Biblical Tithing

Mal. 3,8 – Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.

Col. 3,2 – Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

**The Devil's Reason for Not Tithing**

In January because of Christmas bills due.

In February because of fuel bills and car upkeep.

In March because of income taxes.

In April because of clothes for Easter.

In May because too much rain threatens the crops.

In June because too little rain threatens the crops.

In July because of vacation expenses coming up.

In August because of vacation expenses to be paid.

In September because of the children's school needs.

In October because of winter clothes and doctor bills.

In November because of the Thanksgiving trip.

In December because of the Christmas shopping.

1 Cor. 16:1,2 – Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. 2 Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

**Welfare Tithe**
If every church member in the United States were to suddenly lose his/her job and went on welfare, and yet were willing to tithe from the minimal amount received from public assistance, giving in the nation's churches would immediately increase more than 30%!

*"The Herald of the Covenant"*

For the love of money is the root to all evil – Then the Love of the right use of money is the root of all good.

**Testimony of Tithing, And Didn't Know It**
The day the church treasurer resigned the church asked the local grain elevator manager to take the position. He agreed under two conditions. That no treasurer's report would be given for the first year. That no questions are asked about finances during that year. The people were surprised but finally agreed since most of them did business with him and he was a trusted man. At the end of the year he gave his report:

The church indebtedness of $228,000 has been paid. The minister's salary had been increased by 8%. The Cooperative Program gifts has been paid 200%. There were no outstanding bills. There was a cash balance of $11,252!

Immediately the shocked congregation asked, "How did you do it? Where did the money come from?" He quietly answered: "Most of you bring your grain to my elevator. Throughout the year I simply withheld ten percent on your behalf and gave it to the church in your name. You didn't even miss it!" "Do you see what we could do for the Lord if we were all willing to give at least the tithe to God, who really owns it?" So the new treasurer had made his point.

--*James Carter*

The cotton farmers in Mississippi. Two brothers were about to loose everything. So they put up the farm for one more year. They borrow on everything they had, if they didn’t produce a crop they would loose everything.

They planted their cotton, & when it was budding, a dust storm came through, & wipe out all the crops.

The farmers would loose everything. So they called their pastor. He drove out & knelt in the middle of the cotton field, & prayed. God these are Christian men, & they are Tithers & givers. So by your Word we stand on, bless this crop. He got up, dusted off his paint, & said "That alt to do it."

Their crop came in like you never seen in Mississippi, but all the other farmers lost theirs. So cotton went sky high, & the Farmers became rich on the one crop.

*Hal Taylor – Proving God.*

**Famous Tithers**
J.L. Kraft, head of the Kraft Cheese Corporation, who had given approximately 25% of his enormous income to Christian causes for many years, said, "The only investment I ever made which has paid consistently increasing dividends is the money I have given to the Lord."

J.D. Rockefeller said, "I never would have been able to tithe the first million dollars I ever made if I had not tithed my first salary, which was $1.50 per week."
*W. A. Criswell, A Guidebook for Pastors, p. 154*

**The Commitment**
Years ago a young man knelt with his pastor and prayed as he committed to God his tithe. His first week's pay was $10.00 and the tithe was $1.00. As he grew older, he became more prosperous and his tithe was $7.00 a week, then $10.00. He moved to another city and soon his tithe was $100 a week, then $200, then $500.

One day the younger man sent his old friend a wire, "Please come see me." The pastor arrived at the man's house. They had a good time talking over old times. Finally the man came to his point. " You remember that promise I made years ago to tithe. How can I get released?"

"Why would you want to get released," asked the pastor?

"It's like this," replied the man, "When I made the promise I only had to give $1.00, but now it is $500. I can't afford to give away money like that." The old pastor looked at his friend. "I am afraid we cannot get released from the promise, but there is something we can do. We can kneel and ask God to shrink your income so you can afford to give $1.00 again."

