

ARE YOU WILLING TO TAKE THE STEP AND TEST GOD?

Fundamental Truths that can transform the way we live

- Is “Mine” really a word I get to use? – Deuteronomy 10:14 *Behold, to the LORD your God **belong** heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth with **all** that is in it.*
- If God owns it all, then He can take care of me. Am I willing to believe this?
- If God knows it all, then He has some good ideas about the stuff He owns. Am I willing to believe this?
- If God is good and cares for me, then I can trust Him – Deuteronomy 10:13 *and to keep the commandments and statutes of the LORD, which I am commanding you today for your good?*

God, us, and the Big Test

- Faithfulness in our finances is a **vital** part of our walk with God – 3:6-7 *For I the LORD do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed. ⁷ From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from my statutes and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you, says the LORD of hosts. But you say, ‘How shall we return?’*
- God warns His people: **Neglecting** to tithe is robbery – 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.*

Q: What is a tithe?

A: Tithe means “a tenth.” Tithing is returning to God a tenth of what He allows you to make.

- God challenges His people to take the Big **Test**: Tithing – 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.*

- Tithing is an act of faith: God’s windows are bigger than your wallet.

- There is a difference between a tithe and an offering. A tithe is an amount or percentage of your income; an offering is anything given beyond that, but not in place of the tithe. After you've tithed, you can give in other ways: missions, One Child, Christmas offering, charity, etc.

- God promises financial **protection** for His people: – 3:11-12 *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.*

What may be behind our pushback to tithing

- Forgetting we're Stewards, not Owners.

Truth: God allows us to **keep** 90%!

- Confusing tithing with **legalism**.

Truth: Establishing a baseline for generosity brings freedom, not slavery.

- Assuming our motives need to be flawless.

Your heart and motives follow your money. Want your heart and motives to be in the right place? Put your money there. Jesus: *For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also* (Matthew 6:21).

- I can't afford to tithe.

Truth: God's windows are bigger than your wallet.

- My actual tithe may be too large for my local church to handle properly.

Truth: Is it not arrogant to presume I can individually manage a large gift (from God) but a local church cannot steward it collectively?

Next Steps

- Start somewhere.
- Start giving **systematically** (recurring giving) rather than on impulse: First things first. Every time God gives to me, I return a portion of that to Him.
- Seek to give **proportionally**: From the tithe, see where God leads you.

Further Next Steps (see Connect Card)

- Dedicate your time, talent, and treasure to God.
- I am committing my life to Jesus Christ for the first time.
- I am repenting and renewing my commitment to Jesus Christ.
- I am interested in being baptized.
- I would like more information on becoming a member (Starting Point).