

# What Is Your Best Investment?

What about stocks and bonds? What about start-up companies? What about real estate? Or old fashioned savings accounts? What is the BEST investment you can make?

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A person once told me, “Tithing is the BEST Insurance Policy.” She had received an inheritance, and decided to give one His tithe – ten percent – believing she would be blessed for doing so.

She was, indeed! When another person sued her to get the inheritance, the suite failed. The court ruled in favor of the person who had received the inheritance, and who tithed upon it as “increase” given by God. When the other party sued in a higher court, once again the believer prevailed in court, and the matter was settled in her favor.

Obedying God pays! Tithing pays dividends which few people realize. The truth is, obeying God’s financial laws, and tithing and giving offerings to God’s true Work is the BEST investment a person can make, financially and spiritually as well.

There is no substitute for obedience. The Messiah Himself said, “It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35).

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. Making donations and contributing to His Work. 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).

### *The Tithing Principle*

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.” 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). To be blunt about it, sinning – failing to tithe and give offerings to God – is the WORST investment a person can make! It is tantamount to STEALING from God, the Giver of every good and perfect gift (James 1:17).

### *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 tithe 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).

He said much the same thing in Luke. We read: “But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs and pass by justice and the love of God. These you ought to have done without leaving the others undone” (Luke 11:42).

Truly, dealing justly, and fairly, and having the love of God in our hearts toward others, is the greatest commandment – but we must not leave tithing “undone,” or we are guilty before God of stealing and consuming His portion upon ourselves – SELFISHNESS – which is a great sin.

### *A Matter of Investments*

A man came to Christ and said to Him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.” He was thinking of himself. Obviously.

Christ answered him, “Man, who made Me a judge or an arbitrator over you?” He then said to all within hearing, “Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one’s life does not consist of the things he possesses” (Luke 12:13-15).

He then spoke a parable about a rich man whose crops were richly blessed, and so he decided to pull down his barns and make bigger barns to store all the grain. And the rich man said to himself, “Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry.” But God said to him, “Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?” (Luke 12:17-20).

Christ judged, “So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God” (v.21).

There is an old saying that many people are “penny wise but pound foolish.” In other words, they miss the big picture. They can be very parsimonious and scrunch their

pennies, and miss out on the real blessings. They can be a real “scrooge.” God’s Word says, “Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death” (Prov.11:4).

Furthermore, God says, “The wicked man does deceptive work, but he who sows righteousness will have a sure reward” (Prov.11:18).

There is no doubt about it. “There is one who scatters –[gives generously], yet increases more; and there is one who withholds [gives grudgingly, unhappily] more than is right, but it leads to poverty. The generous soul will be made rich, and he who waters will also be watered himself” (Pro.11:24-25).

We can kid ourselves all we want, but Christ taught giving – and tithing! In fact, 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).

### ***Will a Man Rob God?***

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).

Talk about an “investment” that pays and pays, tithing and giving to God and His Work is the greatest investment one can make! God never fails to bless those who obey Him. His promises are sure. He cannot lie (Titus 1:2).

Some might argue that tithing is “done away,” or is a “minor” point of the law, but Yeshua Himself had a different view. Of His own calling and commission, He said: “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 [fill them up to the brim]. 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).

Are heaven and earth still here? Then God's Law is still in effect – like the Law of Gravity! And like a boomerang, if you throw it away, it comes right back at you. If you ignore God's tithing and giving laws, then you are like the fool who ignores the Law of Gravity, and jumps off the rim of the Grand Canyon – to his death on the rocks of the canyon floor thousands of feet below!

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?***

The prophet Malachi declared: "Will a man rob God?"

"Yet," God says, "you have robbed Me! But you say, 'In what way have we robbed You?' IN TITHES AND OFFERINGS."

As a result, God thunders—"You are *CURSED* with a *CURSE*, FOR YOU HAVE *ROBBED ME*" (Mal.3:8-9). People sometimes wonder why they are not blessed, why they suffer financial trials, why their job search is fruitless, or why their income is minimal. Could it be that they have fallen under this divine curse, because of their lack of faith, and lack of obedience, and failure to pay that which they owe God first, before spending the rest of their income upon themselves?

Think about it.

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 INVESTMENT that pays off big-time!

Christ declared, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matt.6:19-21).

In this pulsating and tremulous age of frightening omens and grievous events, it is more important than ever that we get our priorities straight, and "walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Eph.5:15-16).