

Tithing: Why Give Money to the Church?

Money! We love to make it, spend it, save it, give it ... "Wait a minute," you say. "Give it? That's my money you're talking about. I earned it and I will decide how I spend it, save it and do whatever I want with it. But just give it away? I don't think so."

Money, sex, and power are three of the hottest of hot buttons for men. Number one for many guys is the almighty dollar. I guess it comes with the competitive nature with which many of us are born.

We drive hard, sell hard and perform hard, all to get a buck. When done right, driving, selling and performing are very good things. Those things make much of the world go around.

Money is good. Making it is good. In fact, Scripture talks about a day's work and the importance of work. I Thessalonians 5:12, Colossians 3:23, 2 Thessalonians 3:10 and Exodus 23:12 all talk about work, and that's just the tip of the scriptural iceberg on the topic. Further, it talks of a servant being worthy of his wages in both Luke 10:7 and 1 Timothy 5:18.

Can making money be bad? Only if a man allows it to control his life. Normally when you make it to give it, you control it, not the other way around. Along those lines, here are some things I've observed about money and giving over the years:

- Stingy people are really unhappy. No Scrooges smiling in everyday life at the ballpark or over the backyard barbeque.
- Generous people are really, really happy!
- Rich and poor alike can give.
- When a person gets the bug to give, it can begin to be what they live for. Not a bad thing!

Here's a good one I've always dreamed of. Imagine if you had \$10 million dollars dropped in your lap out of the clear blue. How much fun would it be to not just give a ten spot or \$100 gift to a worthy charity or your church, but to give a major, major gift of hundreds of thousands or a million dollars and beyond to start something good for your community or for ministry that would not happen without your gift? I have to tell you, that can trip your trigger!

Much has been written about a person's responsibility to give 10 percent of their income to the local church. Scripture is clear on that matter in Malachi 3:10 and Hebrews 7:5-9 for starters. For 30 years I have worked for two churches, one parachurch ministry, and a Bible college. During those years, never has there ever been a question in my mind where a man's tithe belongs. It belongs to the local church.

Here are questions and answers some men have about giving:

- **Why should a person give the tithe?** Scripture commands it. Keep in mind, it is the Lord's tithe, not our money. It belongs to Him. Be obedient. Then give because much has been given to you. Besides, its fun!
- **What if I don't have enough money to give anything, let alone tithe?** This is where faith comes in. When you follow the command of the Lord and give when you can't see where it comes from, the principle works. I have a pastor friend who tells his congregation he would tithe even if he were not a Christian because he knows the principle works.
- **What if I don't like what my church does with my money?** Give anyway to that church or change churches. Scripture doesn't build exclusions to tithing. It says to tithe. However, on very rare occasions there are churches that are not responsible with their money. Your responsibility is to give. The church's responsibility is to be a good steward of your money. When they don't do their part you may be forced to look elsewhere for

your local church. However, this is never a decision to be made lightly.

- **Why does my church ask me to give more than the tithe?**

That is called the offering. Offerings are those gifts which are above and beyond the tithe. Those gifts in most churches cover the important ministries of missions, building fund, etc. The tithes normally cover the general operation of the church. The church desires to grow and reach out beyond the four walls in your city. Offerings provide to that end.

Money! Wow, we love it and to give it away is one of the most fulfilling experiences for a man and his family. In poverty and in riches, relish all God has done for you. Give of yourself, work hard and give tithes and offerings. Do so and you will be glad you did. You can take that one to the bank!

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