

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

What is Tithing and Why Does it Matter?

The Topic of Money

- The topic of money is not a new topic for the church
- There are more than 2,000 scriptures about money, possessions, and tithing in the Bible
- Jesus himself talked about money often
- Jesus talked about money *more than* He talked about heaven and hell combined
- The reason why money is talked about so often in the Bible is there is a significant relationship between the way we handle our money and faith **Luke 12:34 (NLT2) 34** *Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.*
- Jesus warned us by saying our hearts would be where our treasure is
- We can tell where our heart is right now by looking at what we spend our money on
- Is Jesus saying we shouldn't spend on ourselves, our children, entertainment, or other things?
- No, Jesus is saying when these things come before giving to God, we have a *priority* problem

What is a Tithe?

- The word tithe means a *tenth part*
- The tithe was first mentioned when Abraham gave a tithe of all he had to the Priest Melchizedek after he prayed blessings on him
- Godly honor stirred a commitment of stewardship within Abram.
- The tithe is not "any" tenth, but the *first* tenth **Proverbs 3:9 (KJV) 9** *Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase:*
 - The tithe is a tenth off the top, the gross
- We are to give God the *first and best* portion of our harvest
- Many people give God their "leftovers"
- God wants the first part of our income
- This demonstrates that *God*, not possessions, has *first place* in our life and that our resources belong to Him
- Giving to God *first* helps us conquer greed, helps us properly manage God's resources, and opens us up to receive God's special blessings
- Tithing is discussed and practiced the **Old Testament** and the **New Testament**

The Tithe is Holy

Leviticus 27:30 (KJV) 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.*

- The tithe is *holy unto God*, to be holy means to *set apart* for a specific purpose
- The tithe is the Lord's
- The tithe *belongs* to the Lord
- The tithe is in your possession but it's *not* yours
- If you use the tithe for other things, the Law required you to pay tithe *plus* interest **Leviticus 27:31 (NLT2) 31** *If you want to buy back the LORD's tenth of the grain or fruit, you must pay its value, plus 20 percent.*

What is Stewardship?

- Stewardship is the *management* of money, assets, and resources that *belong* to another
- Everything we have belongs to God **Psalms 24:1 (KJV)**
- **1 The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.**

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- Biblical stewardship covers every area of your life:
 - *Time - Ephesians 5:15-16 (KJV) ¹⁵ See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, ¹⁶ Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.*
 - *Talent – 1 Peter 4:10 (KJV) ¹⁰ As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.*
 - *Testimony - 1 Thessalonians 2:4 (KJV) ⁴ But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts.*
 - *Treasure - 1 Corinthians 16:1-2 (KJV) ¹ 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.*

The Common Barriers to Tithing

- *It's my money, I earned it 1 Chronicles 29:14 (NLT2) 14 But who am I, and who are my people, that we could give anything to you? Everything we have has come from you, and we give you only what you first gave us!*
- When we say it's "my money", we're being selfish, and we've forgotten *the source* of our increase
 - God gives us the ability and the privilege to use our gifts, talents and abilities to earn a living; all of it came from God
- *I can't afford to tithe 2 Corinthians 8:2 (NLT2) 2 They are being tested by many troubles, and they are very poor. But they are also filled with abundant joy, which has overflowed in rich generosity.*
 - The Bible tells us to put God first in everything, including our finances
 - Oftentimes the reason we say we can't afford to give is because our priorities are out of order
 - Tithing is not about *the amount*, it about *the heart*
 - Honoring God with the tithe may require you to look at your current spending and eliminate the unnecessary expenses and begin to practice tithing
- *What if ____ happens again? 1 John 4:18 (NLT2) 18 Such love has no fear, because perfect love expels all fear. If we are afraid, it is for fear of punishment, and this shows that we have not fully experienced his perfect love.*
 - One of the greatest hindrances to tithing is fear
 - We fear some unforeseen thing may happen and we won't have the resources to handle it
 - It may be the fear of past experience happening again
 - We can't allow what happened in the past to impact how you give now
- *The church doesn't need my help*
 - Every church member has a role to play in the church
 - Your tithe may not appear to be much by itself, but when it's added to what others are giving, it becomes significant

God's Call to Repentance

Malachi 3:7. Ever since the time of your forefathers you have turned away from my decrees and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you," says the LORD Almighty.

