

**God's Principles and Priorities on
Time, Talent and Treasure**
Part 1. Financial stewardship, money, giving and blessing
(A Biblical perspective taken from The Blessed Life by Robert Morris)

II. Tithing – Stewardship, not ownership

What is “Tithing”?

- Tithing is a primary indicator of biblically-based stewardship
- God gives us stewardship responsibilities over our lives, the right to make decisions about our actions (Genesis 2:15-17)
- When we tithe, we show God that we realize we are stewards, not owners
- The word **tithe** means *tenth* or *a tenth part*
- The tithe is holy (“set apart”) – Leviticus 27:30

Passing the Test

- Matthew 6:21 – “For where your *treasure* is, there your *heart* will be also.”
- Your heart follows your treasure
- All through the Bible the number 10 is usually connected to a *testing*
 - Egypt’s 10 plagues (testing Pharaoh’s heart)
 - There are 10 commandments (testing and proving our [in]ability to obey)
 - Daniel’s dietary (spiritual) proposal was tested for 10 days – Daniel 1:12-15
 - In Matthew 25, the 10 virgins were tested on their preparedness
- The church at Smyrna would go through 10 days of testing (persecution) - Revelation 2:10
- The tithe represents one of the ultimate “heart tests” for the believer

Tithing precedents (before the Law) - Abraham, Melchizedek, Jacob

- Abraham our “spiritual” father tithed to Melchizedek who was either Jesus Himself (highly unlikely) but more likely represented Christ symbolically (King/Priest) – Genesis 14:18-20, Hebrews 5:9-10, 7:1-9
- Jacob, having experienced God’s presence and trusting in His promise of blessing (Gen. 28:13-15), wanted to thank Him – Genesis 28:20-22
- Abraham and Jacob gave from the heart, not the Law - that’s what tithing is – “A Heart Thing”

Law and Grace

- A common excuse for failing to tithe is “I’m under grace, not law” – the concept of tithing is therefore obsolete or no longer valid
- Jesus came to fulfill the Law not abolish it – Matthew 5:17
- Jesus came to set a higher standard than the Law
 - The Law said “Don’t murder” – Jesus said, “Don’t even be angry with your brother”
 - The Law said “Don’t commit adultery” – Jesus said “Don’t even look at a woman lustfully”
 - The righteousness that grace demands goes farther than the Law demands
- There are certain principles that permeate the Word of God, and tithing – as a guiding principle for giving, stewardship - is one of them.

It's a Heart Thing

- "These [also] you ought to have done"
- Jesus not only recognizes the tithe, but indicates that the tithe has to reflect the attitude of the heart as well – Matthew 23:23-24
- The Pharisees tithed religiously and fanatically, but not out of a spirit of gratefulness and worship – in addition, they neglected the greater commandments of love, justice, mercy, faith.
- The people of Israel, under the reign of Hezekiah, demonstrated an incredible act of "heart" giving – 2 Chronicles 31:4-12 – the result: an over abundance so that rooms had to be built to hold everything

The purpose - Caring for God's Bride, Furthering His Kingdom

- Our perspective on tithing changes when we see the local church as a visible manifestation of God's bride
- While Jesus is gone we are to care for His bride until His return
- Paul tells us that those whom God calls into full time ministry have a right to be supported by those they minister to – I Corinthians 9:11-14, I Timothy 5:17, 2 Corinthians 8:1-5
- Matthew 25:29 – The rewards of faithful stewardship and the benefits to Christ's church and kingdom, are great

God doesn't change (Malachi 3:6a).

Tithing remains an extraordinary opportunity for blessing and abundance to and through those with the faith to trust Him.

"It cannot be affirmed that the Old Testament law of tithes is binding on the Christian Church, nevertheless the principle of this law remains, and is incorporated in the gospel; and if, as is the case, the motive that ought to prompt to liberality in the cause of religion and of the service of God be greater now than in Old Testament times, then Christians ought to go beyond the ancient Hebrew in consecrating both themselves and their substance to God."
- Easton's 1897 Bible Dictionary