



Biblical Guidelines for Giving

“I come home from committee meetings with a headache,” Grace, a member of her church’s Mission Committee said. “There are so many good organizations and so many needs. How do we decide?”

We’ve all struggled, whether in our churches, or as we open our mail and read the appeals that come from charitable organizations next door and on the other side of the world. The good news is that we don’t have to struggle with these questions alone. We can turn to scripture for guidelines about giving to the people of God, just as we do for other decisions.

The books of the prophets are full of God’s judgment on the Israelites when they abandoned responsibility for the vulnerable in their society. Micah 6:8 is a representative verse from the prophets: “What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” We are to be advocates for justice.

James 1:27 gives another very clear command: “Religion that is pure and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction . . .” We must be compassionate to the fragile, disenfranchised among us.

Matthew 28:19-20 is the Great Commission, Jesus’ command to carry the Good News of God’s sacrificial love to all peoples.

Acts 1:8 records another version of that commission, and here we get a sense of the scope of God’s plan. Jesus sent his Jewish disciples out in a widening circle. Jerusalem was their home town. Judea was their state or country. Samaria was the neighboring people, but also represented the oppressed among them. And the ends of the earth are not too far for God’s love and concern to reach. Notice that Jesus did not give his disciples an option: the church is responsible for making disciples at home *and* among our neighbors *and* to the ends of the earth.

Take this grid and pray over it. Share it with your mission committee. Fill in the squares and notice where your church is strong in giving and where there are gaps. Do you focus on compassionate missions in your town (Food Bank, Women’s Shelter, Soup Kitchen) but have no involvement in the care of God’s people at the ends of the earth (Bread for the World, mission hospitals)? Is your church heavy on justice (Peacemaking) but light on evangelism? Does your church support local evangelism (Campus Crusade for Christ), but shies away from the need for making disciples among Unreached peoples (PCUSA Frontier Mission Projects)?

Pray for the courage and vision to balance your mission giving, as an individual and as a church, and to be obedient to all that God asks from us: compassion, justice, and sharing the good news of God’s sacrificial love for all people.

Acts 1:9—Mission Where?	Local	Regional/The oppressed	Ends of the earth
Micah 6:8--Justice			
James 1:27--Compassion			
Matt 28:19-20--Evangelism			



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