

## WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT: CHRISTIAN GIVING

Definition: A believer giving a portion of his wealth to the Lord, by faith, which symbolizes the consecration of it all.

There are three basic Bible principles on which this study is based:

PRINCIPLE #1: Psalm 24:1 (God owns everything!!)

**"The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein."**

PRINCIPLE #2: Deuteronomy 8:18 (What Christians have comes from God).

**"But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day."**

PRINCIPLE #3: Psalm 50:10-12 (God does not need the money of His children).

**"For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.**

**I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine.**

**If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof."**

### I. CHRISTIAN GIVING BEFORE THE LAW OF MOSES.

A. Abraham tithed before the Law was given.

1. Genesis 14:14-20 states:

**"And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan.**

**And he divided himself against them, he and his servants, by night, and smote them, and pursued**

them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus.

And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people.

And the king of Sodom went out to meet him after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer, and of the kings that were with him, at the valley of Shaveh, which is the king's dale.

And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God.

And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth:

And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all."

2. Abraham, recognizing the blessings of God on his wealth and on his family, happily and voluntarily gave the priest of God ten percent of all that he possessed.
3. This account is the first mention of "tithing" in the Bible.

B. TWO GENERATIONS LATER, JACOB PROMISED TO GIVE GOD A TITHE SOME THREE HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS BEFORE THE LAW OF MOSES.

1. This account is found in Genesis 28:16-22, which states:

"And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not.

And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.

And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it.

And he called the name of the place Bethel: but the name of that city was called Luz at the first.

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,

So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God:

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. Evidently, God laid this amount on the heart of Jacob.

## II. GIVING TO GOD UNDER THE LAW OF MOSES.

### A. THE NATION OF ISRAEL WAS COMMANDED BY THE LAW TO GIVE TEN PERCENT OF THEIR WEALTH TO THE LORD.

1. Leviticus 27:30-34 states:

"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.

And if a man will at all redeem ought of his tithes, he shall add thereto the 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.

He shall not search whether it be good or bad, neither shall he change it: and if he change it

at all, then both it and the change thereof shall be holy; it shall not be redeemed.

These are the commandments, which the Lord commanded Moses for the children of Israel in mount Sinai."

- a. This tithe was applied to ALL of a man's wealth.
  - b. This practice would provide a perpetual reminder to Israel that they were merely stewards of the blessings of God.
2. Numbers 18:21-26 states regarding the support of the Levites:

"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.

Neither must the children of Israel henceforth come nigh the tabernacle of the congregation, lest they bear sin, and die.

But the Levites shall do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation, and they shall bear their iniquity: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations, that among the children of Israel they have no inheritance.

But the tithes of the children of Israel, which they offer as an heave offering unto the Lord, I have given to the Levites to inherit: therefore I have said unto them, Among the children of Israel they shall have no inheritance.

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 an heave offering of it for the Lord, even a tenth part of the tithe."

3. Notice the Levites were to tithe as well.
4. This is the plan of God for the support of the ministry even today, as mentioned by Paul in I Corinthians 9:7-11, which states:

**"Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?**

**Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also?**

**For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen?**

**Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope.**

**If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?"**

5. In addition to their tithes, the Jews gave other offerings under the Law of Moses.

**B. TO WITHHOLD THE TITHE WAS CONSIDERED ROBBERY BY GOD.**

1. Malachi 3:8-9 states:

**"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.**

**Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation."**

2. The Jews began to cut corners in their giving as demonstrated by Malachi 1:8, 13, which states:

"And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the Lord of hosts."

"Ye said also, Behold, what a weariness is it! and ye have snuffed at it, saith the Lord of hosts; and ye brought that which was torn, and the lame, and the sick; thus ye brought an offering: should I accept this of your hand? saith the Lord."

3. Their offerings reflected their esteem of God.
4. David demonstrated the proper perspective in giving to the Lord in First Chronicles 21:18-24, which states:

"Then the angel of the Lord commanded Gad to say to David, that David should go up, and set up an altar unto the Lord in the threshingfloor of Ornan the Jebusite.

And David went up at the saying of Gad, which he spake in the name of the Lord.

And Ornan turned back, and saw the angel; and his four sons with him hid themselves. Now Ornan was threshing wheat.

And as David came to Ornan, Ornan looked and saw David, and went out of the threshingfloor, and bowed himself to David with his face to the ground.

