

# NURTURE AND HEART RETENTION

Preventing Church Evasion



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# A RELIABLE EVASION PREDICTOR

Would help leaders to

- Identify those in greater risk
- Provide priority ministerial support



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# WRONG QUESTION

- How to keep members in the church?



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# BETTER QUESTION

- How to attach their hearts (emotions) to heaven? (Col. 3:1-3)



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# HEART RETENTION x BODY RETENTION

- Foremost concern in Jesus preaching (ex. Matt. 5-7)



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# HOW TO INHERIT ETERNAL LIFE

(Luke 10:25-27; Mark 12:29-31; Matt. 22:37-39; Deut. 10:12)

- “Staying in the church” was not Jesus’ answer
- To **love God** with all possible capabilities (and neighbor) was His answer



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# WHEN MEMBERS LOVE GOD

- They will have eternal life
- All things work together for their good (Rom. 8:28)
- Church retention will be the consequence



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A person with long hair is holding a dark brown leather-bound Bible. The spine of the Bible is visible, with the words "HOLY BIBLE" printed in white. The person is wearing a light-colored watch on their left wrist. The background is a soft, out-of-focus purple and blue gradient.

# TO LOVE GOD

- It's a requirement (Deut. 10:12)
- Should not be in word/talk, but in deed and truth (1 John 3:18)
- Is revealed by loving the brothers (1 John 4:7-21)
- The most important Nurture endeavor



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# TO LOVE GOD

It is related to

- Keeping His Commandments  
(John 14:15, 21: 15:10; 1 John 2:4-6; 5:3)
- Keeping His Word (John 14:23)



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# A SURPRISING WAY TO DEVELOP THAT AFFECTION



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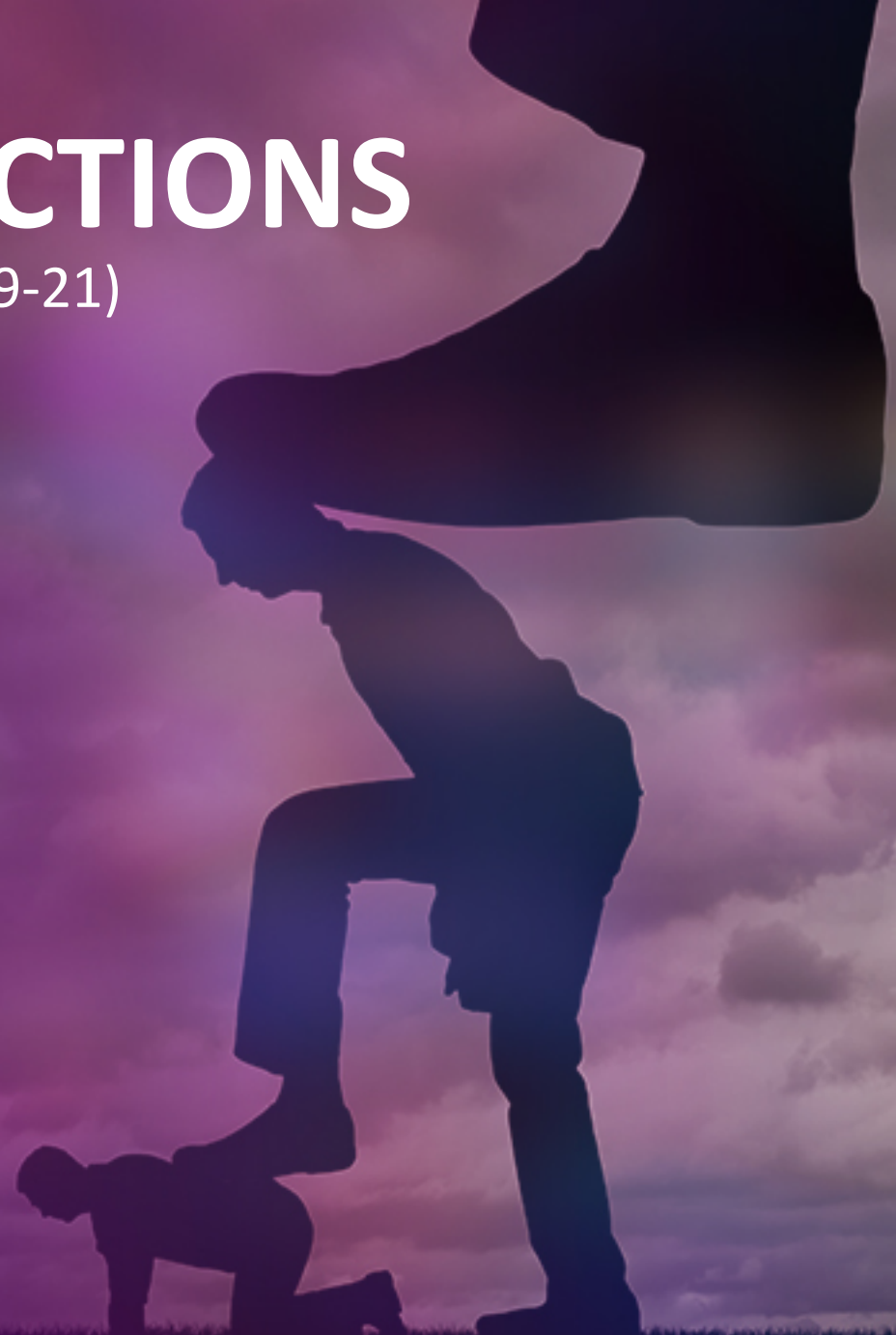
# POSSESSIONS X AFFECTIONS

