

What Does the Bible Have to Say About Tithes and Offerings?

By Pastor Mark Tossell



Many people, both saved and unsaved, have the erroneous notion that all preachers and churches are just out to get their money. Due to the greed and fraud of a few so-called men of God, many preachers are scared to preach and teach concerning giving to God and His work. Christians accuse of "legalism" those who have the sense and courage to preach about tithes and offerings. Who is right? Does the Bible teach us how to handle the money that God has given us? Let us ignore man's opinions on the matter of giving, and see what the Word of God says.

1) Everything we have is from God.

James 1:17 "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

1 Chronicles 29:12 "Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all."

Man is a very proud creature. He seems to think that he has what he has because he deserves it. How foolish! The Bible teaches us that everything we have comes from God, and that we would have **nothing** if it were not for God's mercy and grace. The air we breathe, the food we eat, the clothes we wear, the job we work, the home we enjoy, the country we love, and the freedom we cherish all come from God.

2) Ten per cent, or the tithe, belongs to God.

The Old Testament clearly teaches that the tithe of our income belongs to God.

Leviticus 27:30 "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."

The New Testament also teaches that the tithe of our income belongs to God.

Matthew 23:23 "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone."

Many professing Christians, in a selfish effort to excuse themselves from giving to God, claim that we do not have to tithe because we are under grace, and not under the law. However, that same logic might lead us to believe that murder and adultery are permissible because we are not "under the law." Remember these two principles:

a) Being under grace is no excuse to sin.

Romans 6:14,15,18 "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."

b) God expects more under grace than under the law, not less!

Matthew 5:43,44 "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;"

You probably are asking, where do we tithe? The Bible teaches us that we are to give our tithes to the house of God (Malachi 3:10), which today is the local church.

Malachi 3:10a "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house,..."

1 Timothy 3:15 "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."

1 Corinthians 16:1,2 "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come."

When you give to the local church, you are giving to God. The money given in the offering plates is used to provide a meeting place, support the pastor, send out missionaries, print Gospel tracts, get people to church, and keep the church building and assets well-maintained. The church members vote on a church budget, then the tithes and offerings are spent according to that budget.

It is interesting that no one would think of attending a cricket game at the SCG without buying a ticket to help pay for providing the entertainment, yet thousands of Christians think nothing of enjoying the blessings of church without contributing their part to support the ministry.

3) A Christian who doesn't tithe is stealing from God.

Malachi 3:8,9 "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation."

Now, if a preacher gets behind the pulpit and accuses his people of stealing from God, many would be upset and angry toward him. Yet, the Word of God plainly teaches here that the Christian who doesn't tithe is a dishonest, crooked thief. A person would not even think of robbing a bank or stealing from the local store, but he doesn't think twice about robbing God when the offering plate comes by. Shame on our feeble modern Christianity that loves money and things more than the Saviour who died that we might have life! Christian, are you stealing from God?

4) When you give to God, you give back to Him what He already owns.

You don't own anything. You are just a steward, a caretaker of what belongs to God and has temporarily been given into your care.

Psalms 24:1 "The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein."

Luke 12:42,43 "And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing."

We often talk about "my money," "my car," "my house," "my clothes," etc. How wrong can we be? We don't anything at all - we are just temporary caretakers, or stewards, of the wealth that God has given us. If we would just remember that it is not our money at all, then we would more ready to give back to God.

5) God will bless those who tithe.

Malachi 3:10 "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

Proverbs 3:9,10 "Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine."

Some have said, "I cannot afford to tithe." The truth, you cannot afford **not** to tithe! One of the reason so many Christians are in financial trouble is that they do not give their tithe and offerings. God promises in Malachi chapter 3 to curse those who do not give tithes and offerings, and to bless those who do give tithes and offerings. When you refuse to tithe, you are bringing a curse upon yourself and your family.

Philippians 4:16,19 "For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

Notice that this promise of God's provision, which is used so often by Christians, was actually given to Christians who were generous givers. The reason that many Christians do not tithe is that they do not believe that God is able to meet their needs. They are calling God a liar! Cannot the God who made the universe and holds the world in the palm of His hands take care of your puny needs? Of course. Do you want the Lord to bless you financially and meet the needs of your family? Then tithe.

6) God will bless those who give offerings above the tithe.

Luke 6:38 "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again."

2 Corinthians 9:6-8 "But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully."

Some Christians proudly think that they are doing God a great favour by tithing. God says in Malachi 3:9 that we rob Him when we do not give Him tithes **AND** offerings. If you want to see God work miracles in your life and bless you beyond measure, then give beyond your tithe. Give love offerings. Give to missions. Give to a building program. Just give! Remember, when you don't give, you rob **yourself** of a blessing.

7) When you give to God, you are making an eternal investment.

It is often said about wealth that "You cannot take it with you." Well, that is true, but you **can** send it ahead of you!

Matthew 6:19,20 "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:"

Consider what happens to your earthly investments. Your car will soon rust away and wear out. Your clothes will soon be out of style. Your house is slowly decaying and falling apart. Your stocks and shares could crash at any time. There is no such thing in this life as a sure investment. None. However, when you give to the work of God, you have the assurance that you are reaping eternal dividends, and you cannot lose your investment. Just think of the millions of souls saved because of the generous and sacrificial gifts of Christians throughout the centuries. **That** is an eternal investment.

8) **A Christian who loves money more than God is headed for trouble.**

I once heard of a wealthy man in a church who made the statement, "Anyone who gives 10% of his gross income to God is crazy." That man is headed for trouble!

Matthew 6:24 "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

1 Timothy 6:6-10 "But godliness with **contentment** is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith **content**. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the **love of money** is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

Luke 8:14 "And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection."

The true reason that the majority of Christians rob God is that they simply love money more than they love God. They worship the created more than the Creator. Their money and possessions are idols that demand their reverence and obeisance. Such Christians can be sure that such idolatry will not go unpunished by a jealous God.