

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Should christians tithe?**Should christians tithe? - posted by FishermanH, on: 2009/6/21 6:07**

Hi, I was after some feedback on my views on tithing ...

Should Christians Tithe?

By Harri Korhonen

Introduction

The bible talks a lot about giving, for some people as soon as a preacher mentions giving, their blood begins to boil thinking that someone is trying to swindle their hard earned cash, or they feel great guilt at their lack of giving, while for some its easy to give, as they do not care about worldly riches, but are focused on the joys of serving God.

So what's the go with tithing, what does the bible teach about this topic? Obviously there mention of tithing in the bible, but should we still tithe? In this study we will first examine what tithing is, before investigating whether tithing is required of Christians. Then we will look at other types of giving discussed in the New Testament.

What is tithing?**Abraham**

Firstly, what you probably already know, the word tithe literally means "a tenth part". But what was it a tenth part of and who gave it and to whom was it given. These are the bits that are not understood by most, and become blurred by our "traditions of men".

In Genesis 14 we read about Abraham giving a tithe to Melchizedek, this is the first reference to giving some type of tithe in the bible. Gen 14:20 "And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand. And he gave him a tithe of all."

What Abraham gave was goods taken after the battle against the armies who captured Lot (Abraham's brother). Abraham did not keep anything for himself, all possessions captured went back to the king of Sodom, and a portion to Abner, Eshcol and Mamre.

What happened here does predate the law of Moses, but you could not use this as an argument to say someone should tithe. This is a one off event and if someone was to base their tithing on this, they should also teach to give the remaining 90% away and not keep it either.

Jacob

The next reference to tithing in the bible is found in Gen 28:20-22 "If God will be with me and will watch over me on this journey I am taking and will give me food to eat and clothes to wear so that I return safely to my father's house, then the LORD will be my God and this stone that I have set up as a pillar will be God's house, and of all that you give me I will give you a tenth."

Has anyone ever recommended conditional tithing? Normally we hear people saying you need to tithe so you are blessed, give in advance, but where is that in the bible? What about Jacob, he said "If God will..." then he would give him a tithe.

Ok when Jacob gave a tithe, how did he give it to God? There were no Levitical priests, no temple, no local church and no postal service direct to God. Well in the verses in Genesis it doesn't explicitly say. Maybe he enjoyed a portion of the livestock and produce with his family, friends, the poor, the strangers with thanksgiving and in communion with God, as was done after the Law took effect (See Deut 12:6-7 and Deut 14:29).

Levites

After the laws of God were introduced through Moses to the Israelites, regular tithes were given. But what was actually g

iven, who were they given too and when was it given?

Who were tithes given to?

1. A tithe to the children of Levi

Numbers 18:20-24 : “Behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tithes in Israel as an inheritance in return for the work which they perform, the work of the tabernacle of meeting. Hereafter the children of Israel shall not come near the tabernacle of meeting, lest they bear sin and die. But the Levites shall perform the work of the tabernacle of meeting, and they shall bear their iniquity; it shall be a statute forever, throughout your generations, that among the children of Israel they shall have no inheritance. For the tithes of the children of Israel, which they offer up as a heave offering to the Lord, I have given to the Levites as an inheritance; therefore I have said to them, ‘Among the children of Israel they shall have no inheritance.’”

2. A tithe (the best of) from the Levites tithe above, to be given to Aaron.

Numbers 18:25-32 : Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak thus to the Levites, and say to them: ‘When you take from the children of Israel the tithes which I have given you from them as your inheritance, then you shall offer up a heave offering of it to the Lord, a tenth of the tithe. And your heave offering shall be reckoned to you as though it were the grain of the threshing floor and as the fullness of the winepress. Thus you shall also offer a heave offering to the Lord from all your tithes which you receive from the children of Israel, and you shall give the Lord’s heave offering from it to Aaron the priest. Of all your gifts you shall offer up every heave offering due to the Lord, from all the best of them, the consecrated part of them.’ Therefore you shall say to them: ‘When you have lifted up the best of it, then the rest shall be accounted to the Levites as the produce of the threshing floor and as the produce of the winepress. You may eat it in any place, you and your households, for it is your reward for your work in the tabernacle of meeting. And you shall bear no sin because of it, when you have lifted up the best of it. But you shall not profane the holy gifts of the children of Israel, lest you die.’”

3. The Israelites gathered together with those who belonged to their household ate/drank of the tithe. The Israelites had 3 festivals each year for which they travelled to Jerusalem, for which scholars believe this tithe was used/consumed. (See Exodus 23:14-17)

Deut 14:22-26: You shall truly tithe all the increase of your grain that the field produces year by year. And you shall eat before the Lord your God, in the place where He chooses to make His name abide, the tithe of your grain and your new wine and your oil, of the firstborn of your herds and your flocks, that you may learn to fear the Lord your God always. But if the journey is too long for you, so that you are not able to carry the tithe, or if the place where the Lord your God chooses to put His name is too far from you, when the Lord your God has blessed you, then you shall exchange it for money, take the money in your hand, and go to the place which the Lord your God chooses. And you shall spend that money for whatever your heart desires: for oxen or sheep, for wine or similar drink, for whatever your heart desires; you shall eat there before the Lord your God, and you shall rejoice, you and your household

4. At the end of each 3rd year, gather a tithe of the third year's produce given to the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, the widow who are within your gates.

Deut 14:27-29: You shall not forsake the Levite who is within your gates, for he has no part nor inheritance with you. At the end of every third year you shall bring out the tithe of your produce of that year and store it up within your gates. And the Levite, because he has no portion nor inheritance with you, and the stranger and the fatherless and the widow who are within your gates, may come and eat and be satisfied, that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hand which you do.

Deut 26:12: When you have finished laying aside all the tithe of your increase in the third year—the year of tithing—and have given it to the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, so that they may eat within your gates and be filled.

Note that the Levites didn’t completely live off the tithe, they were given land around cities which they could farm.

Num 35:4 “The common-land of the cities which you will give the Levites shall extend from the wall of the city outward a thousand cubits all around.”

Note that Jesus did not receive a tithe as he was from the tribe of Judah. The apostle Paul did not receive a tithe, as he was from the tribe of Benjamin. None of Jesus' disciples received a tithe either.

When was it tithed?

There is some conjecture as to how to interpret when tithes were given. I'm not talking about what time of year, but which years, and hence how much on average it equates to. When adding up the amounts tithed on a 3 year average, it may either be 3.33% or 10.33% or 23.33%, with the later figure (23.33%) being the most common I found doing a search on the internet.

Ok so where do we get these figures...

3.33%: 10% given every third year (of only the third years produce) to the Levites and to the poor.

10.33%: 10% annually for feasts of worship, and 10% every 3rd year (of only the third years produce) for the Levites and the poor.

23.33%: 10% given annually to the Levites, 10% annually for feasts of worship, and 10% every 3rd year (of only the third years produce) for the Levites and the poor.

Note the above figures are worked on a 3 year average, but every 7th year there was no tithing as that was a Sabbath year of rest in which there was no sowing nor reaping (see Lev 25:1-7). This means the figures should really be 2.89%, 11.43% and 20%.

What was tithed?

Leviticus 27:30-33, "And all the TITHE of the LAND, whether of the SEED of the land, or of the FRUIT, of the tree, is the Lord's: it is holy unto the Lord. And if a man will at all redeem ought of his tithes, he shall add thereto the fifth part thereof. And concerning the TITHE of the HERD, or of the FLOCK, even of whatsoever passes under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the Lord. He shall not search whether it be good or bad, neither shall he change it..."

We read in Leviticus 27:30-33 what was actually tithed. It consists of any of the following:

1. The seed of the land
2. Fruit from trees
3. Animals from his herds or flocks that pass under a rod.

This means that fish, money, houses and any other possessions were not tithed.

Money only came into the equation when, they had to travel long distances to provide their tithes. In these cases they could convert their tithe to cash, then travel, and then buy stuff for the tithe again when they got there. (See Deut 14:24-26)

Another interesting point to note is that it was the last tenth of livestock given to God not the first tenth. So if you had 99 cows, then the 10th, 20th, ..., 90th (9 cows in total) would be given as a tithe.

I have heard preachers say to always give the first 10th of your money, and sometimes they will go so far as to say to give of things you haven't yet received "in faith". Firstly money wasn't tithed in the bible (try putting your pet dog in the offering basket next week), and secondly, what happened to giving the last tenth instead?

Note that there are scriptures which mention giving first fruits or first born, these are not actually the tithes, but a different set of laws instituted under the Mosaic covenant.

Who tithed?

Well as we have already discovered, it was only grain, fruit and animals from flocks and herds. So how would a servant, a shop keeper or a builder tithe? Well they didn't. It was only the owner of the land and animals that tithed. This means even Jesus the carpenter didn't even tithe.

The other people that tithed were the Levites themselves who gave a tithe from the tithe they were given to the priests (from the line of Aaron) (See Numbers 18:25-32).

