

THE MASTER BUILDER

I WOULD LOVE TO TITHE BUT...

Tanya Goffin

Definition: 10% of all our income given to God (via His bride the local church) and the first 'bill' we pay every month.

The issues around tithing that make it so difficult for most Christians:

- My money is my business.
- The church is always after money.
- Tithing is legalistic and OT law only. The NT only teaches 'generosity' but doesn't define it.
- I would love to tithe but simply cannot afford it.

Biblical Truth

- God is very interested in how we handle our finances and material possessions because it shows Him where our heart is.
- 50% of Jesus teaching including parables involves money and possessions.

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

Note: The heart follows the treasure.

- The biggest beneficiary of tithing is you. There is a sowing and reaping principle to obedience in giving, although we do 'give to give' not 'give to get'. It also helps to remove the biggest challenge most of us face in our relationship with God the overwhelming temptation to put our security in money and not in God. i.e. materialism.

Honour the Lord with your wealth and with the first fruits of all your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine. (Proverbs 3:9-10, ESV)

Whoever trusts in his riches will fall, but the righteous will flourish like a green leaf. (Proverbs 11:28, ESV)

The point is this; whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. (2 Corinthians 9:6-8, ESV)

No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money. (Matthew 6:24, ESV)

Materialism takes a good thing God has given us and makes it an ultimate thing. It attaches our self-worth to our net worth ' Pastor Robert Morris

- Tithing is a commandment from God – OT and NT
1. It started with the father of faith Abraham (Genesis 14:18-20, 28:22, Romans 4:11-12) 400 years before the Law of Moses.
 2. Jesus condemned the Pharisees for their legalistic attitude to everything including tithing but still commanded tithing.

*But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and every herb, and neglect justice and the love of God. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others.
(Luke 11:42, ESV)*

For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:20, ESV)

3. Tithing is an integral part of building the church. Blessing is attached to it.

For I the Lord do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed. From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from my statutes and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you, says the Lord of hosts. But you say, 'How shall we return?' Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, 'How have we robbed you?' In your tithes and contributions. You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me, the whole nation of you. Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need. I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of your soil, and your vine in the field shall not fail to bear, says the Lord of hosts. Then all nations will call you blessed, for you will be a land of delight, says the Lord of hosts." (Malachi 3:6-12, ESV)

*So I have provided for the house of my God, so far as I was able, the gold for the things of gold, the silver for the things of silver, and the bronze for the things of bronze, the iron for the things of iron, and wood for the things of wood, besides great quantities of onyx and stones for setting, antimony, coloured stones, all sorts of precious stones and marble. Moreover, in addition to all that I have provided for the holy house, I have a treasure of my own of gold and silver, and because of my devotion to the house of my God I give it to the house of my God.
(1 Chronicles 29:2-3, ESV)*

Our tithe goes to our local church.

Living the doctrine - 'be doers of the word, not hearers only, deceiving yourselves' (James 1.22)

'What if I can't '?

Genesis 3:1-7 - Adam and Eve had problems giving! God wanted a mature relationship with them, not all Him giving and them taking; so He kept back just one tree for Himself.

- Perfect environment.
- Perfect parents (the Holy Trinity).
- All needs met.

BUT, out of millions of trees they couldn't even leave one tree for God. This is why God has to be very precise about this one area of obedience.

Where Did They Go Wrong?

- They didn't understand the principles of stewardship.

Beware lest you say in your heart, 'My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth.' You shall remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your fathers, as it is this day.
(Deuteronomy 8:17-18, ESV)

"For who sees anything different in you? What do you have that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it?" 1 Corinthians 4:7 ESV

- I look after Gods stuff better than my own. I am already a steward whether I like it or not (parable of the talents, Matthew 25.14-30)
- My money, possessions and body do not belong to me. This means I spend wisely, save if I can, and give generously. Principles of spend wisely, save a bit, give generously. This may involve sacrifice.
- We will have to give an account of our stewardship

For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. (Matthew 25:29, ESV)

- They allowed Satan to distort their view of God. God is mean, unfair and holds back stuff that should be ours to enjoy. The opposite is true. They had no eternal perspective.

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. (John 3:16-17, ESV)

And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.
(Philippians 4:19, ESV)