

AFM Theology of Giving

As a non-profit Christian ministry, AFM seeks and accepts gifts as part of its financial strategy in pursuit of its mission. Since whatever God has accomplished at AFM has been financed through gifts, both large and small, it is appropriate that the AFM Theology of Giving be shared publicly.

What *is* a Theology of Giving?

AFM's Theology of Giving is no more than a simple statement that clarifies for our donors what we believe and how we act about giving. A theology of giving answers two questions:

1. What has God told us He believes about giving?
2. What are the implications of these beliefs and actions for the relationship between AFM and its donors?

What has God told us He believes about giving?

- **God owns everything.** "The earth is the Lord's and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it." *Psalms 24:1*
- **God needs nothing from us.** "I have no need of a bull from your stall or of goats from your pens, for every animal of the forest is mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills." *Psalms 50:9-10*
- **Our use of money is the surest indicator of what we deem important.** "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." *Luke 12:34*
- **God meets our needs in response to our giving.** "...my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus." *Philippians 4:19*
- **Giving someone the opportunity to give to the Lord's work is giving him an opportunity to be blessed of God.** "Not that I am looking for a gift, but I am looking for what may be credited to your account." *Philippians 4:17*
- **God has blessed His people with joy in giving.** Thus, AFM does a service to others when it makes its needs known. "Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service

to the saints. And they did not do as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God's will." *2 Corinthians 8:2-5*

- **God expects us to be good stewards of the gifts of His people.** "We want to avoid any criticism of the way we administer this liberal gift. For we are taking pains to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord but also in the eyes of men." *2 Corinthians 8:20-21*

What are the *implications* of these beliefs?

- We base our budget not on what we have on hand, but on what God has called us to do.
- In offering people the opportunity to share in God's work and blessing, we will not demean God's abundant grace by the use of gimmicks, pressure, premiums, or crisis appeals.
- We will clearly, honestly, and effectively communicate our need and leave the donor's decision whether and how fully to participate between him and the Lord.
- We will not limit the generosity of God's people, but instead will challenge them to give generously and to know that God's blessing will follow.
- We will fully disclose open accounting of our stewardship.
- We will receive all gifts as the investments of God's people, showing the utmost diligence in our stewardship of those gifts and using them wisely in projects of excellence and enduring value in God's kingdom. As projects are completed and funding goals are reached, we will publicly praise the Lord for His goodness and thank those to whom He gave hearts of generosity.