

BIBLES & BENJAMINS: WHAT DOES THE BIBLE ACTUALLY TEACH ABOUT GIVING?

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STEWARDSHIP SERIES
MALACHI 3:8-12



GREED (FEAR) DRAINS AND TITHING TRAINS.

Tim Keller "I've had people come to me to confess every sin known to man but I've never once had a person walk into my office and say, 'I've been struggling with greed.'"

Malachi 3:8-12

Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, 'How have we robbed you?' In your tithes and contributions. ⁹ You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me, the whole nation of you. ¹⁰ Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, 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. ¹¹ I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of your soil, and your vine in the field shall not fail to bear, says the LORD of hosts. ¹² Then all nations will call you blessed, for you will be a land of delight, says the LORD of hosts.

Q: What is a tithe?

A: Tithe means "a tenth part." So tithing is returning to God a tenth of what He allows you to make.

Myths about tithing

#1 Tithing is Old Testament. We are under grace so therefore Christians don't need to tithe.

Truth: Tithing precedes the Mosaic Law and is assumed in the New Testament. Tithing is not anti-grace. Tithing is a vehicle of grace.

Genesis 14:20b *And Abram gave him a tenth of everything.*

Genesis 28:22 [Jacob] *And of all that you give me I will give a full tenth to you.*

#2 Jesus never taught his followers to tithe.

Truth: Jesus never said not to tithe. Jesus's first followers were Jews so they already practiced tithing. Jesus did teach them the tithe was not a money issue but a heart issue.

Matthew 23:23-24

Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others. ²⁴ You blind guides, straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel!

#3 Tithing is a way to pay our debt to God.

Truth: Tithing doesn't pay God off. "[Tithing] has always been a training exercise to cultivate a generous and God-centered heart." John Ortberg

Q: Should I give even if I'm not cheerful about it?

A: Giving changes our heart because our heart follows our money. Jesus said, "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Matthew 6:21

John Piper, "Christianity is not mainly about obedience to demands, but about the transformation of what you treasure."

Why Should I Tithe?

1. Because God **commands** it – Leviticus 27:30 *Every tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the trees, is the LORD's; it is holy to the LORD.*
2. Tithing demonstrates that God has **first** place in my life – Deuteronomy 14:22a, 23b *"You shall tithe...that you may learn to fear the LORD your God always.*
3. Tithing **reminds** me that everything I have was given to me by God – Deuteronomy 8:18 *You shall remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your fathers, as it is this day.*
4. God says that refusing to tithe is **stealing** from Him – Malachi 3:8–9 *Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, 'How have we robbed you?' In your tithes and contributions. ⁹ You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me, the whole nation of you.*
5. Tithing gives God an opportunity to remind us He exists and wants to bless us – Malachi 3:10-11 *Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, 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. ¹¹ I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of your soil, and your vine in the field shall not fail to bear, says the LORD of hosts.*

What Should I Tithe?

The first part of what I earn, not the leftovers – Proverbs 3:9–10 *Honor the LORD with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce; ¹⁰ then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine.*

Where Should I Give My Tithe?

Where I worship – Malachi 3:10 *Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, 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.*

How Should I Tithe?

- Give **expectantly** - 2 Corinthians 9:6 *The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.*
- Give **willingly** - 2 Corinthians 9:7a *Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion.*
- Give **cheerfully** - 2 Corinthians 9:7b *for God loves a cheerful giver.*

Vital components of Reach Out 2017

- 1) Give together.
- 2) Get involved.
- 3) Go together.