*Marvin Krause*

ONE MORE –

There was a knock on the door of the hut occupied by a missionary in Africa. Answering, the missionary found one of the native boys holding a large fish in his hands. The boy said, "Reverend, you taught us what tithing is, so here-I've brought you my tithe." As the missionary gratefully took the fish, he questioned the young boy, "If this is your tithe, where are the other nine fish?" At this, the boy beamed and said, "Oh, they're still back in the river. I'm going back to catch them now."

*Church of God Stewardship.*

The Laws and Principles of Tithing

*Abraham Commenced it. (Ge. 14:18-20)*And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. 19 And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: 20 And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.

TITHES – tenth part

*Jacob Continued it. (Ge. 28:20-22)*And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, 21 So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the LORD be my God: 22 And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.

TENTH – to accumulate; but used only as to tithe, take or give a tenth:

*Moses Confirmed it. (Le. 27:30)*
And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD'S: it is holy unto the LORD.

*Malachi Commanded it. (Mal. 3:10)*

Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

*Jesus Commended it. (Mt. 23:23*)
Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint *(sweet-scented plant,)*and anise*(dill)* and cummin,*(dill)* and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

*God Commissioned it. (I Co. 9:14)*Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.

*Paul Conformed it. (I Co. 16:2)*

Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

Abraham and Jacob tithed 500 years **BEFORE** the Law was instituted.

Under the Law tithing was commanded. Under Grace, we do not tithe legalistically, *(one that veiws things from a legal stand point)*but because we love the Lord. Do you think God would ask less love, less faith, and less cheerful giving from a N.T. Christian than from a Jew under the Law? Tithing, for the Christian, is not a matter of bondage. It’s a matter of freedom

**Wouldn’t you rather have a blessed 90 cents than a cursed $1.00?**

The tithe is the Lord’s Le. 27:30 – And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD'S: it is holy unto the LORD.

Mt. 6,33 – But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

This is giving the Lord first place in everything.

Pr. 3,9 – Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase:

Can we do this? This means to set aside the tithe first; before all other bills and expenses.

Do we understand that is why God said in Malachi 3, that His people were under a curse? They had received blessing from God, but withheld from God what was rightfully His.

It is as if God’s people were saying, "God, I will take all the blessings you have for me, but I will not submit myself to you as the One who is greater than me. I will not recognize your rights over my life as the greater. I will take your blessings, but I will not give you tithes.

You see their robbing from God in the tithe was not just a math problem. It was not that they could not figure out what one tenth of all their income was. That was not the issue.

The Issue was a relational one. It was a heart problem... not a law problem. These people had become takers. Their wants, desires, and personal agendas took precedence over God’s will. They lived by human wisdom believing that their needs for self and family would be met as they honored self first, rather than honoring God first. Their rights became more important.

You ask anyone who doesn’t believe in tithing how their finances are going, most time if they are honest, they will have to tell you that they are barely making it! If at all!

Two-thirds of the parables Jesus taught were about finances! And the reason for this is simple: He chose a topic with which everyone could relate. In His parables Christ was describing a SPIRITUAL kingdom that is actually more real than this material kingdom. But in order to identify with worldly people, He had to use a worldly example; MONEY!

16 out of 38 of Jesus’ parables deal with money.

More is said in the New Testament about money than is said about heaven & hell combined.

While there are over 500 verses on prayer & faith, there are over 2,000 verses about money & possessions.

**But Christ never said that money or material things were problems. Instead, He often taught that they were the symptoms of underlying problems.**

Bring the **WHOLE** tithe into the storehouse. What is the storehouse to you? It’s where you get feed at. Would you put money in one store & go & get your food at another?

Tithing is an act of 5 different things:

(1) **W**orship (Ge. 28:20-22) – And ***Jacob vowed a vow***, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, 21 So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the LORD be my God: 22 ***And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.***

(2) **H**oliness (Le. 27:30) – And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD'S:***it is holy unto the LORD***.

