

Grace Giving: More in '24

(Editor's Note: This is Part 3 of a three-part series, "Steps for Biblical Prosperity and Success in '24." Find Part 1 [here](#) and Part 2 [here](#).)

Focused offerings and charitable contributions by New Testament believers and congregations are desired, biblical expressions of generosity and faith. They are part of God's steps for our success and biblical prosperity. Jesus spoke of a divine law of reciprocity:

"Give, and it will be given to you: Good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over will men give unto you. For with the measure you use, it will be measured unto you." (Luke 6:38).

Father God always rewards and multiplies our unselfish, generous giving. However, I believe generous contributions from our resources are not substitutes for worshiping God with our tithes.

Tithing (giving 1/10 of our income) is an age-long expression of covenantal relationship with our eternal God. In the Old Testament, God's people *paid tithes* and *gave offerings*. The first mention of tithing was in Genesis 14 when Abraham gave "a tenth part of all" to Melchizedek, the King of Salem, who used it in a priestly act of worship. (Gen. 14:18-20; Heb. 6:20, 7:1-22.)

Pastor Jack Hayford wrote that "the tithe is part of the Abrahamic covenant of grace, not merely of the Mosaic covenant of works." Tithing releases God's blessings on his people:

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“‘Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, ‘How have we robbed you?’ In your tithes and contributions. You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me, the whole nation of you. Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need” (Mal. 3:8-10, ESV).

God doesn’t need our money, but He always prospers obedience. Many understand that if we modern believers want to find biblical success and prosperity, we need to learn and practice this age-long principle. May we once again commend tithing to developing disciples and congregational leadership—lest we all be “robbed” of God’s blessings and the blessings of their spiritual giftings from God.

Grace Giving to Fellow Believers

The apostle Paul did receive collections from the believers in the churches he had started—not for himself but for the needy believers in Jerusalem and Judea, who were being persecuted and suffering economically (2 Cor. 9:1-5).

These collections were ministering to the saints, a service to fellow believers. It was to be a generous gift and not one grudgingly given. It needed to be willingly pledged and carefully collected in advance of his coming, so no one would feel forced or under pressure by his presence. High-pressure offering appeals are not compatible with grace giving.

Paul wanted the generosity of these believers toward their brothers and sisters in Christ to flow from their hearts and not from a sense of religious duty. He wanted their gift to return to them, as an abundant harvest, which is always larger than what is sown. That way, they would have more than enough of everything they needed, with an abundance left over for them to continue doing good deeds.

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The Cheerful Giver

Beloved Bible expositor Warren Wiersbe had an aptitude for the use of words. On this matter of grace giving, he once said: "We must not be 'sad givers' who give grudgingly, or 'mad givers' who give because we have to (of necessity); but we should be 'glad givers' who cheerfully share what we have because we have experienced the grace of God."

A cheerful, generous giver will receive increasing means and resources to enable their participation in a cycle of blessing, giving to our Lord Jesus, His mission and His people. Only when we give first can we expect to receive. The two acts go together! Paul taught:

"The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work" (2 Cor. 9:6-8).

In verses 9-10, Paul urged believers to give what they had in their hands and trust God to multiply it back to them abundantly so they could continue to give in a prospering cycle of blessings. We are blessed in order to be a blessing to others, both tangibly and spiritually!

Pay your tithes (10% of your income) to the church where you are being spiritually fed (Mal. 3:8-11) and then give generously to God's work and His people in need. This will be a cause for their thanksgiving to God and proof of your obedience to Him, His word and His work (2 Cor. 9:10-15).

Through your cheerful, practiced devotion and stewardship to God, you can become hilariously happy in your giving throughout

this new year. Not only will you have a sufficient amount for your own needs but enough left over to happily help meet the true needs of brothers and sisters in Christ. May God grant you “more in '24” so you will be able to give more in '24, for your good and God’s glory. {eoa}

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