

Tithing Matters More Than You Might Think!

One man wrote a booklet titled “Tithing Is a SIN!” Some people hate the very idea of tithing – even consistent “giving” gets into their craw. Yet one person told me, “Tithing is the BEST Insurance Policy,” and said she would feel very fearful and uncomfortable unless she tithed on money received. What is all this about tithing? Should Christians “tith” to God?

William F. Dankenbring

A man wrote to me saying, “I remember you telling us a few years ago about a certain prayer cited in the Old Testament by a man who asked God to prosper him chiefly so that he could do great works in God's name. I prayed to God to make me prosper just enough to be able to afford tithing this year, and hopefully make me even more prosperous afterward. An unheard of (where I work, at least) raise of one dollar and ten cents per hour convinced me God had heard that prayer and took me at my word.

“Oddly enough, I've heard of people tithing to their own churches -- usually Protestant or Mormon -- and being unusually blessed by God. I recall Herbert Armstrong mentioning on ‘The World Tomorrow’ that John D. Rockefeller (for all his many faults) was a tithe payer, for example. If this is true, it may be a sign that God actually DOES reward people for doing the right thing even if they are otherwise ‘in the dark’ about the true nature of God and what God has planned. If so, then God is far more generous and forgiving than many may suspect.

“One last note before I close: a few weeks after I started back to work, I was walking to my morning bus and began to feel sad and anxious. Out of the blue, a neighbor from down the block whom I have known since we were both five years old drove up the street in his truck. He, too, has gone through his share of hard times, and I was surprised to find that he was very philosophical about it.

“When I told him that the words ‘the Lord will provide’ kept coming to me, he said something like that was God wanting me to have abundance. Was his driving past right when I needed such encouragement a mere coincidence? Is there really any such thing as a coincidence in a universe whose Ruler can account for each hair upon everyone’s heads?”

God Sees Everything

That is a very good question!

How cannot the God who created all things, who sees the sparrow fall, who knows the numbers of hairs on your head, not see everything, and know everything we do? He who created the eye, shall He not see? He who created the ear, shall He not hear?

David wrote, “The LORD is in His holy temple, the LORD’s throne is in heaven; His eyes behold, His eyelids test the sons of men. The LORD tests the righteous, but the wicked and the one who loves violence His soul hates” (Psalm 11:4-5).

God knows our innermost secrets, and our innermost desires, and He beholds the works of all the children of men. And He is going to judge us, one way or the other, for all our actions and deeds upon this earth.

He will judge us whether or not we are faithful in tithing. Men may argue back and forth, debate, and rage, but God means what He says and says what He means, and it is foolish to trifle with Him or ignore His absolute, inexorable, unbending LAWS – including the Law which says:

“And all the tithes of the land, whether of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD’s. It is holy to the LORD” (Lev.27:30).

“And concerning the tithes of the herd or the flock, of whatever passes under the rod, the tenth one shall be holy to the LORD” (verse 32).

In other words, the tenth portion of all our income or increase – that comes to us, that passes into our possession – belongs to God. It is His. He has a prior claim on it and says it is His – and for us to take it, and keep it, and spend it upon ourselves, constitutes breaking God’s LAW. To do such a thing is “SIN” – for God says, “Sin is the transgression of the law” (I John 3:4). He also says to us, “The wages of SIN is death” (Rom.6:23), and, “The soul who sins shall DIE” (Ezekiel 18:4).

The Ways of the Lord

God’s ways are very mysterious to mankind. But there is no doubt that He does intervene for those who believe in Him.

God does prosper those who obey Him and therefore obey His tithing LAW. Abraham tithed. Jacob tithed. Moses tithed. ALL the saints, holy men of God, and prophets tithed. Jesus Christ TAUGHT tithing. He declared: “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithes of mint and anise and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the other undone” (Matt.23:23).

There is no doubt about it. We can kid ourselves all we want, but Christ taught tithing! In fact, He went so far as to say, “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. I tell you the

truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished” (Matt.5:17-18, NIV).

God’s true people and servants have always tithed. Abraham, the father of the faithful, tithed. When Melchizedek, the High Priest of God, met Abraham after he had defeated in battle the kings who invaded the land, “Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything” (Gen.14:20).

Jacob tithed as well. He prayed and promised God, “If God will be with me and watch over me . . . of all that you give me I will give you a tenth” (Gen.28:20-22).

The Greatest Insurance Policy

A lady I know in France recently tithed upon the sale of an apartment. She told me, “Tithing is the BEST insurance.” How true!

The prophet Malachi tells us: “Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, ‘In what way have we robbed You?’ IN TITHES AND OFFERINGS. You are *cursed with a curse*, for you have robbed Me, even this whole nation” (Mal.3:8-9).

God promises to bless the obedient tithe payer, and those who do not tithe are under a CURSE! A divine curse. There are no two ways about it.

God declares through Malachi, “Bring ALL the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try [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 such a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it” (v.10).

