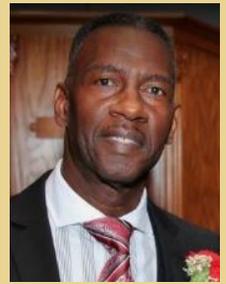


Message from Pastor Jones



The Lord has graciously blessed me with the distinct privilege of serving him in the capacity of pastoring his people. It has been my experience after pastoring a predominately African American church for 30 years that giving is a huge challenge.

I discovered it wasn't that people of color hated giving to the work of ministry; it was they lacked good sound teaching on the subject. In fact, we as a people lacked a full understand that giving was truly an act of worship. I grew up in a church that raised most of its finances by selling chicken dinners and etc.

Tithing to support the local church was not strongly taught during those days for many of the members could barely make ends meet, therefore giving was indeed a great challenge. At that time, a three dollar assessment was common place to support the church's financial obligations.

This also played a major role in the lack of activities that required financial backing. Our facilities were never adequate for activities outside of the morning worship. The lack of good sound teaching concerning giving and receiving have hurt our local churches for years.

This problem plagued me as a young pastor because I wanted to do more in ministry than my predecessors. God knowing this desire was in my heart, therefore orchestrated a time to introduce me to a teaching seldom mention in the church I grew up in.

As God would have it, I was listening to one of my favorite radio stations WTLN, which afforded me the opportunity to hear about Crown ministries. It was at that time I discovered the teaching concerning giving God's way was exactly what I needed to hear.

After listening that day, I immediately inquired about getting information about the Crown program and how I could to implement it into Antioch. I was honored to have Howard Dayton make a personal visit to my office to give me more information about the Crown program.

I introduced the program to our leadership, which was well received, and then to the entire congregation. We subsequently transitioned to Compass - Finances God's Way. Since the implementation of that program we have seen a significant increase in the church's giving and improvements in personal finances (e.g., debt reduction, increase in savings).

The Compass program an on-going part of our overall teaching at Antioch, including our youth. Special thanks to Ken Battles who has been a champion in leading this all important ministry. I would strongly suggest that any church that does not have this program to get it right away. Words can't adequately say how much Compass means to this fellowship.

I strongly suggest and recommend that any person who wants to know more about what God says about money to enroll in a Compass class some as possible.

Charles Jones, Senior Pastor, Antioch Missionary Baptist Church of Oviedo