So in Luke 14:12, when Jesus said the Pharisees were said to tithe of their mint, rue, herbs and Matt 23:23 mint, anise and cumin (note they are agricultural products), they were Jews living under the old covenant (Mosaic law) and Jesus had not been crucified.

Also note the gentiles did not tithe, they were considered unclean and were not permitted to tithe.

What do Jews do today?

Well Jews don't actually tithe anymore. They know that the Levites were the only ones that could receive the tithe. There are no official Levitical priests ministering at the temple in Jerusalem, which makes it totally non-scriptural to pay a tithe. In fact they consider it a sin to give or receive a tithe in any other manner other than what is defined in scripture. As those requirements cannot be done Jews do not tithe today. I also read that the proper genealogical records of the Levites were destroyed in the temple in 70 AD, and the true Levites cannot be determined. So even if the temple in Jerusalem was rebuilt for the Jews, do hold your breath that they would recommence tithing any time soon!

What should Christians do?

How many endless times have we heard Malachi 3:8-10 quoted during a collection of a "tithe". Being told we are robbing God if we do not give 10% of our finances. Being told you will be under a financial curse for not tithing, and being told God will financially bless you if you do. Is it the saints who rob God by not "tithing" or is the preacher robbing God, and the saints, by compelling people to give 10% of their money as though it were biblical tithing? As we have discovered, the tithing discussed in the Bible bears no parallel to what is taught from many pulpits. Why do they give as doctrines the teaching of men? Why do they continue to put heavy yokes on the necks of people? Why do they make the word of God of no effect by their traditions?

If you believe you still need to follow the old covenant, then you still cannot biblically tithe (ask a Jew how you could do this). If you believe that you are under the new covenant, through the blood of Jesus, then there is no premise in the Bible for tithing. If you elect to give 10% to support Christian workers, then that's wonderful, but don't allude to the fact that giving 10% of your money is somehow based on the tithing of the Bible, it just isn't!

What should we give?

As we have discovered giving 10% of your money is not what biblical tithing was, and there is no requirement for us to follow the old covenant method of tithing. So what is written in the New Testament in regards to giving, and what example was given us by the believers in the New Testament?

Firstly we read in Psalm 24:1 (and 1 Cor 10:26), that "The earth is the Lord's and everything in it, the world and all who live in it." So from the perspective that God already owns 100% of everything we have, how do we give to him what he already owns. In fact it is God who has given to us, to be stewards of his possession. He wants us to reflect his character attributes and to be generous givers.

Giving.

2 Cor 9:6,7 "Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver"

(In fact you should read all of 2 Cor 9)

Acts 20:35 "I...help the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive'"

Matt 5:42 "Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you"

Matt 6:3 "When you give to the needy, do not let your right hand know what your left hand is doing"

Rom 15:26 "We...were pleased to make contributions for the poor among the saints"

Luke 6:38 "Give and it will be given to you"

1 Tim 5:8 "If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."

Rom 12 v6 "We have different gifts..", v8 "... if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously"

In summary of the above, God wants us to be happy to give, not doing it because we feel we have to. He wants us to support our families, other believers and the poor. Do not hold onto the possessions God has given to you so tightly and greedily, and do not love the world or the things of the world (1 John 2:15), but use what you have wisely and generously. Enjoy giving and blessing others.

What about giving to support your local pastors/preachers?

So what about those who work in the local church, what should we give them?

What was the example given to us by the apostles themselves? The most scripturally documented example is the apostle Paul, who worked as a tentmaker during the week, and preached in the synagogue on the Sabbath (see Acts 18:3, 4). He also used his income from what he earned as a tentmaker to support the weak, and doing this also an example for others to follow. (Acts 20:30, 2 Thes 3:7-9). Paul did not want to burden the church and take people's money (1 Thes 2:9).

Paul did not always work while preaching, we also read that he did receive money from churches (in Macedonia) to preach to at Corinth (2 Cor 11:7,8).

Another example of what the disciples did was collecting finances to give to Christians in need, such as when there was a drought in Judea the disciples sent gifts via Paul and Barnabus to them. (Acts 11:27-30, 1 Cor 16:1-3)

What did Jesus get the disciples to do during their training with Jesus? He sent them out with nothing but the clothes on their back. But in this, he also told them to accept hospitality given to them, because workers deserve their pay. (Luke 10:3, 4:7)

Where did Jesus and the disciples get finances from? There were believers giving to them to support them (Luke 8:3).

Then we have the example in Acts 4:32-27, where people shared what they had, and even sold land and houses to give to those other believers in need. They gave the money to the apostles, who distributed it.

Of those who labour in the word and doctrine, the bible says that they are workers who deserve wages, and not to muzzle them in their work. Also that, those who preach the gospel, should be supported by those who benefit from it. (1 Tim 5:18, 1 Cor 9:9-14)

In summary of this, we should give financial support to those who teach us the word of God, that their preaching is not hindered. Support the work of the church that it would prosper. We who have should equally give the poor and needy Christians. But how much should we give? We'll give whatever can, and do it with a smile, don't be greedy, but be generous.

Re: Should Christians tithe?, on: 2009/6/21 8:57

No....we should give as guided by the Holy Spirit. Not under compulsion or guilt.

Re: - posted by rainydaygirl, on: 2009/6/21 12:05

reformer wrote "No....we should give as guided by the Holy Spirit. Not under compulsion or guilt. "

I agree completely and I also believe we should be giving with out any one knowing.

rdg

Re: - posted by Logic, on: 2009/6/21 19:17

I agree with rainydaygirl & reformer on this subject.

Some people make it a "law" to tithe.

If it is a "law", and if you must hold to tithing, then you must hold to all the other 613 points of the same law:

Gal 5:3 For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.

Or:

...to every man that **must tithe**, he is a debtor to do the whole law.

Gal 3:10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

IOW:

The curse of the law is that if one thinks that he must be under only some points of the law (tithe), he must know that he must respect all of it, not "pick & choose" which ones to obey and not to obey.

Re: , on: 2009/6/21 19:29

giving is good...very, very, very good

Re: , on: 2009/6/21 20:19

Quote:

Rev__Enue wrote:

giving is good...very, very, very good

of course its good, because most pastors and preachers are the benefactors of the "tithes".

Re: Should christians tithe? - posted by Know-Him, on: 2009/6/22 3:59

Thank you FishermanH for posting this interesting article. Often in Scripture giving is linked with specifically giving to the poor. So often the giving in the western church is directed towards a building project. This is never taught or practised in the new testament. I feel sorry for the many who have given sacrificially to a building thinking that they were giving to God only to find that it will be burnt up as wood hay and stubble. What if the western church (before the credit crunch) had sold all its property and used the money for the poor and needy. What an impact that would have had on all their communities. I agree, give as directed by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will guide in accordance with the word of God. The Word of God teaches giving to the poor not to another monument erected to glorify a man or a denomination.

Re: - posted by davym (), on: 2009/6/22 4:51

When we give, we give to the Lord. Those who are the stewards of these funds will be accountable to God for how they spend it.

There are many churches with corrupt pastors who receive vast sums of tithes especially in the West where congregations tend to be much wealthier than the rest of the world. The extravagant lifestyles and questionable teaching of these preachers/pastors has been subject of many a thread here.

The real point I'm trying to make is that there are many people who tithe in all good faith to what they believe is the Lord'

s work (whether it is or not is another matter). God knows their hearts and motives for giving and this is what is important. Obviously, however, we should be discerning as to who we give our tithes/offerings to.

Ultimately everything is God's anyway. We are only returning to Him what is already His.

Re: - posted by Know-Him, on: 2009/6/22 16:12

I don't think it is good enough to say, "well I gave in good faith." I think that is an avoidance of the issue. We are the one s who are called to be good stewards of what God has given us; not the person we choose to give our money to.

Re: what is a good steward?, on: 2009/6/22 20:47

Many people think they are being good stewards just because the "tithe" every Sunday. You can still tithe regularly and spend like crazy. You might still be worldly. Stewardship is conducting yourself with restraint and prayer over your pocket book; I wish I could say this is how I behaved! But sometimes the hard way to learn gets you on the right path.

When you "tithe" to your church, you are paying the expenses and mortgage on a building they just took a multi-million dollar mortgage on. I suppose "do what I say, not what I do", works in the church and the world.

:)

Re: Should christians tithe? - posted by preacher777E (), on: 2009/6/23 22:14

Your post was very good and biblical. I always call my gifts to YHWH assembly offerings.

Re: - posted by tozerite, on: 2009/7/4 20:27

A Christian in South Korea told me that you should give roughly a third of your tithe to the church, a third to the poor and needy with whom you come into contact and a third to your immediate family, if anyone is in need. If anyone in your immediate family, say, a brother-in-law finds himself unemployed, your care, concern and material help to his family will win him to Christ. If you say like the Pharisee, in your heart or even to him in person, "Sorry, I can't help you, I have given my tithe to the church," he might never open his heart to Christ. If I say to the homeless, sorry, we are building a \$2 million extension to our fellowship hall to serve as a gym for the youth, how can I be a follower of Christ? Give all you can, but be discerning. These churches that take in \$25,000 to \$400,000 per week become empires and take on the stature of a commercial enterprise. There are many in our communities with real financial needs. Reach out and help them. You will reach the hearts of sinners that way and demonstrate the love of Christ to them. You will be amazed how many scriptures deal with this, but in 40 years, I've never heard a minister put the needs of the poor, naked and hungry above the needs of the church - well I have recently and it was one of the powerful experiences of my Christian walk.

