

TITHING UNTO GOD

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May, 2000

Giving is one of the subjects on which the Lord's people often go astray. Even some in the Endtime Message, who profess to take the Bible as their rule of faith and practice, ignore its teachings concerning *tithes and offerings*, trying every device the natural mind can conjure up in order to prosper. Therefore, it is no wonder that some work that God has truly ordained is crippled because of a lack of finance. We ministers sometimes fail to preach the truth concerning this subject, fearing we will be accused of trying to line our own pockets. But, God has ordained that His people hear the truth, and then it is up to them.

QUOTE: ENTICING SPIRITS, PAGE 91, "Today, we're trying to take the place of God's *tithing*. They're trying to adopt something (else), they're trying to make it different. They go down and have bunco games in the churches, play lottery. Lottery will never take the place of God's *tithing*. Suppers, blanket selling, picnics to raise money to pay different debts off, it'll never take the place of God's *eternal tithing and offering*. It'll never do it. But, yet we're trying to do it." (End quote)

What does the scripture have to say about *tithing and giving offerings*? Surely, the Lord has not left us without instruction about this most important subject. The Bible is given as a "lamp unto our feet" and therefore God cannot leave us in darkness regarding our obligations in our dealings with Him. First, He makes His will known to us, clearly and without question, and then He holds us responsible for His Word. Our prayer is that

He will use this sermon as a help to our understanding, and then as we follow His instructions, may He deliver us from the heavy burden of trying to finance His work ourselves.

Many are the deliverances that the Bride of this hour must experience, and may I say that deliverance from financial worries is not the least of these. The Lord does not intend for us to "Take thought about our life, what we shall eat, or what we shall drink, nor yet for our bodies, what we shall put on." (Matt. 6:25) But, as we "First seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, all these things will be added unto us." (Matt. 6:33) Neither are we to be concerned about the wherewith to carry on the work He sets before us. Our obligation is to wait upon Him until we know what work is truly His, and then as He opens the doors, we step through. The Lord never fails to finance His own work. The problem arises when we attempt to push one of our projects through. May He teach us to wait and pray until His leading is certain.

Some of the Lord's people are in desperate financial straits because of their lack of knowledge in the matter of *tithes and offerings*. Others are in the same strait because they refused to obey the Word concerning it, giving in rather to a spirit of covetousness. Still others suppose they will be excused from *tithing and giving* on the grounds of their poverty, and so they wait to be increased in finance before giving to God. For this reason, the

poor become poorer, never realizing that God has appointed *tithing* as the solution to their financial problems.

QUOTE: JUST ONE MORE TIME LORD, PAGE 22, "Take the bunco games out of the churches, and the races (competitive games). Bunco is lottery (gambling), and all these soup suppers to pay the preacher. GET BACK TO GOD'S SYSTEM OF TITHING. COME BACK TO THE WORD." (End quote)

Early in the history of the human race, God made it known that a definite part of the Christian's income should be given back to Him. In Gen. 14:20 it is written, "And he gave Him Tithes of all." Abraham gave Tithes to Melchizedek, and we have been well informed that this Melchizedek was God. We are not told why Abraham paid Tithes, but the fact that he did, and that it was not refused, shows that it was in God's mind that he do so.

In Gen. 28: 19-22, Jacob vowed to pay a *tenth* of all that God gave him. He declared that if God would take care of all his needs, and bring him safely back to his Father's house, "I will surely give the *tenth* unto Thee." Evidently, Jacob knew from some previous teaching, that *tithing* was a part of serving God. When we study the Law of Moses we find that *tithing* was definitely taught. In Lev. 27:30-32 we read, "All the tithes 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. And if a man will at all

redeem ought of his tithes (hold some back), he shall add thereto a fifth part thereof. And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the TENTH shall be Holy unto the Lord.”

The Lord spoke unto Moses concerning the Levites (the chosen Ministers of God). They were COMMANDED to take a Tithe from the people, and to then pay their own Tithe from the amount collected. Num. 18:25-26, “**And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, thus speak unto the Levites, and say unto them, when ye take of the Children of Israel the Tithes, which I have given you from them for your inheritance, then ye shall offer up a heave offering of it for the Lord, even a TENTH part of the tithe** (that you collected).”