(3) **O**bedience (Jn. 14,15) – "If you love Me, keep My ***commandments***.

The fact is that the average church attending Christian gives less than 3% of their income. In fact, if every Christian were to lose their jobs and went on welfare, and tithed from their welfare checks, giving in the American churches would increase over 30%. This just shows that as Christians, we are generally willing to give God credit for everything! But few are willing to give Him cash!

Jesus stated in Luke 12:15 – "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for a man’s life does NOT consist in the abundance of his possessions."

(4) **L**ove (John 14:21) – "Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me."

I like what Paul speaks of. Excellence in giving is to show love as He did (II Cor. 8:8,9) – I speak not by commandment, but I am testing the sincerity of your love by the diligence of others. 9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.

(5) **E**vangelism

Paul continues in his writing in II Corinthians by saying, *"Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else."*

*Malachi 3:10*, claims that God can be tested by tithing.

Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

The word for 'to prove' is the Hebrew word **bachan**and it means ‘to try or to test as metal is tested for its purity’.

If gold can be tried by the water displacement method, and your works can be tested by fire, How then can God be tested?

Tithing existed prior to the existence of the Law. Tithing is not a Jewish law! It is a Godly principle. If you did not obey a Jewish law, you were punished severely. There was not physical punishment among Jews who did not tithe. The only punishment, according to the Word of God, for not tithing, is the punishment of curse!

And, I would rather be punished by man, than to have a curse from God on my life! Wouldn’t you?

LOOK AT THIS:

Lev. 27,13 – if he will at all redeem it, then he shall add a fifth part thereof unto thy estimation.

God is saying "If a man redeems any of his tithe, he must add a fifth of the value to it." If we do not pay our income tax, the IRS adds a penalty. God does the same. In God’s eyes it is, pay the tithe or pay the penalty.

I Co. 16:1-2 – Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. 2 Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

What we are seeing here is for us to set aside a sum. Who or what determines the size? Notice this is in keeping with his income. In other words, a percentage. How do we determine the percentage? By Scripture. The only percentage taught in Scripture is ten percent.

Thinking Biblically About... Money
Mark 12:41-44

And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. 42 And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. *(2 FIFTHS OF ONE CENT)*43 And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: 44 For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.

*Money is important*. That may sound overly obvious to many of you. After all, in our society money is considered to be the ultimate measure of success. It is almost, if not actually, worshiped in our culture.

*People count their personal worth by how much of it they have.*

*People look up to those who have lots of it, even if they are reprobates.*

*Money causes loads of trouble in marriages.*

*Money is important to us.*

Someone once said – "Money talks - It says bye-bye." I'm sure there is some truth to that statement. Probably all of us feel that we have heard those words as we have written checks to our creditors. But our text reveals that money talks in other ways as well. It speaks about our relationship to God, and what we value.

*What does it say about us?*

Some of us may have thought that our privacy was invaded, had we been making an offering on the day referred to in our text. We might have been offended. You see, on that day, recorded in Mark 12:41-44, Jesus was standing around the Temple treasury, looking at what the people put in. We know it as the story of the "Widow's Mite." Jesus, here, is evaluating the people's gifts in terms of their income.

**Why was Jesus doing that? *Because He is interested in what we give***.

Jesus was interested in what the people were giving and He is interested in what we give because money talks. What does money say about us? If Jesus watched us give, what would His opinion of You?

*God Cares About Our Giving*

Because of Jesus' action of observing the multitude as they gave, it should be obvious that God cares about our giving. What we see Jesus doing in our passage, God does all the time and in all things. He sees our giving and our living as well. The point of Jesus making a deliberate effort to observe the giving habits of these people, is that God is interested in our giving.

God is interested in our giving because He has a plan for our giving.