Re: - posted by Laviver, on: 2009/11/7 16:11

Anyone care to comment afresh on this subject?

Re: , on: 2009/11/7 17:23

Nice post tozerite. This actually makes cents.

Re: , on: 2009/11/7 17:38

Quote:

-----There are many in our communities with real financial needs.

Giving to the Church means giving to everyone that makes up that Church not to the organization of that denomination. It's big money for these goons. I look forward to the day these big corporate Churches are taxed. Talk about fleecing the flock.

I like what you had to say Tozerite, very good wisdom.

Above all be cheerful in your giving. If you begrudge giving, God will begrudge giving to you.

Re: Should christians tithe? - posted by twayneb (), on: 2009/11/7 19:02

Great teaching FishermanH. Let me add to that a bit if I may. Tithing is a concept that was entirely under the Old Covenant. If you want to keep the law, then tithe. Under the new covenant we are taught to give.

2 Cor. 9:7 tells every man to give as he purposes in his own heart. Sometimes the Holy Spirit directs my giving. Other times I simply give whatever I want to because I am commanded to do so in 2 Cor. 9:7.

The most extensive teaching involving tithing is found in the book of Hebrews. If you pay close attention to context, tithing is used as the example in a point meant to illustrate that we are no longer under the old covenant but the new. I find it strange that of all the law, tithing seems the one thing the church has taught dogmatically and held onto most. Odd huh?

Jesus taught on money a great deal during His ministry. Money is the one area of many peoples' lives that has not been surrendered to the Lord Jesus. He taught that money was the least of all things, and that if you could not be in submission to Him where money was concerned, how could you be trusted with true spiritual riches. God can always provide a way for you to have more money as you need it. He wants us to be able to bless others and provide for the work of the ministry by being channels through which He can move money, not dead ends that hoard money. A person who is in love with Jesus, and totally submitted to His will will outgive a person who feels they have a legal obligation to give a certain percentage on any day, because generosity in giving is a character trait of the Lord.

Having said that, there is absolutely nothing wrong with deciding that you want to use a certain percentage of your income as your base giving amount and then allow your own desire as well as the leadership of the Holy Spirit to give above that.

Appreciate the post brother. You brought that word very clearly and concisely. Amen!

One final word. Sow in good soil. Allow the Holy Spirit to give you wisdom and discernment as to when and where to give. If the place where you are fed spiritually is good soil, by all means provide so that ministry can flourish and grow so that others may be fed as well.

Re: cheerful giver - posted by Lysa (), on: 2009/11/7 20:18

(removed first paragraph for clarity!!)

Matthew 10:9-10 Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: **for the workman is worthy of his meat.**

A workman is worthy... key word is workman!

I think there are verses that test us and our giving. True we are not compelled to pay tithes but we are to "*give and not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loves a cheerful giver.*" 2 Cor 9:7

For me the question isn't to defend why we don't have to pay tithes but when asked, declare why we do give!! That is a cheerful giver too!

God bless you guys,

Re: - posted by INGRACE (), on: 2009/11/7 21:49

There definitely is a difference between OT.tithing and NT. giving.
Hopefully this is not against the rules, but this article is what got me to really studying tithing and giving.

<http://www.precious-testimonies.com/Exhortations/p-t/sho>

Re: - posted by mguldner (), on: 2010/4/14 2:12

I was going to start a new post on this but I instead took the time to search for this one :) I recently did a sermon on tithing and took it in this article's direction without even really knowing it. I am pretty heartbroken over the state of the "tithe and offering" at my church. We are a small church as so we're running into financial issues. My head pastor when preaching a tithe message will always advise the congregation "We are a full Gospel church and so we must preach on tithe". My dad actually ended up disagreeing with him and they got into a small spat in which they agreed to disagree.

Anyways back to what I was saying, in my sermon I pointed out that the Attitude of the Giver is SO much more important than that amount given. In Malachi we are asked an odd question Will a man rob God? I didn't understand this but meditated and studied this question hard. Most pastors will use this as their focal point that by not tithing we rob God, in my message I presented the most obvious truth I knew YOU CAN'T Rob a God who owns everything! So my point I made was God in Malachi wasn't being robbed of His tithe and offerings but in His Honor and intimacy with His people.

I made the point that WE can give in Joy or in grumbling and in grumbling our tithe becomes not a blessing but a curse. I also pointed out that ALL giving must be done with Christ and Christ alone in mind, many give to get and many bless only to be blessed. Many treat God as if He is a savings deposit for their blessings in heaven, give a little on earth get a two car garage upgrade on your mansion in heaven. My reward is Christ and Christ Alone and HE is enough. I give because Christ is worthy to receive my offerings and tithes.

My final point was Give what you can and if your conviction is 10% and you miss the mark then pray that Christ increase your faith.

I agree with many of those that posted before We have made the tithe a Law and we are no longer under the Law but under Grace!

God Bless,
Matthew

Re: Should christians tithe? - posted by passerby, on: 2010/4/14 23:22

Theologically, I don't believe that we must tithe, but I do not have to be cynical either towards our brethren who tithe or teaches others to tithe.

It could be that they just want to be faithful to the teachings that they receive. Of course some are abusing this concept for their own benefit.

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2010/4/15 7:12

passerby: You are right in that we should not be cynical toward those who do tithe. But those who do it out of obligation or adherence to law rather than out of a joyful heart of giving are profited nothing by their tithing. That is why it is important to draw the distinction. In God's economy, giving is the way to receive. (Not in a selfish or covetous way, but simply to have our needs met and provision for ministry available) So one who teaches tithing in the sense that we must because God demands or requires it and that we are robbing God if we don't is one who is doing the thing that the Judaizers were doing to the Galatian church, and that is putting people back under bondage to law. Now if someone who calls it tithing and says that we should give or tithe because we love God and are blessed of Him then I think there is no problem at all with the term "tithe". You are right. Always the truth in love!

Travis

Re: - posted by passerby, on: 2010/4/15 8:43

Yes, with kind persuasion we will patiently look forward for the liberation of our brethren from the bondage of legalism.

But we may openly oppose those who without shame nor regret are perverting the concept of tithing for their own greed.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/4/15 8:45

Here is a word if you can hear it: Jesus is my tithe.

Re: - posted by mguldner (), on: 2010/4/15 11:43

Could you explain this a bit more I believe I have kind of heard this before but what does it mean that Jesus is your tithe specifically?

I am just curious because I feel the same way but would like to know your take :)

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/4/15 12:17

Happily. Jesus is my tithe in the same way Paul said Christ is our Passover. What God required the Jews to offer in the Law, God offered for us. Jesus became our tithe, or specifically our "first-fruits" by being raised from the dead. He is "God's divine portion." He is God's first, and God's best.

Re: - posted by osandoval, on: 2010/4/15 12:27

Great discussion everyone. I can testify of how liberating it has been for me to come out from the bondage of tithing to church building projects. I still try to use the 10% number as a starting point(though not strictly). But now I look for ways to bless those who are truly in need with it. For example, I look for good reputable ministries to the poor or orphans, missionaries, and personally I give to the homeless in my community, which opens a door for me to preach the gospel to them. I've been blessed tremendously through this type of giving; not so much blessed financially as much as spiritually, though God does faithfully supply all my financial needs. James 1:27 comes to mind:

"Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world."

Re: - posted by osandoval, on: 2010/4/15 12:29

KingJimmy I totally agree. Also, Jesus is the fulfillment of the tithe, in the same way that he is the fulfillment of the Sabbath. He is also our Sabbath rest, but I hope I don't open up another can of worms :).

Re: - posted by mguldner (), on: 2010/4/15 12:35

That is what I thought :) Something that I don't like is the fact that if I get my credentials as an Assembly of God minister it's required of me to give my tithe to the AoG General Council and if I don't tithe then I lose my credentialing. I have started tithing partly because it's an obligation to an organization which I really don't like. I am in prayer about if I really want my credentials if it means falling under the Law of man.

I have been working more towards giving to others rather than just tithe, my wife and I try and give 10% to the church and beyond 10% to organizations that help people. I like what a few have said about tithe if you are subject to tithing because if it's in the law then you are subject to the whole law which to me is something we must step out of.

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2010/4/15 14:58

Brother, I am not against the AoG in any way, but your "credentials" can only come from one place. God both calls and equips you, and He gives you your credentials. Ordination is not a dispensing of legal documents, but a public recognition by existing leadership that you have a legitimate call and that the Holy Spirit is bringing you into a place of wearing the mantle of that call.