From this we learn that the support of the Ministry in the Old Testament was not left to the changing whims of the people, but their livelihoods was a definite amount specified by the Lord. The priestly families lived off a TENTH, and they in turn paid their TENTH. But, after Israel had settled in their land, they failed miserably in their obedience to this Law of Tithing. But, it is very interesting to note that every time God brought them back to Himself, He always restored Tithe paying. In II Chron. 30, is recorded a great revival that took place in the days of Hezekiah. There had been a time of terrible backsliding under the rule of previous kings. They had even failed to keep the Passover for many years, but Hezekiah gathered the people together in Jerusalem and reinstated this Holy ritual. And, not only did he continue the Passover, but he also commanded that Tithe paying be started again.

II Chron. 31:4-6, “**Moreover he commanded the people that dwelt in Jerusalem to give the portion of the priests and Levites (their Tithe), that they might be encouraged in the Law of the Lord.....they also brought in the Tithe of oxen and sheep.**” It was the LAW OF THE LORD that they pay Tithes, and then following their obedience, God abundantly blessed them. In the last book of the Old Testament, Malachi brings us further down the road toward New Testament days. He points out how the remnant that returned in the days of Nehemiah had also departed from some things taught in the Law. Among these things, was Tithe paying and the giving of offerings.

Note, the charges that God brings against them in Mal. 3:7-8. “**Even from the days of your Fathers you are gone away from My ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto Me and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of Hosts. But ye said, wherein shall we return? Will a man rob God? Yet, ye have robbed me. But ye say where in have we robbed Thee? In Tithes and Offerings.**” What a solemn thing to be charged with robbing God! Some today, as were these Israelites, are unaware that they are robbing God by not tithing.

I recently listened to a T.V. minister who was admonishing his congregation to repent of all their sins. (Very good advice.) Then, he proceeded to accuse some of them of having “pulled a heist” that very morning, and that it had been done after they arrived at church. Many of the faces registered surprise as they looked at the minister, and at each other. Then, he went on to explain that they had robbed God by not paying their Tithes and giving an Offering. It was very evi-

dent that he had caught their attention. May our attention also be drawn to the seriousness of such stealing.

But, what about Tithe paying in the New Testament? God has said repeatedly in the Old Testament that the people should pay Tithes, and there is nothing in the New Testament that introduces any change in His Law. Jesus, Himself, acknowledged Tithe paying in Mat. 23:23. “**Woe unto you Scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites. For ye pay Tithe of mint and anise and cummin, 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.**” These Pharisees had been very strict in Tithing, and the Lord did not question that at all, rather did He say they were right in that part, but fell short in other important matters. It is very evident here that He did not set aside Tithe paying. He placed *justice and mercy* as being *more weightier*”, but at the same time gave His authority to tithing. “**These ought ye to have done.**”

We go now to scripture in I Cor. 9:13-14, “**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? Even so, hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel.**” The word *tithe* is not found here, but it is definitely implied. In verse 13, the Holy Ghost reminds the New Testament Saints that under Moses’ Law, God made provision for the welfare of those who ministered in the Temple. And now, in this New Testament dispensation, He says “**Even so.**” (Verse 14) “**Even so, the same method is to be used to**

support the Ministers of the New Testament Gospel."

Again, we look at 1 Cor. 16-2. Once again the word *tithe* is not actually used, but clearly implied. The principle of Tithing is to be found here. **"Now, concerning the collection for the Saints, as I have given order to the Churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store as God has prospered him."** Here Paul is setting forth a predetermined program, an act of "giving up" a sum of money. The sum was to be determined according to how they had been prospered. In other words, the more God had given them, the more they were to give. The TENTH part of what they had been given is implied, as we tie these verses in with other scripture.

The giving was not a spur of the moment thing as far as the Tithe was concerned. The amount was to have been, **"Laid by in store"**, and that according to a predetermined percent of what had been received. It was not left to the individual's own whim, or impulse. Ten percent of all income belongs to the Lord, and nothing has at all been given until after this is paid.

Let us look further at the above scripture. Verse 2, **"Upon the first day of the week let everyone of you lay by him in STORE."** This **"Laying by in store"**, points us back to the scripture in Mal. 3:10. **"Bring ye all the Tithes into the storehouse."** The Tithe is to be brought into the church where you worship and receive your spiritual instruction. The Pastor there is to receive your Tithes.

QUOTE: AS THE EAGLE STIRRETH HER NEST, "Cluck, cluck, cluck, we're going to have an old supper over here tonight, we got to pay the pastor. We

got to have some kind of a sale to pay the..." When it gets to a place like that, the church ought to close its doors. **PAY YOUR TITHES AND THE PASTOR WILL BE PAID."** (End quote)

There is one other important scripture to be examined concerning Tithe paying. Heb. 7:5-6, **"And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a COMMANDMENT to take Tithes of the people according to the Law, that is, of their Brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham."** God's appointed way for the financing of the work He places in our hands is that of Tithing. He intends for us to be strict in setting aside one tenth of all we receive, to be given to His cause. Where the Christians are faithful in so doing there will be no shortage of funds.