God's plan is called tithing. Tithing is giving God's way. It is a plan for regular, proportionate giving for the benefit of His Kingdom and for the benefit of His people. Because what we give and how we give is directly linked to our prosperity in the Lord, in both material and spiritual things, God cares deeply that we follow His plan in this area.

Now, the subject of money is a touchy one for some people. But we should be eager to know God's method for giving, and obey Him in this area. Our use of money impacts our life in many areas. Anyone who is serious about following the Lord must take his giving seriously.

God certainly does.

How do we give?

Do we tithe?

Do we give offerings?

Do we help the needily?

If Jesus were to observe your giving today, what would His opinion be?

*There are three reasons why some do not tithe.*

**1st) Is that they have never been taught to tithe.**

Because of the way some people react to the mention of money, some preachers never approach the subject. And with all that has gone on in the religious world in the last few years, some preachers are even more reluctant. Because some on TV seem to be only interested in feathering their nest with the contributions of Christian people, none of us in legitimate ministry want to appear as if we are simply interested in money. And so, some have never been taught to tithe.

But let me say that God is not just interested in your money; but He is interested in your money. Because He is interested in you and your welfare, I must be faithful to share with you the liberating message of what tithing can do for you.

**2nd) Reason people do not tithe is that they misunderstand the place of tithing in the Bible.**

Some do no think it is for today. But this is a misunderstanding of the principle of tithing as God's plan for giving. I suspect the real reason many object is that they do not want to tithe anyway.

Frank Hubbard *has said – "When a fellow says, 'It isn’t the money, but the principle of the thing,' it's the money."*

He is right. It says a lot about our attitudes toward God. Do you really believe you are glorifying God by not tithing?

**3rd) Reason people don't tithe is because they refuse to do so.**

Some people don't tithe because they refuse to do so, no matter what God says. I trust you are not in this category. If you are, you may want to look closely at your life. If you do, you may see the hand of God's judgment there. God will not be mocked. We refuse to obey Him at our own peril.

Jesus watched those who gave to the Temple treasury because God cares about our giving. He cares about our giving because He cares about our spiritual welfare.

Giving displays our love for Jesus. If we do not give God's way, our spirits dry up. Our fellowship with God is broken, and we take ourselves away from the place where God can bless us.

On the other hand, if we are faithful in our giving, God has promised that He will "open the windows of heaven" and bless us with a blessing until there is no more room to receive it.

*God Cares About How Much We Give*

We see from our text that Jesus not only observed their giving, He observed how much they gave. God not only cares about our giving, but also cares about how much we give.

*Notice what is happening in our text*: Jesus is sitting at the Temple treasury, observing those who are giving. At the Temple treasury were thirteen brass treasure chests, into which people put their contributions. These treasure chests were called "trumpets" because they were shaped like trumpets. The Mishnah tells us that upon each chest was an inscription indicating what the offerings were for. The money people dropped in*(they did not deal in currency in those days)* could make quite a racket. Because of this method of giving, some who wanted to make a show of their giving could easily do so. And while Jesus rebuked such an pretentious show, He never rebuked the giving of large gifts.

Our Scripture says He saw many rich people come along and put in very large sums of money. As they did this, He didn't say a word. He simply observed. Then there came along a widow. *Our text says she was a "poor" widow*. She had with her two coins. She had two "mites," or two "copper coins." They were some of the least valuable coins of the day. They were worth between one-forth and two-fifths of a penny.

To her, they were more valuable. These two coins represented approximately a day's wage for her. Furthermore, Jesus reveals that these two coins were all the money she had. They were all she had to live on.

Yet, this widow came and dropped both the coins into the Temple treasury. She gave all she had. She could have kept one of the coins. I believe it's significant that our Scripture reveals that she had two. Certainly a contribution of fifty percent of all you have would be a worthy gift indeed. But she gave, not fifty percent, but one hundred percent. She gave **all**. And when she did, Jesus could not keep quiet any longer. He had not said anything when the rich gave great sums of money. He had merely observed. But when this widow gave all she had, Jesus became alive. *He turned to His disciples and He said*, *"Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the contributors to the treasury. For they all put in out of their surplus, but she, out of her poverty, put in all she owned, all she had to live on."*The widow's giving impressed Jesus. It impressed Jesus because of how much she gave. God cares about how much we give.