I understand what you are saying though. Licensing is something that does help. I guess you just need to pray whether God would have you licensed by that organization.

Re: - posted by mguldner (), on: 2010/4/15 15:30

The Holy Spirit spoke to me once about it and said What exactly is a credential? and then it hit me A piece of paper saying I was approved by man to preach, This I know I don't need nor should I seek but God also hasn't given me a green flag to stop but has told me to wait and so this is what I am doing :)

Re: - posted by whyme, on: 2010/4/15 16:23

God requires us to sow materially into the lives of those who feed us spiritually. That is a principal of Scripture in both the Old and New Testament. This material sowing is for the purpose of meeting the needs of those who labor in the ministry of the Lord. If you want to loosely call that tithing, fine. That isn't being under the law, that is obeying Christ's commands.

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2010/4/15 18:18

True, whyme, true!

Re: - posted by mguldner (), on: 2010/4/15 19:18

I agree with this as well, we are to sow and meet the needs of those who labor. but there are also those who labor very little and expect full pay. We see a beautiful example of Paul, He worked as a tentmaker and a preacher so he wouldn't be a burden to the church.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/4/15 22:46

Quote:
-----Something that I don't like is the fact that if I get my credentials as an Assembly of God minister it's required of me to give my tithe to the AoG General Council and if I don't tithe then I lose my credentialing.

I was a member at a Church of God where the same thing happened. You could not even hold a position as a Sunday school teacher unless you consistently tithed. If you ceased tithing, you were disciplined, and removed from your position. I had such happen to me once. For about a year or two, I tried tithing so I could maintain my ministry within the church. I thought I was being mature in doing such. After all, I wouldn't want to offend the brethren and discredit my ministry. But in the process, I only ended up wrecking my finances. And when I stopped tithing so that I could pay my bills, I found out the hard way that wasn't allowed.

Looking back though, I realize that ultimately hurt my relationship with the Lord. I was allowing myself to be manipulated by the powers in the denomination. My tithing was not an expression so much of faith as it was in trying to play the system. I ended up losing anyway. There was no joy in it. It was nothing but oppressive.

I would never tell somebody to not tithe if they felt that is what the Lord wants them to do. But if you are tithing even with the slightest idea of doing it to maintain a position in a church, or credentials with a denomination, I would tell you to stop. What you are doing is not of faith nor of God, and I believe in the end, will only prove itself to have been an Ishmael altogether.

Re: - posted by mguldner (), on: 2010/4/15 23:14

thanks brother Jimmy, I agree with you I am kind of torn here because I truly do enjoy giving to the church and those in need but I just don't know if such a rule is proper to make. The Lord really has been laying on my heart home churches and it feels my heart with great joy thinking about what God could do with one as such.

when I started as a youth pastor at this church God told me Quality needs to be over quantity and thus has been my motto from the start. I believe that in a small town Home Churches would be more effective than an actual church. My greatest joy is the fact that if I started a home church the "tithe" would go directly to those in need instead of the church electric bill. I said I wouldn't take the tithe as a preacher for preaching but rather would work my full time job and work in the ministry all at the same time so the money could go to those who really need it. Maybe this is rule is the boiling point for me to take such a venture but as of now God is telling me to wait and so here I wait for the Lord.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/4/15 23:27

Amen. Also keep in mind the denominational machine in the Assemblies of God will require you to be hawkish over the tithing habits of your members. In the Church of God, at least in my area, they recently cracked down on pastors that were not holding people accountable for their tithing habits. The pastor could be disciplined for not doing such. It's one thing if one submits to such a thing by their own free will. I think it's terrible that the denomination would require pastors rule over their flocks in such a manner.

Re: - posted by mguldner (), on: 2010/4/15 23:44

That is not very comforting, God has placed me in a season of training and so I will wait till He tells me different. I am quite excited about the plans He has for me even though He has only revealed very little to me but I know that He is working for my embetterment even if at times it feels I have enemies surrounding me on all sides. What I have been really trying to grasp as of lately is the very foundations of the Christian life which I know I will need a very firm grasp of if I am to tell others about it.

Re: About money - posted by Lysa (), on: 2010/4/16 5:48

I have three things I'd like to share about tithing. The last church I went to (stopped over three years ago), they actually had the audacity to "experiment" during offering time to find out when they got more money. They started out with a box in the back but that didn't bring in much so when they past the plate around, they got even more money. They said people were embarrassed not to be seen putting money in the plate and here is the final kicker... they tried having people stand up during offering and found out that they got more that way too, it was easier for men to get to their wallets. I am just telling you what I heard during their worship planning evenings for this one particular church.

The second thing I wanted to say about tithing is about the pastor where I grew up; when he was first called to preach he dragged his feet and God asked him why he was dragging his feet and he told the the Lord three things. I can only remember the answers God him but I do remember the last statement he told God!

The Lord told him to never kick anyone out, that He would take care of them and the problem.

And the Lord told him to never keep a membership roll, He would keep the membership role.

I remember #3 He said to God, "The day I have to beg for money to keep the church open, that's the day I lock the door and stop preaching." And he said God told him, "I agree! Now go!" They did have lean years but God still provided. They didn't run out and start building a church right away either!

And the third thing I wanted to end with is how Bro. Zac Poonen said his church had an offering box in the back and they had a sign over it that quoted Matthew 5.23-24, ""Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift."

And Bro Zac has said in his sermons that we (as givers) need to research and find out what churches are doing with their money so we can sow what we do give into "good ground."

Re: - posted by mguldner (), on: 2010/4/16 10:33

WOW That is AWESOME! I am so glad that Christ has placed people before me to see that there are people that want to follow a biblical example and ultimately HIS example. We do the whole passing the plate around thing and every once in a while I am the usher but it feels so odd because as an usher you don't really pass the plate but just walk around the church to each person since our church is small. I don't like doing it though because it feels as if I am watching who is giving. My dad suggested the box thing but it was denied. When I start up a church I believe I will use the box thing as well I don't care who is giving and I have faith that Christ will provide for the work of His kingdom.

I think that is one of the issues I have with some of the churches in this area or at least at my church we say we have faith in Christ Jesus but sweat when finances are low and are then "lead" to give a tithe message that casts judgment. If you have faith then great but USE IT! and if you don't have faith then don't say it.

Re: - posted by Miccah (), on: 2010/4/16 15:42

Lysa,

Your post on the churches experimenting with different ways to essentially shame people into giving is disturbing at the least.

What has the church come to that it would hold the Church in such low regards?

Re: - posted by mguldner (), on: 2010/4/16 16:25

Quote:

-----What has the church come to that it would hold the Church in such low regards?

Men are quite crafty at justifying sin in their heart, of course in the end the Just Judge will reign and these men will be truly judged and they won't escape the consequences nor the punishment, unless of course they repent and turn their hearts to Jesus rather than their pocket book.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/4/16 17:44

Once a denominational official had everybody walk up front to hand him the money in person at the altar. He quoted every giving verse in the New Testament. All I had was 2 pennies in my pocket. So, I stood up first, tossed my two cents at him from the middle of the aisle, and stormed out of the church.

This was in front of a group of about 50-100 pastors/bible college students, and part of a local church. You can imagine how well that went over with some people.

Re: - posted by mguldner (), on: 2010/4/16 19:13

That is quite intense Brother Jimmy, I am sure He didn't quote every giving verse or He would have contradicted himself by quoting Give in Secret :). I don't like emphasis the stereo-typical tithe message presents its generally done out of fear the church is going to shut down or judgment and condemnation for those that are don't tithe faithfully. I said this in my sermon on tithing and He later went up to me and said he disagreed with the Judgment and condemnation part because he feels its the holy spirit that is convicting the person rather him judging people.

but what do I know I am just a peayon youth pastor who isn't as wise in the ways of pastoring and ministry.

Re: - posted by Joyful_Heart, on: 2010/4/16 22:30

I can tell you that it is extremely important, like I think Lysa said, to know where our tithe is going when we tithe.

My tithe goes only to a couple of places. One is where I know positively that the poor and homeless are being fed in body and spirit. That single mom's are given homes and gotten off drugs and on a new path with the Lord. And drug addicts are being delivered and set free. And the Gospel is being preached un-watered down around the world. This is the small part I get to do and I am thrilled about it. God laid it upon my heart to tithe to this place a long time ago and I know without a doubt I am doing His will.

The other place is a place where I get fed meat along with Saints from around the world. When I go to a service I will put some in the plate but it's not my tithe.

And as I have read of others in the past how they put a box in the back for people to give as the Lord has laid it upon their hearts how much and when. To me this is God's way. It seems these other pastors are practicing manipulative giving, reminds me of Jesus going through through the Temple with a whip and a Holy anger.

Lysa, loved so much the testimony of the Pastor when you were young. What a man of God.

I still believe in small home groups of praying, worshiping, fellowshiping saints. The only money needed is to buy food for the needy etc. Glory to God.

Not sure if this helps any but I just wanted to share. One thing I do know is that as we seek God - He will guide and direct. I will pray also for your answer. God is so faithful. He is always amazing!

