



Tips on Preaching and Talking  
about Faith and Money  
By Dr. Don Avery

1. It is easy to preach or talk about faith and money if you have discovered and practice the joy of giving. I like to talk about “moving to the tithe and beyond” or “discovering the joy of giving.” But the point is, the speaker should be faithful in his or her practice of proportional giving. It is difficult to preach about tithing if you don’t at least tithe.
2. Don’t limit preaching about money to the stewardship campaign period. If you follow the lectionary, there will be numerous times during the year wherein the focus of the passage is our faithfulness, our discipleship, or our being good stewards of what God has entrusted to us. I continue to learn how to preach, but I learned long ago that a talented preacher can take a text in many different directions. So even if the text is not directly addressing stuff, you can still probably get there because one of our greatest idolatries is our love affair with stuff. It is easy to preach or talk about faith and money if you have discovered and practice the joy of giving. I like to talk about “moving to the tithe and beyond” or “discovering the joy of giving”. But the point is, the speaker should be faithful in his or her practice of proportional giving. It is difficult to preach about tithing if you don’t at least tithe.
3. I believe the preacher should not make a secret about his or her stewardship. The people know what you make, even though they want to count your benefits as your salary. But the point is they know your limited and meager income. What better witness than for them to know your struggles and your progress in overcoming them as you grow in giving. It is so much easier to hold others accountable if you accept being accountable. Don’t brag; just take the secretiveness out of the equation. Believe me we live in glass houses!

4. Use the Bible as you talk about money and material in the same way that you use the Bible to talk about love, prayer, discipleship, etc. There is not and should not be any difference. The truth is that Jesus talked more about the seductive nature of money, material, or manna. (I like to call it stuff and we have a true love affair with stuff. How much stuff is enough?) The Bible says that the tithe is the beginning of discovering the joy of giving.
5. Don't be sheepish or apologize about preaching and talking about giving. It is a vital and necessary part of the gospel. Remember faithfulness for Methodists includes presence, prayers, gifts, and service.
6. Understand that as spiritual leader and church administrator you can not raise money if you don't ask for it. You need to train and encourage other persons to witness as well, namely laity (who can talk about money better than the preacher can), but remember who is appointed as "pastor in charge" and who is expected to be the chief spiritual leader. To raise money, you've got to ask for it.



Dr. Don Avery is currently senior pastor of First United Methodist Church of Natchitoches, Louisiana, and has served the Louisiana Annual Conference as District Superintendent of the Alexandria district and as pastor of several other United Methodist churches in the conference. He had a distinct and varied career in law for 16 years before returning to full time ministry in 1992.