

Growing in the Grace of Giving

This table should enable you gauge the percentage represented by your present level of weekly giving and can help you determine a realistic and reachable level, which you may want to consider as part of your Christian commitment. It is interesting to note that at the end of 2007 the average weekly earnings (for all employed people – part time and full time) were above \$875 per week, and the basic aged pension for a single person was \$268 per week, and for a married person, \$224 per week.

Annual Income	Weekly Income	4%	5%	6%	7%	8%	9%	10%	15%	20%
\$7,800	\$150	\$6	\$7.50	\$9	\$10.50	\$12	\$13.50	\$15	\$22.50	\$30
\$10,400	\$200	\$8	\$10	\$12	\$14	\$16	\$18	\$20	\$30	\$40
\$15,600	\$300	\$12	\$15	\$18	\$21	\$24	\$27	\$30	\$45	\$60
\$20,800	\$400	\$16	\$20	\$24	\$28	\$32	\$36	\$40	\$60	\$80
\$26,000	\$500	\$20	\$25	\$30	\$35	\$40	\$45	\$50	\$75	\$100
\$31,200	\$600	\$24	\$30	\$36	\$42	\$48	\$54	\$60	\$90	\$120
\$36,400	\$700	\$28	\$35	\$42	\$49	\$56	\$63	\$70	\$105	\$140
\$41,600	\$800	\$32	\$40	\$48	\$56	\$64	\$72	\$80	\$120	\$160
\$46,800	\$900	\$36	\$45	\$54	\$63	\$72	\$81	\$90	\$135	\$180
\$52,000	\$1000	\$40	\$50	\$60	\$70	\$80	\$90	\$100	\$150	\$200
\$78,000	\$1500	\$60	\$75	\$90	\$105	\$120	\$135	\$150	\$225	\$300
\$104,000	\$2000	\$80	\$100	\$120	\$140	\$160	\$180	\$200	\$300	\$360

4-6% is participating, 7-9% is growing, 10-20% is maturing in giving.

It is **not** all about the Economy

Perhaps both major political parties should heed the Archbishop of Canterbury's recent attack on Western modernity.

"There is something about Western modernity which really does eat away at the soul," Dr Rowan Williams insisted in his interview with the Muslim magazine *Emel*. And his argument was simple: our brand of modernity turns people into things defined by their function. **All too often we are what we do.** This was the sort of thing that used to be said by Marxists back when they were a more potent cultural force. In the world of efficiency savings, productivity and league tables, human beings are more and more treated as tools in some vast machine-like system. We all too easily cede our humanity to the impersonal workings of the day-to-day routine. Which is why for the archbishop, as for a great many religious leaders, the key battleground is time. He wants us to slow things down, to resist the frantic fascism of the diary. He calls on us to fight back with a battery of practices: art, prayer, holidays. Not art to make us more sophisticated, not prayer to lobby God, not holidays to get us ready for yet more work - for all this is to render them in overly functional terms, as if they always must have some further purpose. Rather, we must learn from our children and, specifically, from their play: something that is both joyous and yet wholly without deeper purpose.

Religion resists the oppressive efficiency of time management because there is nothing to measure. Atheists think that it's the fatal weakness of the God idea that it lacks empirical verifiability. But a world where everything is measurable and testable, and can be turned into a league table, is a world where competition can find its way into every nook and cranny of life. This, in turn, allows no escape from the omnipresence of market forces.

Marx made the point that capitalism turns everything into a commodity - and thus people into objects. Christians would agree but would also see Marx's uncompromising materialism as being part of the problem. For in spite of Marx, this materialism has been conscripted into the service of capital and forms the bars of our cage. Which is why the Marxists failed, and why the only people offering a genuinely countercultural critique of Western modernity are to be found in churches, mosques and synagogues". *Guardian News & Media*