Re: - posted by mguldner (), on: 2010/4/16 22:41

To me it seems my tithe goes to pay a utility bill that is the problem that small town churches seem to have. I will definitely be in prayer about the home church thing since when done in a home utilities are already paid out of my pocket and my tithe can go to where its needed. My pastor doesn't approve of giving to other ministry and calling it your tithe if you are a member of the church though, because "you are to bring the tithe to the storehouse" which apparently is the church. Not entirely sure I agree with his or the AoG concept of tithing but God has me there for a reason and so I will continue to God. I am there to serve and love the people and that is what I am doing to the best I know how.

Edit

And thank you for the prayers they are appreciated and I believe necessary.

God Bless,
Matthew

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/4/16 22:59

To date, I've yet to see anybody show how, Biblically speaking, the church building and the pastor constitute "the storehouse."

Re: - posted by mguldner (), on: 2010/4/16 23:06

Nor have I, but from there we see why we have such divisions in churches, I am currently listening to Zac Poonen 4 part Series "Why Another Church" very awesome I highly recommend it!

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/4/17 10:10

Can you link to this series, I can't seem to find it?

Re: tithing - posted by twayneb (), on: 2010/4/17 11:00

Quote:
-----To date, I've yet to see anybody show how, Biblically speaking, the church building and the pastor constitute "the storehouse."

I agree. If I am wrong someone correct me, but the OT storehouse was literally a place where stores were held for the tribe of Levi, who could not own land and farm as the others, to obtain their necessary provision. There were also stores of financial resources for the work of ministry. It was not a place where the "tither" put off reserves for his future needs. It is not a type for the local church as far as I can tell. Scripture is usually pretty clear as to types, and I have never seen a reference linking the OT storehouse and the NT local church.

Travis

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/4/17 11:05

You are correct.

Re: - posted by mguldner (), on: 2010/4/18 14:35

Quote:

-----Can you link to this series, I can't seem to find it?

http://www.cfcindia.com/web/mainpages/video_message.php?issue=217&date=09_10&title=Why+Another+Church%3F+-+1.+A+Remnant+True+To+God

Here you go Brother Jimmy I didn't realize what you were asking for at first then paid attention the second time I read your post, I actually found it on Zac Poonen's website that is where you will find the other 3 of the series the link is for the first message.

God Bless,
Matthew

Re: - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2010/4/18 16:33

Here is a link to an excellent article in pdf format on why the Christian should tithe. It was written by B.H. Clendennen...

(<http://frontpage.inficad.com/~ronh/Articles/Tithe.pdf>) Tithing

In Christ,

Ron

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/4/18 17:19

I know B H Clendennen is highly regarded, but I must say he is completely wrong on this issue. Yes, tithing pre-dated the law, but so did much of the entire sacrificial system. God never commanded anybody to bring any of the sacrifices we read about in the book of Genesis. Yet, people offered animal and grain sacrifices all over the place. If one is going to argue that we must tithe because tithing pre-dated the law, then we must also continue to offer animal and grain sacrifices as well, because all of those things pre-dated the law.

Yet, we don't do any of those things today. Why? Because Jesus is the fulfillment of all these things, which were but types and shadows of Him. Tithing was part of the sacrificial system, which we are no longer obligated to. Deuteronomy 12 makes it clear it is part of the entire system of types and shadows. Indeed, the oft quoted Malachi proof-text ignores the fact Malachi is also preaching against other abuses going on under the sacrificial system, of which tithing is just one of several practices being neglected and abused.

Additionally, Clendennen's suggestion that one bring their tithe to the front of the church in front of everybody, and that tithing should be preached on in every service is something that is without apostolic precedent, and in my opinion, is spiritually abusive.

Frankly, this was just an awful essay on tithing.

Re: King Jimmy - posted by Areadymind (), on: 2010/4/18 21:38

Jimmy I would also add circumcision to your list there bro, Genesis 17:11, and a full grown man to boot.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/4/18 22:01

Amen. I can't believe I forgot to mention that. It's amazing how there simply is no theological justification for tithing today, yet to question it will often land you in a place assigned to the heretics.

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2010/4/18 22:04

I know this broadens the discussion a bit, but we could likewise say that a Christian does not have to keep the ten commandments. The ten commandments are part of the law, and we must be consistent. 2 Cor. 3:7 refers specifically to the ten commandments as a ministration of death, fulfilling the same purpose as the rest of the law. There is no difference in the two.

But, through the new covenant, God writes His laws in our heart so that by being obedient to the voice of the Holy Spirit within we will actually exceed the requirements of the ten commandments. Rather than "Thou shalt not kill", we will be picked in our hearts when we begin to be angry with our brother and begin to form thoughts of hatred or bitterness toward him. Thus we will, by the Spirit, fulfill the spirit of the law rather than the letter.

The same is true of giving. Our generosity will abound to more abundant giving through the love and leading of the Holy Spirit than it ever would have through keeping the law of the tithe.

Travis

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2010/4/18 22:07

Jimmy, after reading what you just said, I am afraid that last comment will really put me in the heretic zone. It is true though, and scripture.

Travis

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/4/18 22:13

This may come as a shock, and open a can of worms on here. But actually, I believe we don't have to keep the Ten Commandments either. We have been freed from all of the law, including the Ten. That's not to say we are without law. But we aren't under the jurisdiction of the Ten Commandments either.

Re: - posted by mguldner (), on: 2010/4/19 1:05

A can of worms indeed, I am under the Law of Love and Grace, It just so happens that if you Love me and I Love you turns out we won't kill each other, nor steal, nor covet each others wife or things, nor lie to each other. hum strange those sound familiar :) Also if we Love God as Jesus commands with all Mind, Soul, Heart, and Strength then we probably won't take His name in vain, set other 'gods' before Him, etc etc. Probably why Jesus said All the Law and the Prophets hang on the Two great commands :) I believe under a Law of Love and Grace the bar was set higher than the 600 some other laws placed on Israel. Why? Because it doesn't ask for 10% but if you see your brother in need give Him everything you can, this could be very well over 10%. But compared to the Grace given to me and the Love given to me I consider no cost!

God Bless,
Matthew

Re: can of worms! - posted by Lysa (), on: 2010/4/19 6:45

Quote:

-----But actually, I believe we don't have to keep the Ten Commandments either.

I agree but I just wanted to throw into the mix that Paul did state what was required of Gentiles who believed:

But as for the Gentiles who have believed, we have sent a letter with our judgment that they should abstain from 1) what has been sacrificed to idols, and from 2) blood, and from 3) what has been strangled, and from 4) sexual immorality. (Acts 21.25 ESV)

Re: - posted by whyme, on: 2010/4/19 8:39

I've heard others before say we don't have to keep the Ten Commandments. Very Wrong.

Christ confirms the two greatest commandments. The Ten Commandments are summed up in those two.

We cannot be justified by performing the law. The Law of Christ is the law of Love. The Ten Commandments are the most basic expressions of love to God and love to our neighbor. God's law is perfect. It is, including especially the Ten Commandments, a reflection of His character. Christ's commandments in the Sermon on the Mount are actually an amplification and clarification of the Ten Commandments. I hope none would argue that we should not obey the Sermon on the Mount.

Re:, on: 2010/4/19 16:30

Jimmy what about what Christ said, not to abolish the law..but to fulfill it in Matthew 5:17?

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/4/19 18:22

Indeed. He did not abolish it. But by fulfilling it, and fulfilling it in us, He divorced it from our lives so that we might ultimately be united to Him, so that instead of living our lives by letters written in stone, we might live according to the newness of the Spirit.

Re: fulfill the law - posted by twayneb (), on: 2010/4/19 19:34

We must properly define what it means to fulfill the law. To do this we must see what scripture says about the purpose of the law. If I fulfill the law, I complete it in the sense of accomplishing its purpose.

The purpose of the law was to make sin exceeding sinful, to show us that we were in sin, to stop our mouths and make us guilty before God, to revive and reveal sin in us. Romans 5:20, Romans 7:9-13. It also served as a restraint on sin. Thirdly, and in following directly from the first, it served as a schoolmaster to bring us to the place that we despaired of being able to do it on our own and cried out for a savior to deliver us. Galatians 3:24-25, Romans 7 describes Paul's futile effort to obtain righteousness by keeping the law and his realization of the real purpose of the law.

Christ was the object that the law pointed to. He fulfilled the law much in the same sense that a man fulfills his destiny by doing that for which he was born. To fulfill the law does not mean to KEEP it, rather to accomplish the very purpose for which the law was given. To be the savior that the law made us long for. To abolish the sin that the law so effectively revealed in us.

Here are some other verses that are worth studying in their context.

Romans 7:4, Romans 7:25, in fact all of Romans 1-8, Romans 8:2, Romans 10:4, Gal. chapters 2 and 3.

You see, if we are going to say that keeping the law is unnecessary, we must be consistent and include ALL of the law. If we are going to say we must keep one or even ten of the over 600 commandments in the law, then we must be consistent and say that we must keep ALL of the law. If breaking one commandment makes me guilty of breaking ALL of the law, the reverse must also be true.

