

## A Guide To Discerning God's Will

*In Deciding Your Giving Commitment...*

Our Extending the Vision offering will be the greatest spiritual test that God has given to many of us. It will test our priorities, values, faith, and commitments. How can we give in a way that pleases God and causes us to grow?

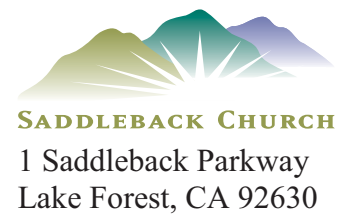
Ask yourself: Will I give based on REASON or by REVELATION?

I can give based on REASON. This means I look at what I have, figure out what is "reasonable," and commit that amount. It takes no faith to give by reason. Reason simply asks, "What can I afford?"

I can give based on REVELATION. This means I determine my gift by praying, "Lord, what do you want to give through me?" This requires faith. When you make giving a matter of prayer, your decision becomes an act of worship. Revelation giving asks, "How much am I willing to trust God?"

**Our Commitment Day: April 23-24, 2005**  
A cash offering & a 36-month commitment

QUESTIONS? CALL (949) 609-8000



## Update # 2: Equal Sacrifice – Not Equal Gifts

As we approach our Extending the Vision offering on April 23 and 24, it is critical that we focus on what God has to say about giving. The Bible tells us in Mark 12:41-44 that one day Jesus sat near the temple offering box and watched people put in their money. Many rich people gave large sums of money. Then a poor widow came and put in two copper pennies. Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, this poor widow gave more than all those rich people together! They gave only what they did not need. This woman is very poor, but she gave all she had; she gave all she had to live on."

From this moving example of sacrifice, Jesus taught us three important truths:

- Our attitude is more important than the amount we give.
- It is always possible to give something if we really trust God.
- God measures our faith by comparing what we've given with what we have left over after we've given.

We mean what we say at Saddleback Church about "Equal Sacrifice – Not Equal Gifts." To sacrifice means to give the best I have for a greater purpose. While we all cannot give the same amount, we all can sacrifice somehow. This way everyone can have a part. For some, a sacrificial gift given over three years may be \$1,000. For others, a sacrifice may be closer to \$50,000 or \$100,000. God will impress a specific amount on your heart if you sincerely ask him to speak to you. Pray about giving what you can give in cash, and make a faith commitment to give an additional amount over the next 36 months.

As you pray about what a genuine sacrifice will mean to you, I urge you to read 1 Kings 17:8-16. It is the Bible story of the miracle that happened when a single parent gave away what little she had. God took care of her the rest of her life. God still does miracles today in the lives of those who dare to trust him! There are many ways to give—if we are willing. Pray and give. Then, watch God fulfill his promise to meet your needs!





## Your Questions Answered

**Q** Will I be able to change my 36-month commitment if I need or want to?

**A** Of course! Unforeseen circumstances may cause you to want to increase or decrease your giving commitment in the future. At any time during the 36 months, you can review or change your ETV commitment online at saddlebackfamily.com, or you can ask for another commitment card and turn it in with your revised commitment!

**Q** Can each member of our family make a separate commitment?

**A** Yes! Even young children can learn the values of commitment, generosity, faith, and sacrifice by signing their own commitment card. Extra cards and envelopes are available at the church office and in the seat racks of the Worship Center. The Wildside and High School Ministries have special envelopes available as well.

**Q** WHEN and HOW do I make my commitment?

**A** This weekend, April 23-24! First, you need to decide how much of a cash offering you'll make this weekend. Then decide the amount you pledge to give in addition to your cash gift over the next 36 months. Write both of those amounts on your commitment card and sign it. Please also PRINT your name, address, email and phone on the card. Enclose your check (or cash) in your ETV offering envelope and bring it with you to a worship service this weekend. If you can't attend, mail it in advance so your gift can be included in the victory total.

**Q** Will my commitment be kept confidential?

**A** Absolutely!

**Q** Is it OK to make a commitment to give an amount that I don't have right now?

**A** Yes! That is called FAITH! It pleases God. (Heb. 11:6)

**Q** How will I designate my ETV commitment each week?

**A** New offering envelopes have been printed with separate designations, so you can indicate what part of your weekly offering is going toward your ETV pledge versus your regular offering. You can also go to saddlebackfamily.com to give electronically.

## What it will take to raise \$45,000,000

# Needed	Level	Total	Cumulative Total
1	gift at	1,000,000	1,000,000
3	gifts at	500,000	1,500,000
5	gifts at	250,000	1,250,000
20	gifts at	100,000	2,000,000
30	gifts at	75,000	2,250,000
45	gifts at	50,000	2,250,000
65	gifts at	40,000	2,600,000
75	gifts at	30,000	2,250,000
100	gifts at	25,000	2,500,000
150	gifts at	20,000	3,000,000
300	gifts at	15,000	4,500,000
500	gifts at	10,000	5,000,000
1000	gifts at	5,000	5,000,000
1500	gifts at	3,000	4,500,000
1700	gifts at	2,000	3,400,000
2000	gifts at	1,000	2,000,000
<b>7494</b>			<b>45,000,000</b>

Imagine if 2,000 families in our church each gave an extra \$500.  
That alone would total a million dollars

## Five Essentials for Success

1. We must pray every day for God to help us grow. Eph. 3:20 (NCV)
2. We must believe it can be done. Mt. 9:29 (NIV)
3. We must involve everyone in our church. It will take all of us working, praying, and committing together. The challenge is so great that everyone is needed. 1 Cor. 12:27 (NLT)
4. We must be willing to sacrifice. Nothing great is ever done without sacrifice. Your church needs your commitment now. Our Theme: "Equal Sacrifice... Not Equal Gifts." Ps. 54:6 (NLT)
5. We must be creative in finding ways to give more than we ever thought possible. 2 Cor. 8:12 (NIV)



Extending the Vision for 25 More Years