In proportion to what the rich people had, they had only given a very little. Jesus said they gave out of their*"surplus.*" In other words, they gave what they had left over. What they gave, though it was a great deal in terms of money, was never missed by them because it was out of their *"surplus."*But the widow was different indeed. What she gave was all she had. What she gave cost her. What she gave was a sacrifice. And Jesus commended her for it. This impressed Him because it meant that this widow was a true worshiper.

Worship through giving; what costs us should characterize Christian stewardship.

While they were giving large sums of money, it really cost them nothing. The widow, on the other hand, gave to God that which cost her all she had. That's the kind of offering Jesus became excited about. What she gave was a greater proportion of what she had.

*God has commanded us to give proportionally.*

In Malachi 3:10 it says, "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse..."

Leviticus 27:30 says, "...All the tithe... is the Lord's; it is holy unto the Lord."

By tithing, that is giving one tenth of all your income, to the Lord, everyone can give proportionally.

Whether a person makes five thousand a year,

fifty thousand a year,

or one hundred thousand a year,

One tenth of that money is the Lord's.

It costs the same for all. It is not equal gifts, but equal sacrifice the Lord is after.

Tithing is the beginning place for Christian stewardship.

*God Cares About How We Give*

God cares about our giving. He cares about how much we give. But He also cares about how we give. This is apparent in Jesus' reaction to the widow's gift. Perhaps there were others standing by, watching the rich put in great sums of money. Perhaps that crowd had been "ooohing" and "aaahing" over the size of the gifts. Then comes this woman, perhaps with head bowed, seeking to be as inconspicuous as possible. Trying to be unnoticed, she places her pittance in the offering chest. Do you suppose there was "ooohing" and "aaahing" when she made her contribution? I believe so. Not from the crowd, but from Jesus. He was excited about what she gave -- all she had, and also about how she gave -- with a heart toward God.

You see, ***you can give out of many different motivations***.

You can give in order to be seen of men.

You can also give grudgingly.

Giving can simply be in order to get.

But, as believers, certain attitudes ought to characterize our giving. Jesus was excited because of the attitude which motivated this widow's gift. What should our attitudes be as we give?

A man died and went to Heaven. There, he made this comment concerning his use of money on earth. He said, "What I spent, I lost; what I saved, I left; and what I gave, I have."

We do not lose what we give. We send it on before us, that there may be treasure in heaven. And, as a matter of fact, the more treasure we store in heaven, the more we experience on earth.

The promise of God is that as we give, He will give back to us. He will open the windows of heaven to us. But even if He didn't, we should give anyway.

C. T. Studd, the famous missionary said, "If Jesus Christ is God and died for me, then no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for Him."

Thinking Biblically about money means that we learn to use money and not be its servant. It means that we will be set free from the tyranny of greed and become like the greatest giver of all -- Jesus.

CHRIST'S ATTITUDE TOWARD TITHING

*Christ Endorsed It*
I repeat that Jesus Christ did not repeal the law concerning tithing, but rather He endorsed tithing. If tithing was not burdensome to those in Old Testament times, although they were required to give much more than is asked today of Christians, they surely we can give that portion of our income which belongs to God cheerfully and willingly.