The point is that Christ was the end and fulfillment of the law. In fulfilling the law He ended it for righteousness, ALL of it. A great portion of the book of Hebrews makes this case, as does a great portion of the book of Romans and virtually all of Galatians, plus other scattered teachings in the New Testament. Paul is very clear that the portion of the law written in stone, the Ten Commandments, was a ministration of death.

He is also very clear in Romans that the law was just and holy. It was a picture, although a very incomplete one, of the holiness of God and the standard of absolute perfection that relationship with God demands. But even that very incomplete standard was impossible for any man to keep, thus its very purpose, to make us despair of self-righteousness and seek a savior.

In Matthew 5 Jesus makes some interesting points. His audience is primarily the common people who were under no deception that they were righteous on their own account, although I am sure some pharisees were in the mix. He said, except your righteousness exceed that of the scribes and pharisees, you cannot enter the kingdom of God. This is quite a blow to the common folk as they looked on the pharisees as the really holy ones among them. He then goes on to show

that the standard described in the law was only a shadow of the standard that God demands. He sums it up by saying that if you want to enter the kingdom, you must be perfect like God is perfect. Here is the fulfillment of the law showing the people clearly that none can claim self-righteousness. That is the context in which Matthew 5:17 is written.

Righteousness through Christ is the root that causes us to bear the fruit of grace described in Titus 2:11-13. His laws have been written in our hearts. Not the thin shadow of His law that Moses chiseled into stone, or that was delivered to Moses and written down in the wilderness. But the true law of God that Jesus hinted at in Matthew 5.

So, I do not have to keep the ten commandments, just as I do not have to keep any of the rest of the law either. Because I am righteous, the peaceable fruit of righteousness, holiness, will be borne in my life. I like the way one minister put it. If you really understand the grace of God you will live holier on accident than you ever did before on purpose.

Travis

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2010/4/19 19:40

Oh, one more thing that came to my mind. Jesus did not keep the letter of the law (He never broke the spirit of the law). Remember when He and His disciples picked grain for their food on the Sabbath. This was in clear violation of the law. Exodus 16, Nehemiah 13. Remember how greatly this angered the pharisees? And for good reason, they thought. Remember His response. The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath. He understood that the sabbath, like many other things in the law, were shadows or types of things to come. He was the fulfillment of those things. So, He kept the law, while the pharisees did not, all the while being accused of them of not keeping the true spirit of the law.

Travis

Re: , on: 2010/4/20 7:05

Travis,

isn't that law different from the Law God established? Since the pharisees made their own oral laws.

I believe the ten commandments are still active and we should follow them, not for salvation or righteousness, Christ is our complete and final atonement. But as a lamp and a guide.

Mike

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2010/4/20 9:03

Mike: Just a few questions.

I am not saying a Christian will not follow the ten commandments, but it will occur "accidentally" in the natural course of walking in the Spirit. Here are a few questions to consider.

If they are still active and we should follow them, why not the rest of the law? Paul obviously lumps them all into one category, "The Law". Why single out ten of the 660 or so laws?

If they are still active and we should follow them, and if it is not for salvation or righteousness sake, for what then would we follow them? What would be the purpose of keeping the law or a portion thereof? One might say, because I love God and desire to obey Him, but that motivation makes keeping the law superfluous. Why keep the letter of something that I naturally do anyway. The law was not made for the righteous, but for the unrighteous. Thou shalt not commit murder does not apply to me because in my spirit dwells the love of God and the power of the Holy Spirit.

I know that many have taught that the ten are somehow set apart as separate, but scripture does not bear it out. I like how Ray Comfort and others use the ten commandments. They use them for their intended purpose, to reveal to the self-righteous that they are really sinners.

Travis

Re: - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2010/4/20 10:50

I personally feel that every Church receiving tithes from it's congregation, should be required to publish in detail how "every penny" is being used, and have regular audits to insure the publication is correct. If the Word says, bring all your tithes into the storehouse, well any "normal" storehouse is going to keep track of all it's comings and goings in detail, or it would not be in business very long. It's really sad, that some Christians will give to the poor on the streets asking for a hand out, then make comments on what there probably going to do with it, but never ask or hold the Church responsible for what they do with our hard earned cash. You know God also instructed us to support "every good work, is the Church the "only" good work? I sure hope not, if so were all in deep trouble. I personally give where I feel led by the Spirit to give, I feel when a person is "led by the Spirit" I think it means they understand and follow the principle of love and they give for the needs and betterment of others, they give all they can from their excess to help those in need.

Re: , on: 2010/4/21 6:46

Quote:
-----I personally feel that every Church receiving tithes from it's congregation, should be required to publish in detail how "every penny" is being used, and have regular audits to insure the publication is correct.

I agree, but then no one would tithe when they see the pastors salary.

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/4/21 7:01

If I'm not mistaken, all 501(c)3 organizations are required by law to make detailed annual business reports that are available to all their members. So, as long as your church is such, those reports should be available to you in some manner.

Re: , on: 2010/4/21 7:02

not saying that we need to follow the 613 laws or ordinances. Being that some of those laws were man made. I think you are misunderstanding me. Like I said previously, it not for the purpose to earn salvation and righteous but out of love and obedience. Here is one commandment from the 613 laws that I think it is viable to follow:

Not to follow the whims of your heart or what your eyes see Num. 15:39 or 14, it says to love other converts. I think these are fundamentals in scripture that they are worth following and obeying...because they make sense and scripture backs them up.

We know that these are just a shadow of what was to come...

Have to follow up later...sorry got to go now....

mike

Re: - posted by jimp, on: 2010/4/21 7:35

hi,we need to build churches with an open air section w/o air cond. or heat,no carpets or seats,no access to the nursery or the rest rooms for non givers.that said churches that do receive tithes and offerings are required by law to account for every penny and will let the public view these records on request.the average pastor makes a lot less than the mein income of his congregation.jimp

Re: - posted by Miccah (), on: 2010/4/21 9:48

That's seems a bit on the harsh side jimp.

Punish those who do not give? I didn't know that to attend a church, one needed to give money?

That being said, regardless if I gave or not, I would WANT to sit in the section that you describe. Where there is suffering, there the Lord is. Most of the people in the "punished" side of the church are the people that the Lord would be hanging with in my opinion.

On the subject of tithe. Give as you are lead to give by the Lord. No church should be holding tithes over peoples heads. A church like that is a church that would get not one penny from me.

Re: - posted by jimp, on: 2010/4/21 9:58

hi,i never said you had to give in order to go to church but you certainly have to spend money to pay nursery workers, mortgage payments or rents electric bills, cleaning and buying supplies and yes even salaries.jimp

Re: - posted by wind_blows, on: 2010/4/21 11:46

Quote:
-----hi,i never said you had to give in order to go to church but you certainly have to spend money to pay nursery workers, mortgage payments or rents electric bills, cleaning and buying supplies and yes even salaries.jimp

you would not have to do any of that if the members of the church acted and behaved as they should, a body with Jesus as the head. One body each doing its part to love, care for, and extend themselves to another. One body meeting daily from house to house loving, caring for, and extending themselves to others in the body of Christ...you would not have needed then for a special building, with bills and supplies and salaries. The tithe could be used for feeding the hungry, taking care of the poor and the widows...something along the lines of the church being a family of God where all are equal and vital members:)

just my thoughts:)

edit: My bad...I was reading over what I posted and I realized that what I shared came across as if I was writing it directly to jimp and the church he attends. That was not what I meant, I meant any churches, all churches would not have to deal with these things if we were all functioning more like a family, the body of Christ instead of Sunday morning services ect...I meant in my comment to be talking about how the church functioned in ACTS:) Sorry jimp if it looked as if I was writing directly to you.

Re: - posted by jimp, on: 2010/4/21 12:13

hi, last year we gave many millions of dollars to plant thousands of churches and feed many here and around the world. it takes money in the world we live in ...jimp

Re: - posted by wind_blows, on: 2010/4/21 13:33

Quote:
-----hi, last year we gave many millions of dollars to plant thousands of churches and feed many here and around the world. it takes money in the world we live in ...jimp

That is so great:)

in Him
ellie

Re: , on: 2010/4/21 16:27

Our local food bank and soup kitchens is the best place to put the so called "tithe".

Re: - posted by mguldner (), on: 2010/4/21 16:35

I am not against giving money to the church, infact Jesus taught on giving but no where do I see Jesus say and give you r tithe at the temple or storehouse or whatever you want to call it. I believe that we are to give as we are blessed the am ount the Spirit is leading to give, done in secret so that your left hand doesn't know what your right hand is doing.

Re: churches giving 10% - posted by Lysa (), on: 2010/4/21 17:57

Quote:

-----snufalapagus wrote:

Our local food bank and soup kitchens is the best place to put the so called "tithe".

