

A photograph of a wheat field at sunrise or sunset. The sun is a bright, glowing orb in the upper center, casting a warm, golden light across the scene. The wheat stalks are silhouetted against the bright sky, with some catching the light and appearing golden. The overall mood is peaceful and hopeful. The text "AS YOU PROSPER" is centered in a white, serif font.

AS YOU PROSPER





# THE SUNDAY MORNING STICKUP



# WHERE'S THE FAILURE?

- While money can bring out the worst in people, it is also a tool that can be put into service. The challenge is to align congregational goals with the scriptures and then handle the collection itself with honesty and tact. Most problems associated with the collection come about because of a failure in one of those two areas.
- If people are presented with noble, Biblical goals, and there is transparency in the collection process, they will enthusiastically support a church's leadership.
- Biblical precedent illustrates this...



# THE CHURCH IN JERUSALEM

- Powerful worship and good teaching produce enthusiasm for sharing (Acts 2:43-45).
- “Had all things in common” infers a treasury (also see 1 Corinthians 16:2).
- Giving had a direct connection to the need of the moment (4:32-35, 11:27-30, also Romans 15:26).
- Nobody was forced or guilt-tripped, and honesty/transparency were at a premium (5:1ff, 2 Cor. 8:18ff).
- Every example shows that it was a free will offering. There was no set amount to be given by each member, and those who had no ability to give were not to be treated as second-class Christians (James 2:1ff, 2 Cor. 8:12-15)





# KEY PASSAGES

1 Corinthians 16:1-4,

2 Corinthians 8:1-5, 9:6ff



# VARIOUS WORKS

- The example of the relief of the brethren is just one use of money collected by the church, though its rather conspicuous place in the NT should remind us that taking care of needy Christians was a priority to the first century church (Gal. 2:10, Acts 6:1ff, Rom. 12:8, 13).
- Supporting local evangelism, edification, and teaching (1 Tim. 5:17-18, Gal. 6:6, 1 Cor. 9:14, 1 Thess. 5:12-13). This includes purchasing materials and maintaining or renting a facility for scriptural church activities (Acts 19:9, Heb. 10:25).
- Supporting preachers in other locations (Phil. 4:14ff).



# GETTING TO THE HEART OF GIVING

- God loves a cheerful giver
- Readiness, desire, forethought
- Attitude, not amount (Mark 12:38-44)
- Perspective (James 1:17)
- You reap what you sow (Gal. 6:7f, 2 Cor. 9:6)
- Motivated by love (1 Cor. 13:3)



# CONSIDERATIONS

- There is not a single command, example, or inference about tithing in the context of the church. We are to give “as we have prospered”, which means that our giving is flexible and related to rising or falling income.
- God does not command or expect such liberal giving that we neglect other commandments. We are required to feed and take care of our families (1 Tim. 5:4,8). We must also pay any taxes, fees, dues, etc. associated with civic duties (Rom. 13:6-7) as well as debts (Rom. 13:8). And we must use some of our money to help in good works and charities in which the church is not authorized to participate (James 1:27, Eph. 4:28, 1 Tim. 6:17-19).
- “Food and shelter” (1 Timothy 6:8).