*Did Christ Tithe?*Tithe-paying was a general practice in the days of our Lord. The sect which was strictest concerning tithing was the Pharisees. In order to be admitted into the fellowship of the Pharisees, one was obligated to pay his tithe. He was obligated to tithe what he bought, what he sold, and what he ate. But what was the attitude of our Lord concerning the paying of tithes? Our Lord could not ignore the matter of paying tithes because He was brought face to face with it every day of His life. Even to buy a pennyworth involved the consideration of whether the penny had been tithed. If a woman set before her husband untithed food, it was an offense grave enough to permit divorce. Jesus had to face the question of tithing day after day. He taught the people as one having authority, and we can be sure that they were not silent in their questions on this point. If Jesus Christ had not been a tither, this would have been one of the first complaints of the Pharisees; for, even when our Master dined with sinners, they murmured, "Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?" (Matthew 9:11). But not once is Christ questioned concerning His obligation to tithe. The Pharisees were continually watching every word and action, seeking to find fault with Him; but they never found it on this point. The very fact that Jesus Christ was admitted into the homes of the Pharisees for meals is evidence that He was a tither: "And as he spake, a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him: and he went in, and sat down to meat" (Luke 11:37). This was definitely against the vow of a Pharisee to be the host of an outsider--that is, one who did not adhere to the Pharisaical vow.

*Jesus Fulfilled the Law*Jesus Christ did not come to destroy the Law but to fulfill it. If one examines closely the teaching of Christ in the gospels, he will discover that Christ enjoined an almost lavish system of giving. He said to one man, "Sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven" (Luke 18:22). When Jesus urged men to follow Him, He expected them to surrender all. Man must deny self, take up the cross, and follow Jesus Christ. He must hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, and his own life also, or he cannot be Christ's disciple (Luke 14:26).

If Jesus Christ required such a rigid surrender on the part of His followers of some of the things that are most valued by all men--family relationships and their very lives--it is conclusive that man's money was not excepted.

There are those who feel that Christ denounced the Pharisees for their tithe paying. Christ did not offer disapproval to the Pharisee who said, "I give tithes of all that I possess" (Luke 18:12). His fault was not in his tithe paying but in his self-righteousness and egotism. Neither is there disapproval in Matthew 23:23: "Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin...these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone." The Lord id not disapprove of tithing but, on the contrary, expressed His approval by saying, "These ought ye to have done." This scripture most certainly expressed the attitude of the Lord concerning tithe paying.

Since tithing was generally accepted among religionists in the day of Jesus Christ, it was not necessary for Christ to issue a new commandment concerning tithing. He merely summed up the matter of giving with these words: "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

*THE TEACHING OF PAUL CONCERNING TITHING*

To the Corinthians
The Scripture, in 1 Corinthians 16:2, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him" does not have reference particularly to tithing. It is rather, the collection of monies for a charitable fund to take care of the poor of the church at Jerusalem. The churches of Corinth and Galatia were called upon for this special service.

*To the Galatians*
The Apostle Paul also encouraged the Galatian converts to support the ministry: "Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:6, 7). Seldom do individuals think of this scripture as having a monetary connotation; however, Paul is giving instruction concerning support of the ministry.

*To the Romans*In Paul's letter to the Romans, He sets a policy for the support of the ministry. He contended: "For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things" (Romans 15:27). Here the Apostle Paul stresses that it is the duty of those who are ministered to to give of their carnal or material things for the support of the ministry. A similar statement is made in his instruction to the Corinthian church: "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? (1 Corinthians 9:11).

It is contended by some that the Apostle Paul worked with his own hands and refused personal remuneration for his labors. It is true that, lest he should be classified with those false ministers who were transforming themselves into angles of light and making merchandise of the gospel, he did forego personal remuneration at times; but he did not give up his right to receive remuneration, for he writes of the liberality of the Philippian church in these words: "In the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me concerning giving and receiving, but ye only...ye sent once and again unto my necessity. Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account" (Philippians 4:15-17).