At that last church I attended (the one that experimented with fleecing the sheep), I spoke with the pastor on the church budget and asked to see it, and he gave me a one page fill-in-blank budget. Then we went on and I explained to him th at I believed if every church tithed on the money they received during the week to food banks, homeless shelters, soup k itchens, etc, maybe so many families wouldn't need government assistance.

He said, "If we gave out 10% to the community, this church couldn't operate."

My response was, "And yet you expect every family to operate on 10% LESS even when it causes them hardship." He said, "They're supposed to."

Its pitiful what the Pharisee's demand today and I guess always has.

Personally, I will give an offering to a church if I go, but I'm really thinking anymore before I go anywhere else on a reg ular basis, I want to see a "detailed" church budget, not a one page fill-in-blank budget.

In conclusion, let me state for the record!!!!

I believe in giving!

I believe in giving abundantly!

I believe in giving where we get fed. (Meaning, we don't attend church A regularly but when we need a Spiritual refres hing, we attend church B but yet we give our tithes to church A. See?)

I believe in giving to the poor!

I believe in giving cheerfully!

I believe in giving without expecting anything in return.

I believe in giving non-monetary gifts, whatever the need may call for!

I know the rest of you believe in giving too or we wouldn't be here!!!

God bless you guys,

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/4/21 18:05

It should be noted that the OT tithe never went to supply any material needs. It was only for the purpose of feeding people. So, using tithe to pay for light bills and buildings is borderline criminal.

Re: - posted by MaryJane, on: 2010/4/21 19:11

Quote:
-----you would not have to do any of that if the members of the church acted and behaved as they should, a body with Jesus as the head. One body each doing its part to love, care for, and extend themselves to another. One body meeting daily from house to house loving, caring for, and extending themselves to others in the body of Christ...you would not have need then for a special building, with bills and supplies and salaries. The tithe could be used for feeding the hungry, taking care of the poor and the widows...something along the lines of the church being a family of God where all are equal and vital members:)

I agree Ellie, just think how much more money could be used to help and care for people if tithes and giving was not going to support building funds, power bills, staff salaries, supplies, etc.

I agree with your thoughts on this

God bless
mj

Re: - posted by Miccah (), on: 2010/4/21 23:20

For our Sunday morning fellowship of House Churches, otherwise known as church to others, there are no paid positions. Everything is volunteer. Outside of basic cost from those who give ie. lights, rent, toilet paper, etc... ALL money goes to the poor, widows and missionaries.

No collection plate. No paid salaries. No "professional" clergy. There is a collection box at the back of the room. Giving is instilled in the weekday House Church's. If there is a need, we pray about it and ask Father to provide. We have always received what we need.

The Lord is not short on cash... He can make money if it pleases Him. Trust in the Lord, not in man's pocketbook.

Re: , on: 2010/4/22 7:05

Quote:
-----Punish those who do not give? I didn't know that to attend a church, one needed to give money?

No it is just expected! If you don't come, like my previous church, won't let you hold a "leadership" role...that's why I am out. Looking for home church, content with staying home with my family.

Re: , on: 2010/4/22 10:32

Very nice set up Miccah, I like that very much.

Re: , on: 2010/4/22 10:35

Reformer, your right there. There was one Church that I attended that you had to pay your tithes for a year in order to sing on the platform. I often wondered about professional Christian artists that never go to that Church, never paid their tithes to that Church but are allowed to perform on that platform.

There is only one word I have for that type of reasoning: Stupid!

Re: - posted by jimp, on: 2010/4/22 10:48

hi, some orthodox temples collect it in advance to your joining every year.jewish people know how to deal with money.jimp

Re: - posted by mguldner (), on: 2010/4/22 10:58

Quote:
-----No collection plate. No paid salaries. No "professional" clergy. There is a collection box at the back of the room. Giving is instilled in the weekday House Church's. If there is a need, we pray about it and ask Father to provide. We have always received what we need.

This is awesome and how it should be.

Re: - posted by whyme, on: 2010/4/22 11:13

No offense intended but I feel like I'm in a chat room with Job's friendly advisers. Does anyone have an opinion or preferably a Scripture on what God says on the matter? It seems to me that very important "truths" or principles are being established solely on the basis of going with personal preferences based on bad personal experiences at bad "churches". You will probably find that God is in fact silent on some of these things in terms of commands and detail. If I'm right and God is in fact silent on these issues, then maybe..... The reason I might sound harsh on this issue is that our local body is currently going through some trying division on the issues of finance and church order (ie., financially supported preaching elder?? and should we have a building or not???). We've had a fill of an admixture of limited Scripture and lots of personal experience and preference. The combination has been deadly. Form over SUBSTANCE always has that affect.

Re: - posted by MaryJane, on: 2010/4/22 11:26

Quote:
-----Does anyone have an opinion or preferably a Scripture on what God says on the matter?

Whyme: if you read over the entire thread there are scriptures given. Also if you have interest and do a search on this to pic other threads on tithe are here also. I know this topic has been discussed a few times:)

God bless
maryjane

Re: - posted by whyme, on: 2010/4/22 11:45

Thanks MaryJane.

I have read the thread from the beginning. I even made a comment here and there. There is some Scripture discussed on tithing but very little on the other issues that evolved out of the original thread.

The uncontrovertible Scriptural truth is that:

1. 1Timothy 5:17-18 provides that an elder who labors in the word should receive wages. (the Greek word for "honor" i

includes a possible meaning of price paid for something that in context would be the correct application)

2. House churches are not commanded by Scripture. They may be descriptive of early church meetings but not prescriptive.
3. The Lord prescribed that those who receive Spiritual food from their teachers should reward them with material gains.
4. The Lord commended the poor woman who gave all she had to the church offering. If there are those who would rather not tithe 10% then certainly more would be pleasing to the Lord. Remember, Jesus had a perfect opportunity in that scene to warn everyone not to give to the church body.
5. Luke 11:42- Christ commands the listeners to not neglect tithing but to remember mercy.

Re: - posted by passerby, on: 2010/4/22 12:07

1Tim 5:17-18

17 The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.

18 For the Scripture says, "Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain," and "The worker deserves his wages."

If your congregation sees that it would be profitable to have a 'synagogue' for your services and other ministries then it is just fine, it is neither prohibited to have such in the bible.

Re: - posted by Miccah (), on: 2010/4/22 14:42

Where in scripture are we told to build a church building? Where in scripture are we asked to raise money for this?

I did not quote the scriptures, but money going to the poor, widows and missionaries is found in scripture. No where do I see that we have to pay a set amount to have one person preach to us, or to pay a secretaries salary, or a nursery worker, etc...

If this is what your church wishes to do, that is ok. Please provide scripture to support these payments.

Re: - posted by mguldner (), on: 2010/4/22 14:56

You not only don't see them building buildings but simply saw them using preexisting Houses and Homes and if preaching wasn't done in a home then it was done at the market place in open air. They did preach at the synagogues but this was only because it was the religious center of the time and was already built. Zero money went towards this.

Re: - posted by jimp, on: 2010/4/22 21:39

hi, what they did is shared everything in common. they gave it all. now you holy folks need to follow what they did.jimp

Re: - posted by mguldner (), on: 2010/4/22 21:58

I agree jimp we must be doers not just talkers, we can do this topic lip service for all eternity and never actually practice giving in the manner we talk about on here.

God Bless,
Matthew

Re: - posted by passerby, on: 2010/4/22 22:01

Is there really no use for a 'church building' in our age.

Did the church buildings built by Christians in the past had no benefit at all.

Is it really prohibited for us to build one.

Well, we can just rent or borrow, but if it is someone's belief to do otherwise then don't give anything for such projects, there are christian groups that simply meets at home.

The thing is, we may need to spend money to fulfill the church mission on earth whether for helping the poor, renting or building, websites, conferences, missions and evangelism, etc.

Synagogues has lot of uses as I read articles about them, but like others the principles behind them can be abused and perverted.

I was converted in a campus fellowship back in my college days. We live in dormitories sharing rooms with people of different faiths.

For our gatherings and ministries we had to rent or borrow buildings, though almost all of the time the school administrators just allowed us to use the school facilities for free.

Our fellowship was almost exclusively ran and financed by students, from our meager scholarship or home stipends.

Tithe giving and other 'offerings' and were our concept back then but no one was being forced nor obligated to do so_ there were no sanctions, checkers, or records of whatsoever.

Re: - posted by mguldner (), on: 2010/4/22 22:21

Quote:
-----Tithe giving and other 'offerings' and were our concept back then but no one was being forced nor obligated to do so_ there were no sanctions, checkers, or records of whatsoever.

This is the exactly what we are talking about leadership that has abused the tithe and offering for personal gain and building up their honor. I have nothing wrong with the church building but find that the effectiveness of the church building isn't as effective as a home church (clarifying In a small town). The tithe was for a number of things but buildings were never on the list. I don't find the church building useless but physically seeing it useless makes it kind of hard evidence to say that we must have a building. I live and come from a small town and so we have small congregations that can barely support itself let alone give to the poor and needy but rather we give to a building that gets used for Sunday and Wednesday and is empty for the rest of the week. Zero ministry is going on the 5 other days. I believe if a church is big enough to support the building and do outreach that goes on the rest of the week then that is great and nothing wrong with that.