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"But you ask, 'How are we to return?' 8. "Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. "But you ask, 'How do we rob you?' "In tithes and offerings.

- The children of Israel had a lack of reverence and respect for the ordinances of God
- In Malachi 1:6, Children honor their parents and slaves respect their masters, but God was not given any honor
- They viewed obeying God as unimportant
- Their attitude about giving effected their obedience
- They placed defiled food on God's altar
- They gave God leftovers
 - Would you have special dinner, invite guests and serve leftovers?
 - They went through the motions, but missed the point: God is first and deserves the best
- They treated their government better than they treated God
- God tells them the they are robbing Him, they get mad and said, what do you mean we are robbing you?
- God says you have robbed in tithes and offering
- God called them *robbers*, not "thieves"
- The difference between a robber and a thief is *visibility*

My Attitude Affects Me And Others Connected To Me

9. You are under a curse--the whole nation of you--because you are robbing me.

- Living under a curse determines the outcome of a thing
- A non-tither will live under a curse in the financial arena of their life
- God is trying to show us our way is not working, return to Him
- The non-tither curses himself, his family, and others linked to him

Put God to The Test

10. Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty,

- The whole tithe is 10% off the top
- The storehouse is where you are spiritually fed, the church where you are a member
- Your tithe funds the ministry, the church
- When we live by God's plan there will be no lack in His house
- God challenges you to test Him in giving so that He can *demonstrate* His faithfulness to you

God's Promises To The Tither

Malachi 3:10... "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it. 11. I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not cast their fruit," says the LORD Almighty. 12. "Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land," says the LORD Almighty.

- Blessings also relate to the outcome of a thing
- 1. You will see God open the *floodgates of blessing* for you
 - A floodgate is gate that regulates a the flow of water
 - So when I tithe God throws open the floodgates of blessing for me

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- When the floodgates open the flood is going to occur quickly (i.e. a flash flood), sudden blessings, miracles, unexplained blessings
- The flood is also going to be fast moving (I may skip some steps and still reach my destination)
- When the floodgates open, you will see and know it's God
- This flood is going to move the stubborn thing in your life
- Once this flood starts, it can't be stopped
- This flood is caused by supernatural forces (rain or wind) both symbols of the Holy Ghost
- A flood is an overflow, an abundance of water
- **When you obey God by tithing, you're living in a floodplain!**

2. Nothing can contain your blessing

- When the floodgates open you have nothing to hold all that God has flowing to
- If all that God has flowing to is too much for you to contain, don't hoard it let it flow others
 - Let it flow to others, if someone by you does not have anything to give, you can give for yourself and give to others
- You are blessed to be a blessing
- Let it flow past 10%

3. God will prevent the pests from eating your blessing

• **11. *I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not cast their fruit," says the LORD Almighty. (material blessings)***

- A pest is something you can live with, but you will be better off living without
- God is saying I'm going maximize what you already have
- I'm going to bring the fruit on the vine to full growth
- God is saying since I'm your Lord I'll be on *pest patrol* for you
- I'll whisper in your ear before you make decision, that's a pest

4. No premature harvests

- Your life won't be too early or too late anymore
- You will live in God's perfect timing
- God is saying since I'm your Lord, I'm now fully responsible for you and everything associated with you

5. Others will recognize you are blessed

12. *"Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land," says the LORD Almighty. (spiritual blessings)*

- Believers and unbelievers will recognize as the one God has His hand on
- You will be a living testimony that the Word of God works **2 Corinthians 9:12 *For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God;***
- You can answer the tithing question by how God has blessed your life since you started tithing
- You will say to yourself, I don't even miss it because I realize it wasn't mine from the beginning