

3 Reasons You Should Tithe

Every Christian is on a journey regarding their relationship with money and possessions. We are bombarded on a daily basis by messages that relate to money and materialism. These messages tell us that money will make us happy, that the money we have is ours alone to do with what we want. But the Bible tells us something different. That everything – yes, everything – is a gift from God. The Bible tells us that we are called to be good managers, not owners, of the resources entrusted to us. Tithing is one way we acknowledge God's provision in our lives and exercise good management: here is how – the three G's.

You GET to tithe.

Tithing isn't something you "ought" to do or "have" to do – it's something you get to do. When people think about tithing, they can sometimes have the less-than-excited attitude that tithing is something they are obligated to do. But I want to encourage you to change your mindset around tithing and instead look at it as a way to joyfully acknowledge God's provision over the resources He has asked you to steward. Instead of thinking of tithing as an act you have to do, consider tithing as something you joyfully get to do. I guarantee this change in mindset, while admittedly not always easy to maintain, will change everything. Joyful generosity is a gift. Why? Proverbs 11:24 says, "The world of the generous gets larger and larger; the world of the stingy gets smaller and smaller."

Tithing is not a 10% goal, it is a GOOD DISCIPLINE.

Our mission at Thrivent is to help Christians be wise with money and live generously. Our research into wise money decisions and joyful generosity at a practical level has unearthed some interesting findings. One of those findings is

that although people say they will start giving more financially when they make more money, they usually don't. Regardless of where you're at with tithing, I'd encourage you to begin developing the spiritual discipline of giving. Just start and trust God. The Bible talks about the discipline of being faithful with little, so that you will later be faithful with much. The goal of tithing is to establish the financial priority of putting God first and honoring him as the giver of all good gifts is the goal – it's not giving 10%. I can also share that in my personal life, my wife and I have found the most joy and fulfillment when we were giving sacrificially well beyond the tithe.

Tithing is an act of GRATITUDE.

As we have studied the behavioral economics of money management, one thing consistently shows up when we talk to people who have a contented and confident relationship with their financial situation. Surprisingly, it is not how much money they have! It is a grateful heart. When we focus on sharing our treasure, our time and our talents, we take the focus off of us and instead begin to focus outward on others. This shift in focus cultivates a grateful heart and illuminates the blessings we have in our lives.

When we chose to live a joyful generous life, then, and only then, can we really thrive financially. Don't wait until you have enough – start now! I believe God blesses this obedience and discipline with a grateful heart and with it a world that will get larger rather than smaller.

Brad Hewitt is the CEO of Thrivent Financial, a not-for-profit Fortune 500 organization dedicated to helping Christians be wise with money and live generously. He holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in mathematics from the University of Wisconsin – River Falls – and has completed the Harvard Business School's program for management development. Hewitt and his wife, Sue, have two adult children and live in Minnesota.

Learn more at .