Possessions are carriers of Affections (Matt. 6:19-21)

“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. **For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.**”



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# FINANCIAL SPIRITUAL GIVING

Will place the heart in heaven/  
God's dwelling place



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# ONLY TWO OPTIONS

“There are only two places in the universe where we can place our treasures, - in God’s storehouse or in Satan’s; and all that is not devoted to God’s service is counted on Satan’s side, and goes to strengthen his cause.”

Ellen G. White, Counsels on Stewardship, page 35.



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# TO LOVE GOD

- The most important choice for eternal life
- May be started and increased also by financial spiritual giving
- Financial spiritual giving is related to eternal life



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# JESUS'S HEART RETENTION PROGRAM

- A divine strategy to keep the *heart* in His kingdom
- Means much more than simply to keep the *body* in the church



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# FINANCIAL SPIRITUAL GIVING

- Must be considered as an integral part of the list of Adventist Personal Piety practices (McIver, 2015)
- Must be assessed and studied for Nurture and Retention purposes



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# PRACTICES POSITIVELY CORRELATED TO TITHING (MCIVER, 2015)

- Sabbath School attendance
- Open and close the Sabbath
- Study Sabbath School quarterly
- Read and reflect on the Bible each day
- Pray often during the day



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# ARE THEY RELATED TO SPIRITUAL GIVING BY CHANCE?

Or are they all integral  
parts of a same system?



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# WHEN INVESTMENTS AND HEART ARE ON THE EARTH

(Parable of the Sower - Matt. 13:22)

- People are deceived and distressed by the possessions
- God's word is choked
- Person becomes spiritually unfruitful



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A person wearing a denim jacket is holding a credit card and several shopping bags. The background is a blurred outdoor setting. The image is overlaid with a purple gradient on the right side.

# LOVE OF THINGS AND THIS WORLD

(1 John 2:15-17)

Implies in

- Loss of spiritual sight
- Loss of “the love of the Father”
- Heart evasion
- Increased church evasion risk



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# LOVE OF MONEY & DESIRE TO BE RICH

(1 Tim. 6:9-10)

- Drowns “men in destruction and perdition”.
- “... a root of all kind of evil...”
- “... for which some have strayed from the faith...”
- It is a Church’s Evasion Risk factor



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# MONEY GETTING x SPIRITUALITY

“... devotion to money getting” is something that “deadens the spirituality of the church and removes the favor of God from her.” CS, 20



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# MONEY GETTING x SPIRITUALITY

- How to recognize “devotion to money getting” and spiritual dead state?
- Is financial unfaithfulness and evidence of spiritual death?



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# THE EVIDENCE AND ITS EXTENDED INFLUENCE

“... he that will withhold from God that which He has lent him, will be unfaithful in the things of God in every respect....”  
1T 198



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# A GRADUAL DEVELOPMENT

- Devotion to money getting
- Spiritually dead
- All kinds of imaginable unfaithfulness
- Apostasy
- Church evasion



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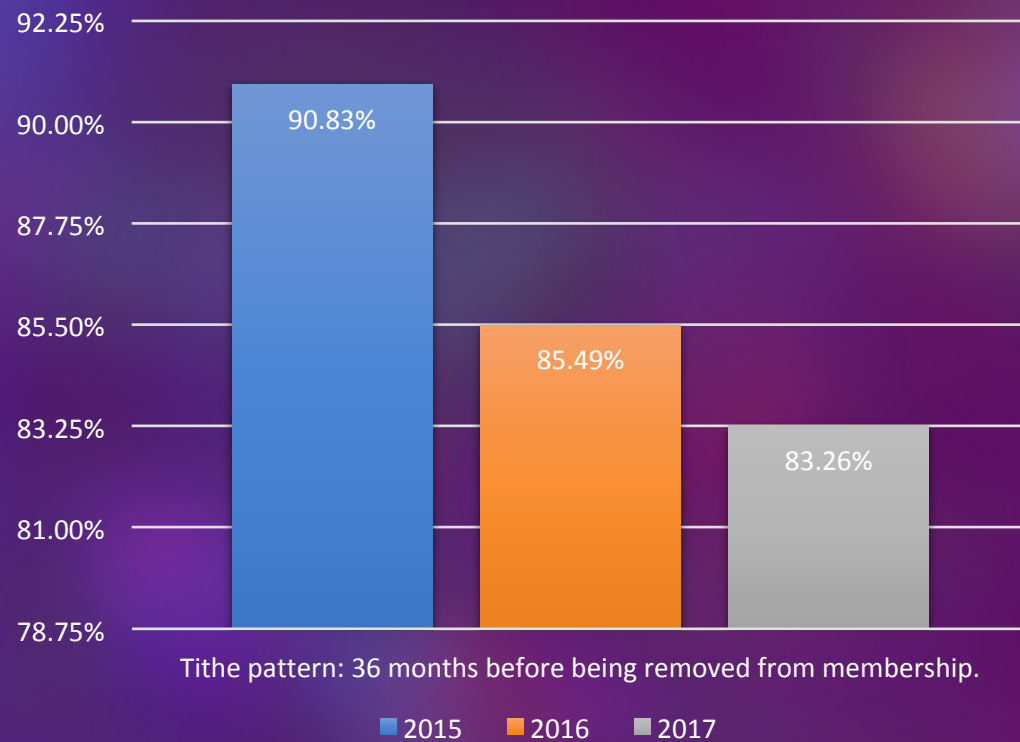
# A SAD RESEARCH