Then David said to Ornan, Grant me the place of this threshingfloor, that I may build an altar therein unto the Lord: thou shalt grant it me for the full price: that the plague may be stayed from the people.

And Ornan said unto David, Take it to thee, and let my lord the king do that which is good in his eyes: lo, I give thee the oxen also for burnt offerings, and the threshing instruments for

wood, and the wheat for the meat offering; I give it all.

And king David said to Ornan, Nay; but I will verily buy it for the full price: for I will not take that which is thine for the Lord, nor offer burnt offerings without cost."

C. TITHING HAS NEVER COST ANYONE ANYTHING.

1. God issued a marvelous challenge to His people in Malachi 3:10, which states:

"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."

2. His plan will always prosper those who will be obedient.

III. GIVING TO GOD AFTER THE LAW OF MOSES.

A. BELIEVERS ARE NOT UNDER THE LAW OF MOSES TODAY.

1. Paul wrote to the Colossians in 2:13-14:

"And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;"

2. Paul further stated to the "church" in Rome in Romans 7:6:

"But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter."

B. THEREFORE THERE IS NO COMMAND FOR CHRISTIANS TO TITHE.

C. THEN HOW MUCH SHOULD A CHRISTIAN GIVE TO THE LORD?

1. The principles of the Word of God never change because they are based on the character and nature of God Himself.
2. Jesus Himself commended the practice of tithing when He said in Luke 11:37-42:

**"And as he spake, a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him: and he went in, and sat down to meat.**

**And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that he had not first washed before dinner.**

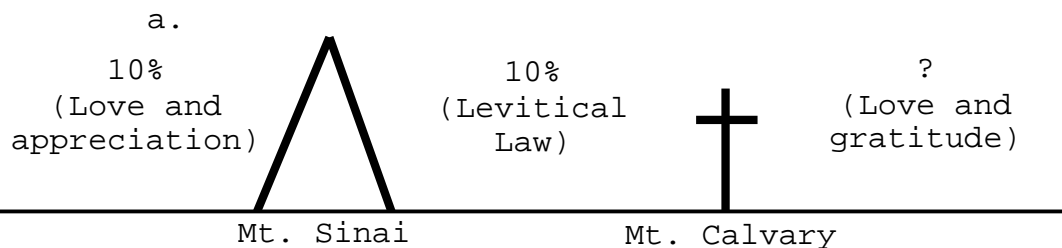
**And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness.**

**Ye fools, did not he that made that which is without make that which is within also?**

**But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and, behold, all things are clean unto you.**

**But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."**

3. Although the practice of tithing was commended by the Lord, it was not commanded by Him.
4. So, how much should a Christian give to the Lord?
5. Bro. Paul Goodwin, instructor at the Missionary Baptist Seminary, had an interesting illustration:



- b. The believer, not being under the commandment to give ten percent, today has the choice to give as he desires.

6. This is the clear teaching of the Word of God.

D. HOW SHOULD A CHRISTIAN GIVE TO THE LORD?

1. He should first give himself to the Lord.

- a. 2 Corinthians 8:1-5 states:

**"Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia;**

**How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.**

**For to *their* power, I bear record, yea, and beyond *their* power *they* were willing of themselves;**

**Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and *take upon us* the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.**

**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."**

2. The Christian should give willingly.

- a. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 9:7:

**"Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."**

- b. If the believer does not want to give, then he should NOT give!

3. The Christian should give regularly.

a. Paul said 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, that there be no gatherings when I come."**

E. THE REWARD FOR CHRISTIAN GIVING.

1. Malachi 3:10 states:

**"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."**

2. Paul stated in 2 Corinthians 9:6:

**"But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully."**

3. Jesus stated this principle in Luke 6:38:

**"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again."**

a. A believer simply cannot "out give" God.

b. "Show me a man who gives to the Lord and I'll show you a man who will always have something to give." (Roy Byrum).

c. There is a wealth the world does not understand and may not be found in a bank.

(1) Peace of mind.

(2) Joy unspeakable.

- (3) Faith in God.
  - (4) Children saved.
  - (5) Prayers answered.
4. Therefore, in the final analysis, Christian giving is taught in the Bible, and a pattern of tithes and offerings is shown in the Scriptures.

However, there is no law except: **"Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give..."**