If Tithing be ignored, there is almost always a shortage. In these cases, unscriptural methods are often resorted to in effort to raise money. Never has the Lord ordained for His people to pull for money. Our needs are to be made known to Him and Him alone. Then, when the answer comes we definitely know from whence it came. A Christian who has supposedly been grounded in the faith, does his Lord a grave injustice in the eyes of the world by appealing for money. They are constantly watching us. Truly God meets our needs through the Church and the people, but when we make appeals to them ourselves, we do show forth a lack of faith in the scripture that says, **"But my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in Glory by Christ Jesus."** (Phil. 4:19)

For the Christian to resort to the lowly practices of appealing to others for money, whether he is a

lay person or a minister, is a sure way to gain the disapproval of God, and His fellow Christians. But even worse, he will bring reproach from the WORLD upon the whole Christian Family and place a stone of stumbling before the unsaved. It is true that sometimes we are led to give to some who make their appeals, but we do understand that it is a sign of immaturity and we pray and wait for them to mature. May God speak to some hearts.

In examining Mal. 3:10, we see a most remarkable statement our Lord made. **"Bring ye all the Tithes into the Storehouse..... AND PROVE ME NOW HEREWITH, SAITH THE LORD OF HOSTS."** God says, **"Prove Me."** He is saying, place Me on trial, or put Me to the test in this matter of Tithing and see what I will do. We are bidden to give Him one tenth of our income and then see if He will let us be the looser. He says, try Me and see if I will be any man's debtor! Precious Saints who fear and tremble about their financial welfare and who may only make a meager amount, are shown the way to financial prosperity. Pastors, both here and overseas, if you are not already doing so, take your Bible and teach your people to Tithe and give Offerings. You will not only solve their financial problems, but your own as well.

USE OF THE TITHE MONEY

All the Tithe money from a church belongs to the Pastor and God holds him responsible for its use. If he be a true God-called man, he will not take any surplus and live higher than the generality

of the people who support him. If he chooses to give all, or part, back to the church, that is between him and God, but first he must pay his tenth to another Levite (minister). Any money remaining in his hands is to be used at his discretion. A good Pastor is concerned with the needs of his people, as well as the up-keep of the meeting place, and may be well expected to give offerings in this direction from any surplus.

A lay member may not give of his Tithes to a widow or to the poor, or into a fund to maintain the Church, or to any need other than the Pastor. But once the Pastor has received of their tithes he may roof the Church, feed the poor, or give to the widow, AFTER his ten percent goes to another minister.

QUOTE: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS C.O.D. BOOK, PAGE 680, QUESTION: Would it be wrong to use tithes on church building funds? ANSWER: "Well, now here's a touchy little thing for

the church. No, correctly Tithes are to go to the minister. That's right! In the Bible, they had a box that they'd set at the door in the Old Testament building. This box was a fund where the people put in there for the repairing.....they kept up the building and things like that.....all the repairs on the building was taken care of out of that fund....but ALL THE TITHINGS went to their Priests, their Pastors. Yes, Tithings are to go for nothing else. I know people take their Tithes and give them to a widow woman. That's wrong. If you've got anything to give the widow woman, give her, but DON'T GIVE HER GOD'S MONEY. That's not yours in the first place. That's God's." (End quote)

Every Christian is obligated to pay Tithes and give offerings, no matter how poor he may be. It is a command of God.

QUOTE: GOD MISUNDERSTOOD, PAGE 617, "I would like

to give you a personal testimony, of how that I was even hungry, and my Mother and them hungry, and my Daddy sick, but I took my Tithes out first and gave it to God, and you ought to see what happened.....if God don't bless that, call me a hypocrite. Yes Sir!.....Every Christian should pay Tithes." (End quote)

Tithing is an antidote to covetousness, a test of faith for new Christians to help establish their trust in a faithful God and the answer to every financial problem that can arise in connection with His work. If God's people practiced Tithing today, it would be and end to the financial straits that are crippling so many of His enterprises, both here and in the poorer countries. But do not forget OFFERINGS. The tithe is not yours to give. It is a debt that you owe the Lord. You have not begun to give until you have done your Tithing. Amen!

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