

A Church Where Visitors Are Not Expected to Give

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Money can be a sensitive topic.

Many have been turned away from Christianity because of religious leaders' attitudes toward money. Not a few had bad personal experiences in churches due to it. It is not uncommon to hear things like these:

- *I don't go to church because when I do, they want me to empty my pockets. They make me feel guilty if I don't donate.*
- *For once I'd like to see a church where they didn't ask for money as soon as I walk in the door.*
- *Why do churches keep asking for money all the time? Frankly, it turns me off and I think it does a lot of other people, too.*
- *It's just one scandal after another.*

Jesus was angry with such abuses in His day (cf. Mark 3:5). True Christians oppose this as strongly—if not more so—than those on the outside. Bad apples and false teachers block the path for people to find God's love, grace, and truth.

It is fair to say that most religious groups are not

trying to bilk innocent people, but no one would deny that it is important to emphasize God's standards. God's way is always the best and only safe course in religion (2 John 1:9–11).

Let's explore how money issues are handled by those seeking to restore New Testament Christianity. This is what you can expect if you come for a visit.

In the church of Christ, guests are never expected to give. If you honor the church with a visit, you are not expected to put anything more than an attendance card in the plate. Why should nonmembers support the church? Would we invite someone to our house for dinner and then ask him to pay for it?

When one becomes a member, then giving is a personal worship decision. God set up His work to be fully supported by His people giving freely in their weekly meetings (1 Corinthians 16:1–2). Since there is no Bible authority (Colossians 3:17) for other funding models (such as cake sales or car washes), we do not solicit funds from nonmembers by sales or donations.