The Other issue of this thread was the fact of should it be 10% that is given and found that the tithe was of the old covenant, and in the New covenant the people are to give according to the Spirit and give Cheerfully rather out of obligation or giving only to receive something. We have congregation that watch their people like a hawk and actually use disciplinary action on their flock if they aren't tithing on a regular basis. I hope this clears things up for you. We aren't Antigiving just against Leadership spiritually abusing people that can't give.

God Bless,
Matthew

Re: - posted by passerby, on: 2010/4/22 23:19

I understand your concerns, though be mindful that there are also operational difficulties associated with 'home churches' as you can read from the articles of people who are attending or facilitating such.

Pondering if the 'church buildings' built by christians in past were of no benefit at all, it came to my mind that the Lord moves in various and mysterious ways. I am grateful for those christians and I am thankful for their church buildings.

As for tithes, I do not believe it is a christian obligation_ nor the 'tenth' is the biblical thing to do.

The Lord knows our heart.

Re: - posted by mguldner (), on: 2010/4/22 23:29

To each his own, I am glad that we can come on a bit of common ground. There is always going to be problems with something that is new to this generation or time, keep in mind that men aren't perfect only the Saviour so there is always going to be the examples of home churches that just don't work. I believe this depends solely on the people involved and the Spirit moving among those involved, but more of the Spirit moving. The thing the Lord has laid on my heart is if we took just Scripture and dropped all of man made tradition would we get the Modern Christian church? Looking at scripture alone I have to say no and this is what I have to go by Scripture alone.

God Bless,
Matthew

Re: - posted by whyme, on: 2010/4/23 8:19

Christ commands that you pay a price to those who labor in the word. Look at Luke 10:27 and 1Timothy 5:18. (the word used in each verse is "wage" which has the meaning of a soldier's pay) The Apostle Paul took wages from the churches in Macedonia to serve the local church in Corinth which he calls "robbery" because presumably he should have gotten that wage from those he served in Corinth (2Corinthians 11:8) It was his right in the Lord to receive that wage as expressed in his own words in 1 Corinthians 9.

It has always been that the Lord wants His people to support those who labor in the service of Himself and the temple (in the Old Testament it was the Levites and the physical temple); in the New Testament it is for the support of the temple of the Lord (the church body) and especially of those teaching elders who minister to the body. The teacher provides spiritually to the flock, the flock provides materially to the teacher. That is what the Bible says.

As for house churches, there is no command for it. There is, however, the historical example of house churches as there also is of catacombs. Home churches are good. That does not make non-home churches in and of itself bad. There is also the historical example of Paul teaching disciples at Tyrannus lecture hall in Acts and the upper room where breaking of bread and preaching took place in Troas in Acts 20 (that was not a house).

All this to say that God was very silent about intrusions for the meeting place. Why? Because it isn't about the meeting place it is about Christ only. Where two or three are gathered there I will be in their midst.

The question about wise use of God's resources and whether a building or salaries is a good stewardship of those resources takes you into a different realm of thought. I suggest that until you have rightly got stewardship over how you use your own resources for your own living expenses under control that criticising other's use of their spending is premature. We all (most) spend money the wrong way if the standard is giving as much of your resources as possible to the poor. This is not to say that evaluating how churches spend money isn't essential. I know a guy who rails against "pastor" salaries paid through the church because he thinks the money should rather be used for the poor but that same guy has no problem spending hundreds of dollars a year on and multiple hours reading Christian theological literature. How much teaching do we need when there are poor all around us??? Look not only to money, look to your time. Myself, I "cheerfully" tithe my time and should be ashamed for not giving everything.

For those who rightly say we should follow the Spirit's leading in giving to the local assembly, you couldn't be more right. When the Spirit speaks we should listen and cheerfully and joyfully obey. The Spirit wrote the Scriptures. The Script

ures are clear...you must sow materially in those who feed you spiritually. Those who make preaching the Gospel their li fe deserve to live materially from the Gospel. Will you obey??

Re: - posted by whyme, on: 2010/4/23 9:03

Thought this quote from JC Ryle might help:

"Pray daily for a great outpouring of the Spirit on the Church and on the world. This is the grand need of the day-----it is t he thing that we need far more than money, machinery and men. The "company of preachers" in Christendom is far gre ater than it was in the days of Paul; but the actual spiritual work done in the earht, in prportion to the means used, is und oubtedly far less. We need more of the presence of the Holy Spirit----more in the pulpit, and more in the congregation--- more in the pastoral visit, and more in the school. Where He is, there will be life, health, growth and fruitfulness. Where He is not----all will be dead, tame, formal, sleepy, and cold. Then let everyone who desires to see an increase of pure a nd undefiled religion, pray daily for more of the presence of the Holy Spirit in every branch of the visible Church of Christ ."

this quote points to a very significant point Jesus made to the Pharisees and to us, whether we love steeples and paid p astors (lots of dead church buildings here) or whether we love house churches and unpaid elders (lots of dead church buildings here as well)..... Jesus stressed SUBSTANCE over Form!!! If Jesus was talking to the woman at the well tod ay He would tell her that a day is coming when you won't worry about which mountain or church edifice (house or buildin g) you worship in because we will worship in spirit and in truth.

Re: - posted by Miccah (), on: 2010/4/23 11:34

whyme,

I agree with almost all you are saying. Giving (tithe) is what we are to do. Jesus said to give all you have...

Where I think we differ is on the mandatory giving enforced by the local church. Giving should be just that...giving. It sh ould never be enforced by man, but given from the heart.

Re: - posted by passerby, on: 2010/4/23 17:20

I agree too, 'substance over form'. It is the 'abiding biblical principles' behind our giving, behind our services, behind our ministries, behind the assembly or care of the saints that really matter.

I am for home churches, but neither will I unnecessarily oppose those who want to have their own assembly or ministry hall.

But I tend to have a negative impression towards the stadium-sized mega churches or family-controlled spiritual dynasti es.

Re: Home vs small vs mega... - posted by twayneb (), on: 2010/4/23 18:59

I see the discussion shifting quite a bit and have a suggestion. It did me a great deal of good to read The Normal Christi an Church Life by Watchman Nee. God had been showing me some things, and I was amazed at how closely Nee's per spective paralleled what I was seeing through scripture. He dealt with the Biblical pattern for "doing church" so to speak, although I am sure he would disagree with the phrase "doing church", but I really don't have better words for it at the mo ment.

Travis

Re: , on: 2010/4/25 9:39

I agree, its not just food that they are receiving, but spiritual counseling, mentoring, educating and job placement; and that's just the of what our local food mission does in Nashville tn

Send the tithe to them, let the pastors take a pay cut and find a regular job. Quit telling there congregation to forgo there vacations and give that money to the building fund, like our previous pastor said, just weeks before he and his family were out to the beach.

but you say, 'If a man says to his father or his mother, whatever I have that would help you is Corban (that is to say, give it to God),'

Re: - posted by jimp, on: 2010/4/25 15:47

hi,the church i am with has planted and supported nearly 20000 churches around the world since 2000. we have a food bank and have fed thousands after hurricanes and feed the poor on a regular basis... we have a unwed mothers center that takes care of women in lieu of abortion... we have bailed out other ministries around the country who have had unexpected financial problems...we baptize hundreds of people each year...we preach Christ and Him crucified... we train people for the work of God...i wish i could give millions.we have sponsored a r. bonky (spelling)meeting in africa for nearly a million.jimp

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2010/4/25 19:50

Quote by jimp:

Quote:
-----hi,the church i am with has planted and supported nearly 20000 churches around the world since 2000. we have a food bank and have fed thousands after hurricanes and feed the poor on a regular basis... we have a unwed mothers center that takes care of women in lieu of abortion... we have bailed out other ministries around the country who have had unexpected financial problems...we baptize hundreds of people each year... we preach Christ and Him crucified... we train people for the work of God...i wish i could give millions.we have sponsored a r. bonky (spelling)meeting in Africa for nearly a million.jimp

jimp, what kind of church are you with that has the financial resources to do all you mentioned? or, are you talking about the universal church?

ginnyrose

Re: - posted by jimp, on: 2010/4/25 20:09

hi,we have one church with three locations in baton rouge with no real membership from its beginnings 50 years ago the first check ever written by the church went to missions.we are in cooperation with most of the churches in br and fellowship and promote them. my pastor started the church planting in 2000 and we have other churches in the process.in alabama a church with a homeless ministry reported that a few homeless guys got jobs and have pooled their resources to plant three churches in china. my pastor recently started a ministers conference to restore moral and financial integrity to the church in the USA.our youth convention is coming up and they expect 8000 to attend.we started with 5 people and had about 200 when i started going.i moved here to go there.we have started some great works from our church along the way and we have somewhere over 10000 coming now...all thru evangelism ...go out and bring them in. jimp