Tithing is INSURANCE from God, and He never fails to pay on a policy; His promises are sure; He cannot lie (Titus 1:2).

People who don’t tithe FAITHFULLY are like people walking NAKED down the street, in broad daylight. Their nakedness is revealed to everybody; and their shame is inevitable – great shame. Tithing is the greatest insurance policy ever – and it is backed up by God Almighty Himself.

A Bad Example

A family I once knew briefly came out of the Philadelphia Church of God. They wanted to come with us, and wanted to be our representatives in Canada, and collect tithes for us. It didn’t work out and the next thing I knew she was teaching against tithing, poisoning the minds of some of God’s people. She was sending them literature written by Ernest Martin, a disfellowshipped minister of the old Worldwide Church of God who had started his own ministry and taught against tithing – he called tithing a “SIN.”

How strange! Obeying God is a “SIN”? Only the Devil would say that – or someone inspired BY the Devil! He also taught that all God’s Law was “done away” for Christians, because we are already sitting in the “heavenlies” with Christ! He wrote that therefore a man or woman could commit adultery, and it was NOT A SIN -- but is already forgiven by Christ!

What unutterable nonsense and tragic false teaching! When Satan begins to corrupt the minds of people, he doesn’t let go, but they get worse and worse. As the apostle Paul prophesied, “But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived” (II Tim.3:13).

Be careful. Look well to your obedience. Don’t trust anybody – even a mate – if you have delegated authority to them to pay the family tithes, but suspect they may not be tithing. Beware that you do not “collude” or “conspire” against God not to tithe, and decide to hold back what belongs to God.

Ananias and Sapphira

Remember Ananias and Sapphira, in the book of Acts. They “sold a possession” and ‘kept back part of the proceeds, his wife also being aware of it, and brought a certain part and laid it at the apostles’ feet. But Peter said, ‘Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself? While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God.’ Then Ananias hearing these words, fell down and breathed his last. So great fear came upon all who heard these things” (Acts 5:1-5).

His wife also was privy to this plot. She came in about three hours later, not knowing what had happened. “And Peter answered her, ‘Tell me whether you sold the land for so much?’ She said, ‘Yes, for so much.’ Then Peter said to her, ‘How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out.’ Then immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. And the young men came in and found her dead, and carrying her out, buried her by her husband. So great fear came upon all the church and upon all who heard these things” (Acts 5:8-11).

It does not pay to try to fool God – or lie to the Holy Spirit – or to “pretend” to be a Christian but fail to tithe. God knows the truth. As Paul wrote, “But let each examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For each shall bear his own load. Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches. Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap” (Gal.6:4-7).

To does not pay to try to cheat God. To refuse to tithe faithfully is “TRANSGRESSION of the law” (I John 3:4), and the “wages of SIN is DEATH”

(Rom.6:23). But “the FEAR of the Lord is the beginning of WISDOM; and a good understanding have all those who DO HIS COMMANDMENTS” (Psalm 111:10).

Do you stand in awe before God? Do you tremble before the Word of the Almighty? Do you really fear Him and believe He will punish the wicked? God says, “But on this one will I look: On him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who *trembles* at My word” (Isaiah 66:2).

God’s Word tells us plainly to tithe. “For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account” (Heb.4:12-13).

Will a Man Really Rob God?

Review once again what the prophet Malachi writes: “Will a man rob God?” Who would be so brazen, so bold? “Yet,” God says, “you have robbed Me! But you say, In what way have we robbed You? IN TITHES AND OFFERINGS.” Did you know that the tithe BELONGS TO GOD – IT IS HIS – the tenth of your income has God’s Name written on it! And if you keep it for yourself, you are STEALING – literally stealing from GOD HIMSELF! Who would be so foolish – so craven – so insensitive – so wicked and arrogant? But the truth is, millions of people thoughtlessly, ignorantly, perhaps, *rob God daily and steal from Him!*

As a result, God thunders—“*You are CURSED with a CURSE, FOR YOU HAVE ROBBED ME*” (Mal.3:8-9). God says, “Bring ALL the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try [test] Me in this, says the LORD of hosts, if I will not open for you the WINDOWS OF HEAVEN *and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it*” (Mal.3:10).

The NIV translation has this, “Test me in this, says the LORD Almighty, and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.” Now that is a REAL “insurance policy”! I agree with the lady from France. Tithing *IS* the “Best Insurance Policy.”

Make no mistake. Tithing matters to God. It proves where your heart is. It proves the bona fides of your love, surrender to Christ, and your obedience to God. It is surely one of the “test” commandments. How are you performing on the test?

God says what He means; and means what He says. Tithing is one of the most neglected, ignored, and compromised commandments today, even in the lives of Christians. So many have allowed themselves to be so deceived, and misled, angered and abused by false ministers and their evil deeds, that they take out their wrath on God and His true servants. So they steal from God, saying in their hearts, “We are confused. We don’t know who are God’s true ministers.” So they steal from God. What about you?