

THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

1 Timothy 6:17-19

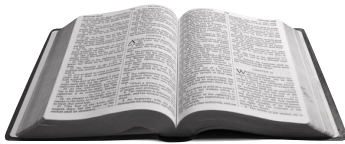
Lesson #13

The Tithe

04/07/2019

“There are two tests of a true disciple: wealth and poverty.”

How to read the Old Testament



The Bible says far more about wealth and poverty than it does about heaven and hell.

2

Some common mistakes Christian churches make

- ✓ They avoid talking about money.
- ✓ They talk too much about money.
- ✓ **They talk about money in the wrong way.**

3

How to read the Old Testament



The Mosaic Law and **“tithing”**?



5

As a blessing from God be **thankful**.

As an opportunity for ministry be **responsible**.



As a dangerous deception don't let it **define** you.

As a desensitizer to God, people, & your spiritual need don't let it **blind** you.

4

Some facts about tithing

- **Descriptive**: Abraham's sharing 1/10 of the spoils of war with Melchizedek (a priest of God). *Heb.7:4, Gen.14:20*
- **Prescriptive**: The Mosaic law. *Lev.-Deut.*
The Hebrew tithe system was a part of the feudal relationship between God, His people, and the promised land.
It was an extension of the 8th commandment.
- Until the 19th cent. **many states** in the USA collected a tithe from their citizens.
- The practice of tithing is **unknown** outside the Judeo-Christian tradition.

6

Malachi 3

"8 Will a man rob God? Yet you are **robbing** Me! But you say, 'How have we robbed You?' In tithes and offerings. 9 You are **cursed** with a curse, for you are robbing Me, the whole nation of you! 10 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."

The Biblical tithe was linked to the commandment - "do not steal" from God.

7

The Israelites lived as stewards in a "feudal system" where God was the property owner.

"The land, moreover, shall not be sold permanently, for **the land is Mine; for you are but aliens and sojourners with Me.**" *Lev. 25:23*

- The tithe was a part of the Holy Land **stewardship**.
- The **Year of Jubilee** returned land to its original owner (manager) after 50 years. *Lev.25:8-13*

"Thou shalt not **steal**." *Ex. 20:16*

- The people were to **respect** the property under the stewardship of others.
- This commandment implies "stewardship" but **does not suggest "ownership"**.

8

The Old Covenant system was a "flat tax" involving 3 tithes.

10% priesthood
(Levites)

(Num.18:21,24)



10% temple
(Temple)

(Deut.14:22-27)



10% charity
(the poor)

every 3rd year
(Deut.14:28,29)



9

"In addition to the two tithes which I have already directed you to pay each year, the one for the Levites and the other for the banquets, you should devote a third every third year to the distribution of such things as are lacking to widowed women and orphan children." —

Antiquities iv. 24

Flavius Josephus
(1s cent. AD)



10

The Biblical tithe was a transaction of giving and receiving.

Proverbs 3

"9 Honor the Lord from your wealth, and from the first of all your produce; 10 **so** your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will overflow with new wine."

The giver would be blessed materially if the giver put the Lord first in the handling of material wealth.



11

The O.T. defines blessing and cursing in material terms.

Deuteronomy 28

"2 All these blessings will come upon you and overtake you if you obey the Lord your God. ... 11 The Lord will make you **abound in prosperity** ... 13 The Lord will **make you the head and not the tail**, and you only will be above, and you will not be underneath, if you listen to the commandments of the Lord your God, ... to observe *them* carefully,"

- Vs 1-14 list the many blessings that will come with obedience **all of which are material**.
- Vs 15-68 list the many curses that will come with disobedience **all of which are material**.

12

"Sowing and reaping" seems to be the "great commission" of the prosperity gospel.

2 Corinthians 9:6

"Now this I say, he who **sows** sparingly shall also **reap** sparingly; and he who **sows** bountifully shall also **reap** bountifully."

Mark 10 (Matt. 19:29)

"³⁰ but that he shall receive **a hundred times as much now in the present age**, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and farms, along with persecutions; and in the age to come, eternal life."

The prosperity evangelist
Kenneth Copeland's net worth is
\$760 million.



13

Mark 4:8 The Parable of the Sower

"And other seeds fell into the good soil and as they grew up and increased, they yielded a crop and produced thirty, sixty, and a **hundredfold**."

Two models of sowing and reaping.

We are the sower
Faith is the seed
God is the soil

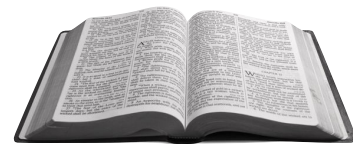
God is the sower
We are the soil
the Word is the seed

We reap what we
sow materially.

God reaps in
and through us
spiritually

14

How to read the Old Testament



What do the Apostles teach us about giving?

15

2 Corinthians 9

"6 Now this I say, he who **sows** sparingly shall also **reap** sparingly; and he who **sows** bountifully shall also **reap** bountifully. . . . 10 Now He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food, will supply and multiply your seed **for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness**; ¹¹ you will be **enriched in everything for all liberality**,"

Sowing and reaping (in the teaching of the Apostles) had more to do with "**righteousness**" and "**for all liberality**" than personal material wealth.

