

## Sunday School Lesson for the Months of October and November, 2024

### Tithing

(Sunday, October 13, 2024)

Subjects that touch our wallets and purses, taps a very sensitive nerve. When a person says, “**it’s not the money but it’s the principle of the thing,**” – when it’s the money!! Talk of giving makes us nervous, but the idea of tithing arouses feelings of hostility in some of us. Our immediate reaction is often to dismiss it as either, **bringing in the law,**” or at least the classic example of a minister who has “**quit preaching and gone to meddling.**”

My hope of convincing you is that: **(1)** you are a Christian; **(2)** you really want to please the Lord; and **(3)** you want to be governed by the Bible.

### A Solution No One Talks About

Tithing is a solution no one talks about. If every professing Christian would tithe, every congregation would be free of financial worries and could begin to truly be, “*the salt of the earth*” (Matt. 5:13). If every Christian would tithe, the church would begin to make an impact on the world that would change it. The church, instead, is paralyzed. Tithing Christians could make a big difference, but because most Christians do not tithe, the churches remain in a generally discouraged state. Many churches struggle to pay their bills: (utilities, and staff salaries). Perhaps, a church will do something about redecorating its premises or improving the building if it has extra money. No money for missions is available when tithing expectations aren’t met. A handful of the faithful members carry on most Christian work with precious little money.

The world is unimpressed with the church because the church has not commanded the world’s attention and respect. When we do not support the work of God according to the

biblical pattern, it should not surprise us that the world does not respect us. Why should they, when we don't respect God – or His way? We show how much we care according to how much we give.

Tithing is a solution to one's own spiritual problem. Part of the problem with your Christian growth has to do with fidelity in the stewardship of money. Sooner or later, every Christian faces the use of his money. What happens then? Either he will squarely and honestly face his Christian responsibility, or he will draw back. **Jesus said, "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much." (Luke 16:10)**

Becoming a tither provides a definite break-through for every Christian. It unlocks the door to the mind, heart and will. It releases, it emancipates, it frees. Becoming a tither is a milestone in every Christian's life. With some people, tithing begins with conversion, but with others, it is a post-conversion commitment. Tithing is as much a part of Christian gratitude and obedience as any commandment God ever gave. The time will come when one will see the rewards of tithing itself – not the blessing that emerges from doing it. Tithing becomes its own reward when we learn to thank God for the privilege of tithing.

Tithing is not only a solution for the church at a financial level; the same applies to individuals. Remember, **"He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and He which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully" (2 Cor. 9:6)**. The promises of **Malachi 3:10** clearly points to a material return as one kind of blessing from the Lord. Obviously, some will prosper more than others, owing to gifts, place of responsibility, or opportunity. But, at the bottom of it all is a promise for all believers that they will be honored [even at a material level] in such a way that, whether it be more or less than others, it is more than it would have been had they not been faithful in Christian stewardship. There are countless testimonies of financial hardships, debt, and distress until tithing was begun. Not that such people become millionaires, but that they lived without constant financial adversity.

(Sunday, October 20, 2024)

## Why Some Christians Don't Tithe

### Three Basic Reasons:

1. Some Christians do not tithe because they simply have not been taught to tithe. It must start in the pulpit. The Pastor must be a tither. The Pastor must teach the staff, officers, and people to tithe. Christian parents must teach their children to tithe.

2. Some Christians do not tithe because they do not understand the place of God's law in the Bible. The moment one raises verses such as "the tithe is the Lord's" (Lev. 27:30) or, "will a man rob God?" (Mal. 3:8), someone is usually around who says, "but that's the Old Testament, we are not under the law but under grace." But is not the very word, "tithe" an Old Testament term? Yes, nearly everything we as Christians believe originated in the Old Testament. Words like, faith, atonement, redemption, righteousness, sin, and so forth, have their origin in the Old Testament, but not in the law. The big mistake we so often make is that we say, "if it is in the Old Testament, it must be under the law." This is wrong!! "The law is not of faith," said Paul (Galatians 3:12). Men like Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph did what they did by faith (Heb. 11:23-32), and this was written after the law came. The writer of the epistle to the Hebrews would have us follow all these men.

