

## Why I Pledge



As I read Becky's article last week, I recalled my childhood days as well, when we put our nickels or dimes in the offering envelope on Sunday morning and placed it on the plate as it passed by. I don't know if my parents tithed their full 10%, but they were faithful and consistent in their support of our church's ministry. With limited income and a growing family, it seemed impossible some months to make our pledge in my early years. Necessary bills were paid first and, if there was anything left, we attempted to fulfill our commitment to the church. We always gave some amount. If we got behind in our pledge, we would try to bring it up to date when possible. At some point, we made a giant step in faith and made our pledge FIRST, then paid the rest of our bills. It was so scary, but,

surprisingly, we still had enough to make essential monthly expenses. God always provided enough. The final step in my faith journey came years later when I put my pledge on auto-draft from the bank. There have been hard times and times of plenty, especially this past year, but I have never backtracked that decision, and I have never regretted it. That act grew my faith in tangible ways. Of course, it is a blessing for the church and its ministry, but what it has done to me spiritually, as I have put my faith in God to provide, is a huge blessing as well. If it was possible for me, then it surely is possible for you!

One other thought... When things get tough and hardship abounds, we are always quick to turn to God for comfort and peace. But what do we do when everything is going our way? What is our response? Are we as quick to turn to God in the times of abundance? Over 45 years ago, I experienced a sequence of events that impacted my life in amazing ways. I was overwhelmed with all my "good fortune," yet I couldn't as quickly produce an appropriate response. I even went to my pastor with my dilemma and laid out the sequence of events that had overwhelmed me. My question, "What should be my response? How can I say thank you to God for all the goodness that has been showered on me?" His first and quick response, with a twinkle in his eye, was, "Have you ever thought about tithing?" I shall never forget that moment. It was a life-changing epiphany.

What should be our heartfelt motivation for committing a financial pledge to the church? The answer, for me, is plain and simple. I give not out of obligation to the church budget or ministry but rather from a heart overflowing with gratitude. With deep gratitude to a God who "can do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine" (Ephesians 3:20), I have made my pledge. Please join me on this journey of gratitude. Experience the joy that God has in store for you as well!

