



The Lies We Believe About Money

Inductive Bible Study

Though giving a tithe to the Lord is largely an Old Testament practice, mentioned only sparingly by Jesus in the New Testament (Matthew 23:23-24), it is still the foundational starting point to guide our obedience in giving. The practice of tithing has never been set aside and, in fact, Jesus supports its continued practice, as long as the more important matters of justice, mercy and faithfulness take precedence. Therefore, this study will introduce us to the meaning and importance of the tithe in three key Old Testament passages.

Read Leviticus 27:30-33

- To what does the tithe apply and to whom does it belong?
- Note the process for the selection of the animals to be tithed. Why do you suppose the Lord chose such a “mechanical” approach?
- How might we fall into the practice of not giving our best to the Lord?

Read Deuteronomy 14:22-29

- What are the various uses for the tithe in these instructions of Moses?
- Who are the Levites, and why are they singled out for special provision?
- Why might the “foreigners, the fatherless and the widows” be selected as beneficiaries of the tithe?

Read Malachi 3:7-12

- The Lord through Malachi calls upon the people to return to him. In what way does the Lord require the people to “return”?
- The Lord asked to be “tested.” What does the Lord promise for those who tithe?
- Find yourself in this text: Place a check in the box(es) that applies and explain.
 - Robbed God: must honestly admit that I have withheld my giving.
 - Ready to trust God: I am ready to tithe and in faith watch God provide.
 - Am trusting God: Living on the stretch in trust and have watched God come through.

7 Biblical Steps to Financial Freedom

Step 1

All giving begins with attitude, not the amount. Giving has nothing to do with how much you have. The first step to financial freedom is to ask the Lord to show you how outrageously lavish His grace is toward you.

Step 2

Giving that is honoring to God has a thoughtful faith goal that is translated into a plan. What can you believe God for this year? Giving is not just reactive or sporadic, but done with forethought. Plan your giving in the same way that you would an addition to your house.

Step 3

Pay Go. Pay yourself (save). Pay your bills. It was the practice in the Old Testament that people gave the first fruits of the harvest or the best of their flock to the Lord. Make the first checks you write each month to further the Lord's work.

Step 4

Giving is an act of faith in the ability of God to provide, whatever the circumstances. The beauty of stepping out in faith in regard to your money is that it gives the Lord an opportunity to demonstrate His faithfulness to us in very tangible ways. How often do we get to see the Lord's hand clearly at work? When we trust God even in the lean times, and watch him provide, we have clear evidence that He is real.

Step 5

C.S. Lewis has said it best: "I do not believe one can settle how much we ought to give. I am afraid the only safe rule is to give more than we can spare. In other words, if our expenditure on comforts, luxuries, amusements, etc., is up to the standard common among those with the same income as our own, we are probably giving away too little. If our charities do not at all pinch or hamper us, I should say they are too small. There ought to be things we should like to do and cannot because our charities expenditure exclude them."

Step 6

There is no more exact guideline for obedience to give a tenth of our income to the Lord's work. Write down your annual or monthly income and multiply by 10 percent. Here is your goal and starting point. Build from there.

Step 7

Giving should always contain the element of the risk of faith. In the realm of stewardship, this is called making a "faith promise". In other words, the goal of giving is set to the level that the Lord must provide in faith. You reach at least a little beyond where you know the resources will come from. For those who have been practicing tithing for some time, the edge of adventure may have been lost. Giving has simply become a financial transaction. Consider what it would be to move beyond the routine, to a place of cheerful adventure.

Giving that is honoring to God is motivated by gratitude. Cheerfulness and the awareness of undeserved grace are inseparable. When we know what we have been given, we give. And then the cycle repeats itself. We get back what we give.