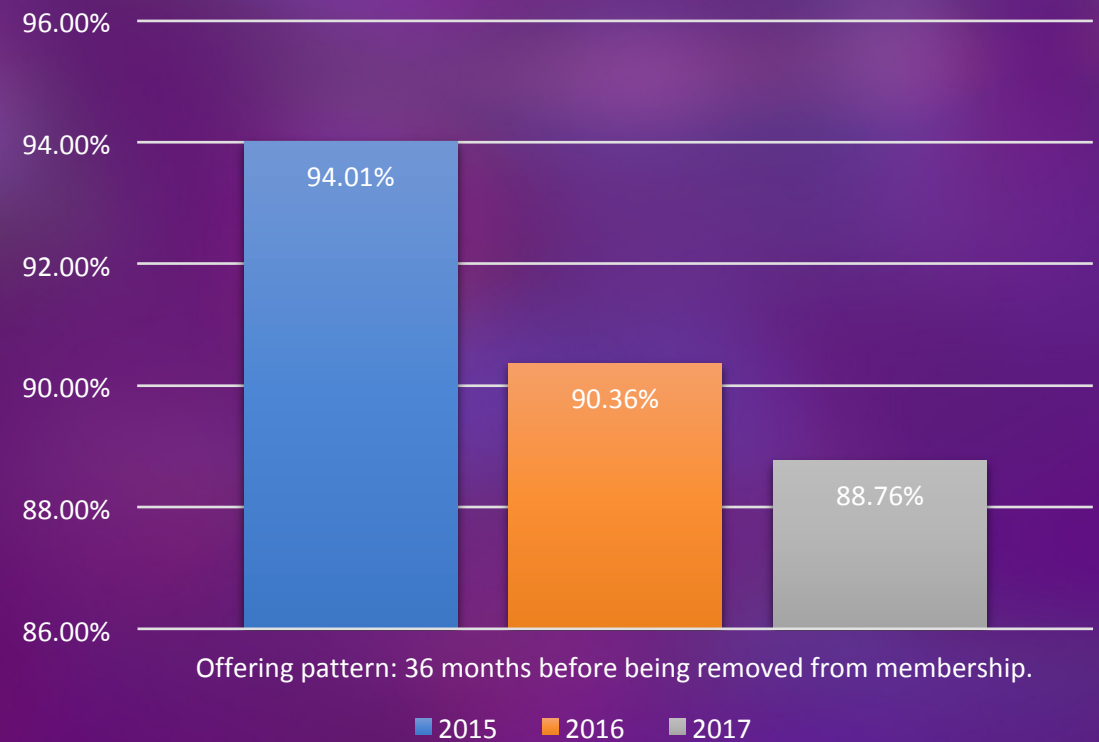
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All SAD members who left the church from 2015-2017

An average of 86%: no **tithing** record:



An average of 91%: no **offering** record:





# JESUS' HEART RETENTION STRATEGY

“... Through every investment made [in God’s treasury], they will become more wedded to the cause of present truth...” CS 73.



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# RELATED TO SPIRITUAL PROSPERITY

“... Withholding from God Always brings a curse. Spiritual prosperity is closely bound up with Christian liberality...” CS 49.



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# THE MOST SPIRITUALLY PROSPEROUS CHURCHES

“... Churches who are the most systematic and liberal in sustaining the cause of God are the most prosperous spiritually.” 3T 405



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# CHURCH GROWTH x FINANCIAL SPIRITUAL GIVING

The work of imparting of the heavenly gifts “is the life and growth of the church.” 6T 448.



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# FINANCIAL SPIRITUAL GIVING

- Highly related to church growth and spiritual prosperity
- Is expected to increase retention rates
- It's absence – a predictor of apostasy



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# NURTURE & RETENTION STRATEGY

- To assess and carefully follow church's spiritual financial giving patterns.
- Identify potential apostasy/ church evasion risk.
- Priority care, including visitation, to those in greater risk.



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Next presentation

# STRATEGIES TO

- Strengthen spiritual systematic giving
- Establish appropriate interventions when needed.



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