John 18:36

"My kingdom is not of this world."

16

Should a Christian tithe?

(a parallel issue)

Should Christians honor a Sabbath day
(**Saturday**) and keep it holy
(**refrain from working**)?

(Three guidelines)

- The tithe is mandated under the Old Covenant but **not after Pentecost**.
- The New Covenant calls for more than a tithe from most of us - (**equality**).
- We should **not stand in judgment** of those who do or do not practice tithing.

17

“It’s not how much of my money I give to God, but how much of God’s money I keep for myself.”

R.G LeTourneau



18

Galatians 3

“²⁴ Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, . . . ²⁵ But now that faith has come, we are **no longer under a tutor.**”



When we start training wheels **are a restriction** to teach & protect.



After we get the point they **are a restriction** to a gracious heart.

19

“Tithing isn’t the ceiling of giving; it’s the floor. It’s not the finish line of giving; it’s just the starting blocks. Tithes can be the training wheels to launch us into the mind-set, skills, and habits of grace giving.”

Randy Alcorn



20

Wealth is a gift
Generosity is a
sign

21

1 Timothy 6

“¹⁷ Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy.

¹⁸ Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share,

¹⁹ storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed.”

22

Basics

“¹⁷ Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be **conceited** or to fix their **hope** on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to **enjoy.**”

- ✓ **Enjoy material wealth as a gift from God.**
- ✓ **Don’t mistake it for a sign of superiority.**
- ✓ **Don’t place too much hope in it.**
- ✓ **Be prepared to gracefully lose it.**

23

Materialism

is not the possession of wealth,
but rather the

**preoccupation
with material things**

by both the rich
and the poor.

24

Basics

“¹⁸ Instruct them to do good, to **be rich in good works**, to **be generous and ready to share**,”

- ✓ “Do good” for the kingdom with what you have been given.
- ✓ Don’t necessarily give it all away but rather manage it as God’s steward.
- ✓ View generosity as your true treasure.
- ✓ Enthusiastically initiate sharing what you have been given.

25

Basics

“¹⁹ **storing up** for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the **future**, so that they may take hold of that which is **life indeed**.”

- ✓ Saving for the future is important and let it be measured in **testimony** rather than money.
- ✓ Measure and seek a “**life**” that is Christ like in terms of **perspectives, values, priorities, expectations, and courageous faith**.

26

Why do Christians give?



They are
need driven



They are
blessing driven



They are
duty driven



They should be worship driven

27

When asked about her ministry
as a social worker she replied,

“My ministry is
not social work,
it is worship.
My care for the
suffering is my
love for Jesus.”

Mother Teresa



28

**What we would tell visitors to the
congregation - *We are not asking
you to give but rather:***

- If you are worn out - **REST!**
- If you are wounded - **HEAL!**
- If you are immature - **LEARN!**
- If you aren’t a believer -
WATCH & LISTEN!

So that some time down the
road you can - **WORK, HEAL,
TEACH and BELIEVE!**




29

“We take a new convert and immediately make a worker out of him. That is not God’s way.

God meant that a convert should first learn to be a worshipper, and then his work will have God in it.

A.W Tozer



30

“Seeking the Lord” in decisions

- ✓ **Before** the coming of the Spirit, disciples were asked to “seek the Lord” for revelation in guidance. *Acts 1:24-26*
- ✓ **After** Pentecost, believers were to seek wisdom more than revelation. *Jas. 1:5-8*
- ✓ For most decisions seek: (because we already have the Spirit indwelling us)
 - ★ Broad **PERSPECTIVE**
 - ★ Clear **VALUES & PRIORITIES**
 - ★ Realistic **EXPECTATIONS**
 - ★ Courageous **FAITH**

31

Giving is a challenge to both



32

At the heart of the Gospel is freedom from



33

Our challenge with material wealth is not our lack of love for the needy.

We have no problem being generous with someone else’s stuff.

Our challenge is **FEAR** that we will not be secure and happy without the stuff we have acquired.

We too often fail to trust that we can be secure, fulfilled, and happy with less stuff.

34

How much should I give?

2 Corinthians 8

“¹² For if the readiness **(to give)** is present, it is acceptable according to what a man has, **not according to what he does not have.** ¹³ For this is not for the ease of others and for your affliction, but by way of **equality** – ¹⁴ 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**; ¹⁵ as it is written, “*He who gathered much did not have too much, and he who gathered little had no lack.*””

- The underlying basis for this teaching is the **“community”** of the Body of Christ.

35

Acts 2

“⁴⁴ And all those who had believed were together and **had all things in common**; ⁴⁵ and they began selling their property and possessions and were **sharing them with all, as anyone might have need.**”

Acts 4:32

“And the congregation of those who believed were of one heart and soul; and not one of them claimed that anything belonging to him was his own, but **all things were common property** to them.”

**We should not only
pray, expecting God
to answer our prayers
but also pray that
we might be the
answer to some-
one else's prayer.**