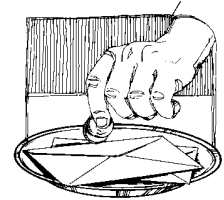


MINISTRY OF GIVING



A TIME FOR
GIVING

1. ARE WE EXPECTED TO GIVE OUR SUBSTANCE TO GOD?

The Bible speaks frequently concerning giving. It is obvious that a vital part of fellowship with God is the worshipful act of offering our substance to Him. This principle remains unchanged in both the Old and New Testament. Read Genesis 4:4; Mark 12:41-44.

2. WHAT IS THE MINISTRY OF GIVING IN OUR STEWARDSHIP OF FINANCES?

The ministry of giving is an act of worship and includes giving ourselves and all that we possess to God.

"For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability they gave of their own accord, begging us with much entreaty for the favor of participation in the support of the saints, and this, not as we had expected, but they first gave themselves to the Lord and to us by the will of God."

(II Corinthians 8:3-5)

3. HOW MUCH ARE WE TO GIVE?

A. The Holy Spirit directs our giving according to the Word in us, what we have, what is needed, and what is our fair share of responsibility.

"For if the readiness is present, it is acceptable according to what a man has, not according to what he does not have. For this is not for the ease of others and for your affliction, but by way of equality -- at this present time your abundance being a supply for their want, that their abundance also may become a supply for your want, that there may be equality."

(II Corinthians 8:12-14)

4. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO TITHE?

To tithe is to give or pay a tenth part of our income or substance for the support of God's program.

5. WHERE IS THE TITHE TO BE GIVEN?

In the Old Testament time, the tithes and offerings were brought to the "storehouse" which meant the local place designated by the spiritual leadership for the storage and disbursement of the people's substance. In the New

Testament the same principle applied. Your tithe should be given in the support of the local church program that ministers to your spiritual needs.

"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this," says the Lord of hosts, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven, and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows."
(Malachi 3:10)

Also read Acts 4:34-35.

6. WHY MUST WE BRING OUR TITHES TO THE LOCAL CHURCH?

Our tithes support the ministry and functions of the local church. In a small local assembly, the tithe could perhaps support only one minister, the pastor. As a congregation grows, other ministers (teaching, music, administrative) will be needed. Tithes also help to pay the expenses of the church.

"So also the Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living from the gospel." **(I Corinthians 9:14)**

7. WHAT LESSONS DO WE LEARN FROM THE BIBLE CONCERNING TITHES AND OFFERINGS IN BOTH OLD AND NEW COVENANTS?

A. The Bible commands a tithing of 1/10 before the Mosaic Law was given. Abraham tithed to Melchizedek, King of Salem. Read Genesis 14:18-20.

B. Jacob gave tithes before the law. Read Genesis 28:22.

C. The Bible called for tithing under the Mosaic law.

" Thus all the tithe of the land, of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's; it is holy to the Lord. If, therefore, a man wishes to redeem part of his tithe, he shall add to it one-fifth of it. And for every tenth part of herd or flock, whatever passes under the rod, the tenth one shall be holy to the Lord' ". **(Leviticus 27:30-32)**

D. God made clear His command for tithing through Moses. Read Numbers 18:24.

E. Jesus confirmed tithing under grace.

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law; justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others. " **(Matthew 23:23)**

F. Every Jew in Jesus' day recognized that tithing was important to God --

even the prideful Pharisee."

"I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get."

(Luke 18:12)

8. WHY IS THE NEW TESTAMENT ALMOST SILENT ON THE SUBJECT OF TITHING?

The New Testament primarily emphasizes those things that were changed from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant. Jesus had nothing to add to the principle of the tithe except the spiritual motive of love to God and love to man, without which, giving is meaningless.

9. WHAT DOES GOD SAY OF PEOPLE WHO OBJECT TO GIVING TITHES?

"Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing Me! But you say, 'How have we robbed Thee?' In tithes and offerings. You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing Me, the whole nation of you!" (Malachi 3:8-9)

10. DOES THE NEW TESTAMENT TEACH TITHING?

Tithing is mentioned in seven verses of the New Testament. The first two occurrences are given by Jesus Himself in **Matthew 23:23** and **Luke 11:42**

In addition to Jesus' statement, we also have the apostolic teaching in **Hebrews 7:5-10**. Here we find that the "*order of Melchizedek*" involves giving tithes to God Himself in spontaneous worship, rather than as a legal obligation to a dying order of earthly priests. **Hebrews 7** shows that tithing under the law was merely the legal, outward manifestation of a higher principle -- the faith that sprang joyfully from the heart of Abraham as he gave tithe to the eternal priesthood of the Living Lord Jesus! This is how we should give today, not grudgingly, but with genuine joy and worship.

"Let each one do just as he has purposed in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver." (**II Corinthians 9:7**)

11. WHAT SHOULD OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD MONEY BE?

We should prosper materially as we prosper spiritually so that we can handle the increase in a godly way!

"Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers." **III John 2**

Material prosperity without growth in our character and spiritual maturity can be a snare.

"But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith, and pierced themselves with many a pang."

II Timothy 6:9-10

12. IS IT RIGHT FOR CHRISTIANS TO TITHE THEIR MONEY FOR THE SUPPORT OF THEIR SPIRITUAL LEADERS? SHOULDN'T PASTORS WORK A SECULAR JOB TOO?

Paul clearly teaches in I Corinthians 9:1-14 that just as the Levitical priesthood lived from the people's tithes, so also should the New Testament ministry.

"Even so HATH THE LORD ORDAINED that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel".

I Corinthians 9:14

Just as soldiers, farmers, etc. are rightly paid their wages, so it must be with the ministry.

"Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, 'You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing,' and 'The laborer is worthy of his wages.' " **I Timothy 5:17-18**

Although Paul did not allow the Corinthian Church to support him (for circumstantial reasons) he says "forgive me this wrong" (**II Corinthians 12:13**). Jesus was supported by others (**Luke 8:1-3**) and He taught His disciples to rely on others (**Luke 10:3-11**). Early in the disciples' training they were taught that from now on they were to catch men, or be fishers of men. To supply the natural needs of His ministry, Jesus told Peter to go and catch a fish, and the fish would have the needed money (**Matthew 17:27**). Jesus is still meeting the needs of the ministry by this method. Those who are ministered to in spiritual things are required to minister natural things in return. The Gospel is to be given freely to the heathen, but when the heathen are converted, God expects them to supply the needs of the ministry.

"And let the one who is taught the word share all good things with him who teaches." **Galatians 6:6**

Read **I Timothy 6:18**.

13. WHAT ARE SOME PRINCIPLES OF GIVING?

A. We must give ourselves to the Lord first.

"And this, not as we had expected, but they first gave themselves to the Lord and to us by the will of God."

II Corinthians 8:5

B. We must give without hesitation.

"For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability they gave of their own accord." **II Corinthians 8:3**

C. We are to give hilariously.

"Let each one do just as he has purposed in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver." **II Corinthians 9:7**

D. We should be generous or liberal givers.

"Now this I say, he who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly; and he who sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully." **II Corinthians 9:6**

E. We are called to give regularly.

"Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so do you also. On the first day of every week let each one of you put aside and save, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come." **I Corinthians 16:1-2**

F. We should be loving givers, or give lovingly.

"Therefore openly before the churches show them the proof of your love and of our reason for boasting about you." **II Corinthians 8:24**

G. We are to give thankfully.

"You will be enriched in everything for all liberality, which through us is producing thanksgiving to God. For the ministry of this service is not only fully supplying the needs of the saints, but is also overflowing through many thanksgivings to God." **II Corinthians 9:11-12**

H. We are to give as a ministry to the Lord and His saints.

"Because of the proof given by this ministry they will glorify God for your obedience to your confession of the gospel of

Christ, and for the liberality of your contribution to them and to all." **I Corinthians 9:13**

14. WHEN A PERSON TITHES, WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BLESSINGS HE CAN EXPECT FROM GOD?

- A. Tithing is God's way of bringing spiritual maturity.
- B. We receive peace of mind by our obedience.
- C. Tithing demonstrates our faith in God's power to supply all of our needs.
- D. The act of faith in tithing blesses the money that is left, because God is honored. It also puts us in right relationship with God when we are in need of a job or financial help. We can come to God in prayer knowing we have been obedient.
- E. It gives the individual tither a part in God's infinite program.
- F. It blesses the church by enabling it to carry out a greater ministry.
- G. Through our obedience we become good examples of financial stewardship.

15. ARE WE REQUIRED TO GIVE OFFERINGS AS WELL TO THE LORD?

Yes. We are required to give offerings for various things like missions and needs of the church.

"Be devoted to one another in brotherly love . . . contributing to the needs of the saints." **Romans 12:10a,13a**
Also read **Malachi 3:8**.

16. WHAT DID JESUS TEACH ABOUT THE MINISTRY OF GIVING?

- A. Jesus taught that clinging to earthly wealth can make us lose our eternal wealth.

"But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." **Matthew 6:20-21**

- B. Jesus taught that we should not give expecting to be rewarded by men.

"When therefore you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be honored by men. Truly I say to

you, they have their reward in full. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing that your alms may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will repay you." **Matthew 6:2-4**

- C. He said that we are not to keep more than we need, but are to share what we have.

"And he would answer and say to them, " 'Let the man who has two tunics share with him who has none; and let him who has food do likewise.' " **Luke 3:11**

- D. Jesus taught that giving in genuine sacrifice pleases God more than giving out of our excess.

"And calling His disciples to Him, He said to them, " ' Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the contributors to the treasure; for they all put in out of their surplus, but she, out of her poverty, put in all she owned, all she had to live on.' " **Mark 12:43-44**

- E. Jesus taught we will receive according to our generosity in giving.

"Give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, they will pour into your lap. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return." **Luke 6:38**

17. CAN WE DESIGNATE HOW OUR TITHE SHOULD BE SPENT?

No. Once the tither pays his tithe, it belongs to the Lord. No one has the right to dictate how it shall be used. We may designate our offerings, but not the tithe. The tithe is to be received by the leadership of the church.

18. IS IT SCRIPTURAL TO GIVE ONLY WHEN "WE FEEL LED" OR BY IMPULSE?

No. God has ordained that we are to give systematically. We are to give on the first day of the week (Sunday) and our tithes and offerings should be large or small based on the way God has prospered us. The church needs to be able to regularly count on finances to cover it's obligations.

"On the first day of every week let each one of you put aside and save, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come." **I Corinthians 16:2**

19. ARE BUDGETS SCRIPTURAL?

Although the term is not found in Scripture, but the principle of sound stewardship is. **Luke 14:28**

"Any enterprise is built by wise planning, becomes strong through common sense, and profits wonderfully by keeping abreast of the facts." **Proverbs 24:3-4** (Living Bible)

"Riches can disappear fast. And the king's crown doesn't stay in his family forever -- so watch your business interests closely. Know the state of your flocks and your herds; then there will be lamb's wool enough for clothing, and goat's milk enough for food for all your household after the hay is harvested, and the new crop appears, and the mountain grasses are gathered in." **Proverbs 27:23-27** (Living Bible)