all the causes. Distribution of funds is made to the several objects on the basis of their respective needs. In no better way can a child of God share in supporting every phase of God's work.

IV. GIVING ACCORDING TO ONE'S ABILITY:

Every man shall give as he is able.—Deut. 16: 17.

For if readiness is there, it is acceptable according as a man hath, and not according to what he hath not. 2 Cor. 8: 12.

Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper.—1 Cor. 16: 2.

Many loyal Baptists are already giving according to their ability; thousands who are giving something should do more; while hundreds of thousands now doing nothing should be enlisted in doing something.

V. GIVING THROUGH THE CHURCH:

Bring ye the whole tithe into the storehouse.—Mal. 3: 10.

While the temple was the recognized house of God under the old dispensation, and tithes and offerings were brought there; the church is Christ's appointed institution under the new or present dispensation, and since it is through the church that the Kingdom is to be advanced, it is

through the church that our contributions for Kingdom extension should be made.

NOW IS TIME FOR ACTION

Today, when every interest of the Kingdom of God at home and abroad calls for increased support in order that it may adequately maintain its present work, take care of pressing obligations, and begin to meet at least some of the challenging opportunities for Kingdom advancement, there is such need as has scarcely ever existed before for every Baptist church enlisting all its members in the Scriptural plan of giving. The Every-Member Canvass is the most feasible method for the inauguration of this plan. Considerable preparation for this canvass is necessary to make it most effective, though detailed suggestions on executing the plan can not be incorporated here. Write your state secretary for copies of an informing folder, "The Local Church and the Every-Member Canvass," by J. T. Henderson.

Southern Baptists can make a great advance in taking care of all their work at home and abroad next year if the interested churches will adopt at once the Scriptural plan of finances and then conscientiously endeavor to enlist all their members in support of it through a thorough Every-Member Canvass.

What will your church do about it?