

A close-up photograph of a weathered wooden signpost mounted on a tree trunk. The signpost is a horizontal wooden plank with a pointed left end, pointing towards the left side of the frame. It has the words "PUBLIC" and "FOOTPATH" written in white, uppercase letters. The background is a blurred forest with trees showing autumn foliage in shades of brown and orange. A wooden fence is partially visible in the foreground.

PUBLIC
FOOTPATH

The Giving Pathway

The idea of walking with the Lord as a metaphor for our spiritual growth is all throughout scripture. Words like “path” and “pathway” are found all throughout the Bible.

Enter In is based on the affirming response of the landowner to his faithful servants, “Enter into the joy of your lord.” The “Enter In” imagery is the idea of spiritual growth in giving being like walking down a pathway where there are gates you pass through.

In each line of Psalm 119:33-40 another faithful servant is yearning to grow spiritually in faith and practice to God. The servant uses the same imagery of a pathway, “Make me walk along the path of your commands, for that is where my happiness is found.”

This booklet is intended to walk you through a Giving Pathway through which you can evaluate where you are on this pathway and what gates you could enter through as opportunities of growth in your giving.

Use this as a devotional and talk with the Lord through each of the gates identified in this Giving Pathway.





The First Gate is my First Gift

Abel also brought a gift—the best portions of the firstborn lambs from his flock. The Lord accepted Abel and his gift...
Genesis 4:4 (NLT)

For many people they can remember the first time they gave an offering at church.

It could be that you did not grow up in church and you did not have that experience until later.

It also could be that you have yet to have this experience of giving. Maybe you've given to other things but you've never given anything to the church.

Imagine how this experience must have been for Adam, Eve, Cain, Abel, and everyone at the beginning of creation. Everything was new. But in the newness of everything there was a very clear understanding that a generous God had given them everything they had and giving back a portion of what they had so generously received from Him was a beautiful expression of appreciation.





*The Second Gate is my
Commitment to Keep Giving*

“Bring all the tithes into the storehouse so there will be enough food in my Temple. If you do,” says the Lord of Heaven’s Armies, “I will open the windows of heaven for you. I will pour out a blessing so great you won’t have enough room to take it in! Try it! Put me to the test!”

Malachi 3:10 (NLT)

Imagine along your way down the Giving Pathway you come to a sustainable garden. What is a sustainable garden? The basic idea is that it is a garden that does no harm to the earth but enhances it while at the same time providing food. The very definition of the word “sustain” means to keep alive.

A body of believers who each Commit to Keep Giving create a sustainable source of ministry both to those within the church and people outside the walls of the church. The consistent and faithful giving of believers keeps the Gospel growing and alive whereby everyone can know and grow in Christ.





*The Third Gate is my
Proportional Giving*

Honor the Lord with your wealth and with
the best part of everything you produce.

Proverbs 3:9 (NLT)

Regardless of what it is or what you're doing, what you do first is very important. Before every meal we stop and first take time to thank the Lord for His provision. Typically, in worship at church we take time to sing praises to God and thank Him for who He is in our lives prior to receiving a sermon that will help us live even more faithfully for him.

The same should be true when we sit down and pay the bills and sort out our financial responsibilities. We should practice Proportional Giving by looking at what has come into our household over the last month and first give to Him by the same proportion. For some that may be 10%. For some who are starting Proportional Giving it may be 2%, 5%, or 8%. It may be that you are really emerging in your Proportional Giving by giving 12%, 15%, or even more. The key is that you have walked through that gate and started Proportional Giving and that you intend to continue to see that proportion grow as God blesses you.





The Fourth Gate is my Abundant Giving

We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord, begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints— and this, not as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God to us.

2 Corinthians 8:1-5 (ESV)

Really there are two mindsets from which someone can give:

1. Abundance mindset
2. Scarcity mindset

In this story here in 2 Corinthians we see a classic example of people who had an Abundance mindset which led to Abundant Giving. They saw that there was a need and they filled the gap with generosity “beyond their means,...”. But here’s the thing, they didn’t do so foolishly or blindly. Look in verse 4, they gave, “...begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints...”. They gave sacrificially because they trusted in God’s favor. These families considered the work of the Gospel and the relief of these saints to be so important that they would make sacrifices in their own finances to contribute and make that happen.

Abundant Giving happens when we start altering how we live so that we can enjoy the favor of giving more to Him and the advancement of the Gospel.





The Fifth Gate is my Generational Giving

Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. Glory to him in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations forever and ever! Amen.

Ephesians 3:20-21(NLT)

When parents save toward their children's college it is often termed as investing in their future. And when people give to charities involving children and/or young people this same phrase of investing in their future is used. All of that is true and all of that is good. As believers there is a final gate we should consider in our giving and generosity to the church...Generational Giving.

This second of two verses here states so strongly of why Generational Giving is so important. Generational Giving is about investing in the proclamation and acclamation of the Gospel to the generations who may follow after our passing should the Lord tarry. We should each invest ourselves into preparing the generation we have access to now to present the Gospel to the generation to come, but we can also invest in resourcing that effort through our Generational Giving.



Teach me your decrees, O Lord;
I will keep them to the end.
Give me understanding and I will obey your instructions;
I will put them into practice with all my heart.
Make me walk along the path of your commands,
for that is where my happiness is found.
Give me an eagerness for your laws
rather than a love for money!
Turn my eyes from worthless things,
and give me life through your word.
Reassure me of your promise,
made to those who fear you.
Help me abandon my shameful ways;
for your regulations are good.
I long to obey your commandments!
Renew my life with your goodness.

Psalm 119:33-40