3. Some Christians refuse to tithe!! Some are convinced, others don't want to be convinced; but the bottom line is a refusal to part with what we regard as "ours." Someone has said, "if you don't tithe, God will get it anyway." It's not that God will get it for His work, but He most certainly has a way of keeping us from enjoying the entire 100 percent.

(Sunday, October 27, 2024)

## Why Every Christian Should Tithe

There is ultimately only one reason why every Christian should be a tither. Because it is biblical!!

All of us need encouragement about giving. None of us, by nature, is a tither. We will look for every possible loophole by which we can justify not tithing. Our Lord will not let us do that. You should tithe because of what it will do for God's work on earth. Look at **Mal. 3:10**, "**Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house.**" The same God who owns, "*the cattle upon a thousand hills*" (Ps. 50:10), and to whom the nations are but as a "*drop in a bucket*" (Is. 40:15), also claims His dependence upon His people to return to Him what is rightfully His – namely, the tithe.

**"The tithe is the Lord's."** Therefore, the prophet Malachi regards the withholding of any tithe as robbing God. God owns everything but will accept nothing unless freely given to Him. In as word: God depends on His people to tithe. There is nothing more, sad, than an underpaid minister. In most cases, were every member to tithe, the minister would not only receive his "double honor" (I Tim. 5:17) but the church would always have money to pay for its material needs.

You should tithe because of what it will do for God in heaven. What on earth, you may ask, can the tithe do for God? Answer: Much!!! How so? Because He loves us so much, God has invested Himself in us. God gave us His Son, and those who dignify His Son's work on the Cross have eternal life. We should tithe because of what tithing does for us. God blesses obedience. He waits to bless us. He wants to bless us far more than we want the blessings. But He waits to see whether we take Him seriously. What tithing does for us, then, is realized at two levels: **The natural and the spiritual.** The spiritual is by far the most important; for the very blessing that comes from heaven is essentially spiritual. It is God's telling us He is pleased with us.

Tithing is one way to find great spiritual release. When one enters the life of faithful tithing, there is a sweet release to be experienced that cannot be fully explained to another person. This release by itself is enough to fully convince one how serious God is about tithing. The peace and joy are so wonderful that a frequent reaction is a kind of sorrow that one had not been doing it sooner.

God has a way of blessing us materially that just happens to coincide with our having become tithers. The Lord has a way of making the 90 percent that we keep after the tithe equal the 100 percent before the tithe. Sometimes the 90 percent goes far beyond what that 100 percent would have gone. How can this be? Frankly, I do not know the answer – but I believe it!!!

**(Sunday, November 3, 2024)**

### **The Origin Of Tithing**

Tithing is not a twenty-first century idea or method..... It is generally believed that Abram was the first tither. The first time the word tithe appears in the Bible is in **(Gen. 14:20). “He giveth him tithes of all. He (Abraham) gave him (Melchizedek) tithes of all” [a tenth of everything]**. There is no indication that Abraham was told to tithe by Melchizedek himself. The Mosaic Law, which later made tithing a legal obligation, came over 400 years later. Therefore, Abraham was not keeping any prescribed command or law of God.

A straightforward reading of Abraham's giving to Melchizedek tithes suggests that this was done gratefully and voluntarily, but also systematically. The tithe comes from the “increase” or income. Abraham did what he did voluntarily. There was no mosaic law enforced then neither is there any indication that Melchizedek “assessed” Abraham to the tune of 10 percent. Melchizedek was not God's IRS agent. The government assesses – as does the Mosaic Law. But God puts those who have been touched by the Gospel on their honor.