The support of the ministry, Paul claimed, was an ordination of God. For he declared, "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel" (1 Corinthians 9:14). If Jesus Christ ordained that they that preach the gospel live of the gospel, is it likely that He would ordain any other plan than the plan that He himself followed, which was the plan of tithing? The Apostle Paul makes a comparison of the support of the ministry under the Old Testament and the support of the New Testament ministry. "Have we not power to eat and to drink?...Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges?...If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?...Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar?" (1 Corinthians 9:4, 7, 11, 13). Then, following this, He says, "Even so hath the Lord ordained" (v. 14), which leads us to believe that God would have His people to set apart a certain portion for the ministry. Those that ministered about the sacred things of the Temple were given a certain portion, which the Levites were also given a tithe. Those who claim that all of the Law was aborted under the gospel must remember that tithing was not instituted under the Law. It was instituted before the Law was given. However, I am of the persuasion that the portion of the Law that concerns tithing was not annulled, but was fulfilled in the fact that Jesus Christ gave His distinct approval and endorsement of this method of support for the ministry.

Jesus confirmed tithing by approving the tithe payments of the Pharisees and ordaining that they that preach the gospel should live of the gospel. For those who would contend that the ministry is to be supported by mere freewill offerings, I refer them to Paul's comparison of those who ministered about sacred things in the Temple. It is well to note that while there were freewill offerings for the ministry, there was also a tithe given. If this is not the system for us today, then Paul's comparison is out of order. The very fact that the Lord ordained that ministers should "live of the gospel" should sweep away the thought that every man was left perfectly at his own liberty to give what he pleased; for, if this were so, there would be no ordinance or Law at all, and what Christ ordained would amount to little or nothing.

There are two major principles concerning giving that the Apostle Paul laid down in the New Testament. One is that tithes and offerings are to be given for the support of the ministry. The second is that each church should have a fund from which the poor can be supported when necessary.

WHAT ARE SOME BLESSINGS OF GIVING & TITHING?

*Six Biblical Reasons to Tithe*

*1. Tithing honors Old Testament principle of how God provided for the ministers, he called and the expenses of their ministry.*

In the Old Testament God designated one of the twelve tribes of Israel, the tribe of Levi, to be the tribe that would have the ministry of the tabernacle and the Temple. So instead of giving them a portion of the land, God said that these ministers of the tabernacle should live off the tithes of the other eleven tribes.

Numbers 18:20-21 – And the LORD spake unto Aaron, Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land, neither shalt thou have any part among them: I am thy part and thine inheritance among the children of Israel. 21 And, behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation.  If the question is raised whether Jesus, in the New Testament, continued this principle for the sake of his church, one of the strongest arguments that he did is *Matthew 23:23 where he says,   Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but****these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others.***

So Jesus endorses tithing:

1 Corinthians 9:13-14 Paul says – Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? 14 Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.

What Paul is saying – the church that in the Old Testament economy there was this system in which the Levites who worked in the Temple lived off the tithes brought to the temple. Then he says in verse 14 – *So also the Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living from the gospel.*

In other words when we tithe today we honor a principle and plan of God that sustained the ministry in the Old Testament and probably sustained the New Testament ministry as well.

*2. When we release a tenth of our income we honor God who owns everything, including all our income.*

One objection to thinking of a tenth of our income as especially belonging to God is that ALL our money belongs to God. Psalm 24:1, – *The earth is the Lord's, and all it contains, The world, and those who dwell in it.*

Giving God a tenth of our income does not deny that all our money is God’s, it proves that we believe it. Tithing is like a constant offering of the first fruits of the whole thing. The tenth is yours, O, Lord, in a *special* way, because all of it is yours in an*ordinary*way.

*3. Giving away a tenth of our income is an antidote to covetousness.*

The last of the ten commandments says: "Thou shalt not covet." Jesus said in Luke 12:15 – Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. Hebrews 13:5 – Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

Every time you give a tithe, you must deal with the desire for what you might have bought for yourself. To give is not to buy. And that weekly crisis is utterly important to maintain. We must fight covetousness almost every day. And God has appointed an antidote: giving. He tests us again and again: what do we desire most -- the advancement of his name or 10% more security and comfort and fun? As Jesus says, You know where your heart is by where your treasure is. Tithing is one of God’s great antidotes to covetousness.

