

Should You Tithe When Things Get Tough?

Recently a man who attends The Man in the Mirror Bible Study every Friday online asked a question about tithing that I suspect a lot of men wonder about. So with his permission, here's our exchange.

Abe: I have a question about tithing. I have not treated God's money very well over my life. I am 52, married five years and have three very young children.

Unfortunately, I am embarrassed to say we have no savings and about \$38,000 in debt outside our condo mortgage. About \$12,000 of that is credit cards, \$10,000 is student loans, and \$15,000 is from a friend who loaned me money for the condo. We had been giving 5-7 percent of our net income until this year when we upped it to 10 percent. If we did not tithe, we could put that money to our credit cards and pay them off much sooner.

Do you think that would be biblically wrong or does God want us to suffer and pay the price for my immature and irresponsible attitude towards money? Our financial situation is a large source of tension in our marriage. I feel I have let our family down. My wife asked me to shoot you a message to see what you think.

Response: Abe, no one else can tell you what God's will is for anything unless it is specifically commanded or prohibited by scripture. In my opinion, tithing falls into the category that it is commanded in the Old Testament and confirmed by Jesus in the New Testament at Matthew 23:23.

My own story is that, even though I faced bankruptcy every day for seven years, my wife and I tithed every penny we ever earned—actually more. And God has wonderfully provided for us.

We have never lacked for anything. And I was spared from bankruptcy.

My advice would be to keep tithing. I know it's counterintuitive, but God honors those who honor Him. You're going to get through this. Make God bless your decision.

Men, I hope you already tithe. But if not, I would like to encourage you to test and see if it's true that, by tithing, God will watch over you as He has watched over me.

Patrick Morley is founder and CEO of Man in the Mirror. After building one of Florida's 100 largest privately held companies, in 1991, he founded Man in the Mirror, a nonprofit organization to help men find meaning and purpose in life. Dr. Morley is the best-selling author of *The Man in the Mirror*, *No Man Left Behind*, *Dad in the Mirror*, and *A Man's Guide to the Spiritual Disciplines*.