Abraham was not promised a blessing for giving the tenth. He already had been blessed: Abraham gave not only voluntarily, but also systematically. He gave one tenth of all. Abraham was careful to give a “tenth of everything.” Let us follow his gratitude that we may be cheerful givers **(2Cor. 9:7)**.

Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek, who was a figure of Christ. When Mosaic Law made tithing legal and binding on Israel, it was the Levitical Priesthood to whom tithes were to be paid **(Num. 18:21)**. Therefore, Abraham’s giving to Melchizedek prefigured the New Testament pattern, that those who preach the Gospel should receive their living from the gospel **(1 Cor. 9:14)**. The tithes of all paid by all would enable every minister of the Gospel to live at this standard. The tithes therefore, should go directly and only into the storehouse which is the church.

### **The Gospel And The Law**

A common objection to tithing is that it brings in the Law. Some say, “we are not under the Law, but under grace” **(Rom. 6:14)**; therefore, tithing is “out” insofar as the Christian is concerned. Freedom from the Law of Moses is precisely what prepares one for the happy yoke of Christ’s Lordship. Freedom from is also freedom for.

“Take my yoke upon you,” said Jesus, “and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” **(Matt. 11:29-30)**. Under the new covenant of Christ, we have the freedom of self-discipline precisely because our faith, not our obedience, counts for righteousness **(Rom. 4:3-5)**. Tithing is not a carry-over from the Mosaic Law. It is a carryover from Abraham.

**(Sunday, November 10, 2024)**

### **Do You Tithe?**

Do you tithe? The logical answer to that question would be yes or no, depending upon whether you give 10 percent of

your income to the Lord. But, do you tithe? In the Old Testament the Jew gave a tithe of everything they possessed. So, do you really tithe?

- Were 10 percent of the miles on your car put there in service to the Lord?
- There are 168 hours in every week. Do you spend a tenth of those hours every week doing something for Jesus?
- Are 10 percent of the programs you watch on television religious in nature?
- Can you honestly say that 10 percent of your reading time is spent reading the Bible or some other Christian literature?

Now certainly every Christian should give 10 percent of their income to the Lord, but God gives us much more than money; therefore, we owe Him more than money.

I like what Paul said about giving in **(2Cor. 8:5)** **“and this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.”** God is not merely interested in your money, but He is interested in you. He wants to be first in every area of your life. That is what the Lordship of Jesus is all about – letting Jesus be the Lord of everything.

There are three kinds of givers –

- The flint
- The sponge
- The honeycomb

To get anything out of the flint, you must hammer it, and then you only get chips and sparks. To get water out of the sponge, you must squeeze it. The honeycomb however, just overflows with its own sweetness. **Which giver are you?**

**(Sunday, November 17, 2024)**

## **Scripture Studies On Tithing**

The following scripture studies can enrich your life as a Christian steward. Read the suggested Scripture references carefully. Reflect on the meaning and make personal application.

1. The Old Testament teaches (3) tithes:
  - (Num. 18:21-24) addresses the tithe for the Levites.
  - (Deut. 12:5-9) focuses on the tithe for worship celebrations.
  - (Deut. 14:28,29) teaches the tithe for charity.
2. The Tithe belongs to God – (Lev. 27:30-32)
3. Tithes are to be taken to place that God designates – (Deut. 14:24-25,28)
4. God promises to bless tithers – (Mal. 3:10-12)
5. Tithing is more than money – (Deut. 14:22,23)
6. Jesus commands tithing while emphasizing positive, spiritual attitudes – (Matt. 23:23)
7. Tithing is not the limit for Christian givers – (Mark 12:41-44)
8. Tithing can be misused through spiritual pride – (Luke: 18:10 -14)

## **Scripture References On Tithing And Giving**

Malachi 3:10

Matthew 23:23-24

Luke 18:12

Genesis 14:20

Genesis 28:22

Leviticus 27:30

2 Chronicles 31:5

Nehemiah 10:30

Nehemiah 13:12

Nehemiah 12:44