***Illustration: John Wesley***

Take John Wesley for example. He was one of the great evangelists of the 18th Century, born in 1703. In 1731 he began to limit his expenses so that he would have more money to give to the poor. In the first year his income was 30 pounds and he found he could live on 28 and so gave away two. In the second year his income doubled but he held his expenses even, and so he had 32 pounds to give away (a comfortable year’s income). In the third year his income jumped to 90 pounds and gave away 62 pounds. In his long life Wesley’s income advanced to as high as 1,400 pounds in a year. But he rarely let his expenses rise above 30 pounds. He said that he seldom had more than 100 pounds in his possession at a time.

This so baffled the English Tax Commissioners that they investigated him in 1776 insisting that for a man of his income he must have silver dishes that he was not paying excise tax on. He wrote them, "I have two silver spoons at London and two at Bristol. This is all the plate I have at present, and I shall not buy any more while so many round me want bread."

When he died in 1791 at the age of 87 the only money mentioned in his will was the coins to be found in his pockets and dresser. Most of the 30,000 pounds he had earned in his life had been given away. He wrote, I cannot help leaving my books behind me whenever God calls me hence; but in every other respect, my own hands will be my executors. In other words, I will put a control on my spending myself, and I will go beyond the tithe for the sake of Christ and his kingdom. (Quotes from *Mission Frontiers*, Sept./Oct., 1994, No. 9-10, pp. 23-24*.*

*4. It is God’s way of bringing about many good deeds for his glory.*

2 Cor. 9,8 – And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:

*At the end of verse 8 Paul says that when you sow bountifully and cheerfully you will "have an abundance for every good deed."*The goals are good deeds.

Excess money is for good deeds. These are the things that make your light shine and cause people to give glory to your Father in heaven. If you lay up treasures on earth, people have no reason to think your Father in heaven is glorious. You look like you love what everyone else loves.

Titus 2:13 – Christ died "to purify for himself a people who are zealous for good deeds."

2 Corinthians 9:8 – may abound to every good work.

Verse 11 – Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God.

Excess money, from God is given to us so we can show where our treasure is by giving it away, or to the ministry of God’s.

*5. Because it will prove and strengthen our faith in God promises.*

There is an absolute correlation between faith in the promises of God and peace of mind in giving away what we may think we need but don’t.

Hebrews 13:5 – Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

Another version – Let your character be free from the love of money, being content with what you have; (why? because of a promise:) for He Himself has said, "I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you."

Every time you doubt that you can live on 90% of your income let the glorious promise of God strengthen your faith: *"My God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus"*(Phil. 4:19).

Tithing boils down to is a faith issue.

Do we trust God’s promises. There is no one else that we really can trust but God. He will never fail or forsake you. He is the one that will supply all your needs.

*6. Zit is God’s way of providing you, "the tither", sufficient money for your needs.*

Giving is a way of having what you need. Giving in a regular, disciplined, generous way -- up to and beyond the tithe -- is simply good sense in view of the promises of God.

2 Cor. 9,6 – He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

Verse 8 says, – And God is able to make all grace abound toward you;that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things,

In other words the "bountiful reaping" promised in verse six is explained in verse eight by God’s pledge to give a sufficiency for us and an abundance for good deeds.

**This seems to be Paul’s way of expressing MALACHI 3:10,**

*Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in a mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you’re the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.*

This is an amazing challenge from God. Test me, he says. You think you can’t afford to tithe? Well test me. And what we will find when we test him is that we cannot afford ***not***to tithe -- and beyond! This is the only safe way to handle our money.

Jesus Said, in Luke 6:38,

*Give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, they will pour into your lap.*

This is not a guarantee of getting rich. It’s a guarantee of ‘an abundance for every good work" and sufficiency for yourself.