

Faith Promise: A Way of Giving to Missions

What is Faith Promise? Faith Promise is a means of funding missions in the local church. It has been used for many years to help congregations increase their giving to God's missionary work.

The Faith Promise is a commitment between an individual and God. It is a one-year promise of a sum of money that an individual, in dependence upon God, intends to give to missions. It is not based on money that people have on hand. The aim is higher. People are urged to ask God what they should trust Him for, the amount that He will enable them to give for missions during the coming year.

"This requires faith; not faith-to-get, but faith-to-give. Ninety-nine percent of the time we exercise faith to receive something from God. We must learn to exercise faith to give something for God and His mission in the world." (John T. Seamands)

Faith Promise provides a way for God to enable an individual or a family to give to missionary work more than their calculations show that they can. They "promise" to give in "faith" that God will provide. They step out in faith with a commitment, begin to fulfill that commitment, and continue to fulfill it *as God makes it possible*.

Faith promise is a commitment to God, based on His provision, to give a certain amount over a specific time period (usually a year). In one sense it is not a risk, because the individual gives as God provides. On the other hand it is a risk, because the individual begins to give toward the commitment *even before* God provides.

Faith promise is a means for churches to receive more money for God's missionary work than they would otherwise receive because it helps people to give more than they think they can.

For Faith Promise to "work," the people must have a heart for God's missionary work and sincerely desire to give generously. It allows people to give; helps people to increase their giving by faith.

Faith Promise is not a cure-all for missions malaise. It is not a remedy for failure to communicate clearly and compellingly the importance of missionary work. It will not help people to give what they already know they have available to give. And it will not improve upon other missions funding methods without a lot of effort.

On the other hand, where there is a cohesive strong desire among church leaders to contribute powerfully to the missions enterprise, giving can be miraculously increased. Many churches over many decades have published annual giving totals that demonstrate God's working in this way.

On the following page you will find a five-step process to implementing a Faith Promise approach to missions giving.



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Five-Step Process to Implementation

Step 1. Inform Yourself

Find and study Faith Promise resources. Talk to some churches that use it. Learn how it is done, who is doing it well, and how they make it work.

Step 2. Inform Your Leaders

One of the biggest obstacles is helping people to clearly understand and accept the concept. The larger the church, the more difficult it is. This requires extensive education over time. The place to start is with church leaders. When each one (and their spouse) can clearly articulate what it means, you have a good chance of getting the congregation on board. Nothing kills a new church idea quicker than one of the pastors giving a confused or negative explanation of it!

Step 3. Inform Your Congregation

Take several weeks to build the missions commitment of the congregation and develop stewardship. It may be a stretch for many to learn to give generously, then sacrificially, and trust God to give more. Explain faith promise carefully on several occasions. Prayerfully develop and advertise a total goal. Prepare and hand out faith promise commitment cards for people to pray over.

Step 4. Call for Commitment

At a Sunday morning church service during a major missions emphasis, challenge people to pray for God's guidance and ask them to commit to the amount they believe God would have them give. Collect the commitment cards. Be sure to include all ages.

Step 5. Celebrate

Celebrate God's goodness. Periodically feature brief testimonies of how God has provided to continue the celebration of God's faithfulness and remind the congregation of their commitments.

An Innovative Approach...

One church that implemented faith promise took an innovative approach to resistance. The stewardship board wasn't convinced that faith promise would bring in as much as the budgeted 10%. So they proposed to continue to budget 10% of general income for missions and add the faith promise offerings. Looking back, this in effect doubled the missions budget because the first year's faith promise equaled the 10%!



Some churches have used Faith Promise to bless Encompass over the years. We are glad to provide this resource to encourage stewardship to reach the least reached.
EncompassWorld.org/give