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The Truth about Tithing & The Blessed Life

Radically Biblical, Apostolic, Christianity



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The Truth about Tithing

Tithes or Blessings of God

In writing on tithes, I am sure that I will not get this printed before I discover another great blessing in paying tithes, but I wish to pass on to you, a few of the good things that I have found in the Word of God. The more that anyone proves God in paying tithes, the more light that is given to him. No wonder He states, "Prove Me," in Malachi. This is a challenge to all men. Very few men take the challenge, but those who do, will never regret it.

PASTORS FAULT

Where people do not pay tithes, it is the pastor's fault. "Many pastors have destroyed my vineyard, *they* have trodden my portion under foot, *they* have made my portion a desolate wilderness." Now it is the pastor's fault. Here it says many pastors have trodden my vineyard. God's vineyard is God's Church. They have trodden my portion under foot. God's portion is His tenth. They have devised some other way to support the Church. Their wives have worked. They themselves have worked, and their children have worked. Pie suppers, box socials, and sewing bees, and anything else imaginable. Rummage sales. Any time you see in the paper a rummage sale, you can say to yourself, "That pastor has not taught tithes as he should have, and has trodden God's portion under foot." Ice cream socials, guessing games and raffles. Anything, but the way that God said His Church should be supported. They have tried every way, but the way God said His Church should be supported.

Oh, my friend, when those pastors come before God and they see the plan: the plan of tithes so that God could bless the poor. They will be ashamed of trodding God's portion under foot. They make the pleasant portion of God, a desolate wilderness. They have mixed it up with every sort of plan, God's tithing, and the plan becomes a wilderness because there are so many plans.

God has only one plan, by which, He operates. He made only one plan and His plan: to support His people, His Church, to support His vineyard, to support His ministers. His portion is tithes. Thank God for His truth concerning God's portion.

The preacher that will demand tithes must muster enough back-bone to teach tithes, to every man, woman, boy or girl, in his assembly. The preachers are afraid to teach and preach tithes. He fails God's plan or fails God's intention.

G. T. HAYWOOD

I have in my possession a little book by Bishop G. T. Haywood of Indianapolis called *Christian Stewardship, the Story of the Tenth*. Here is Bishop G. T. Haywood's story and he is no different from all other ministers. This is his picture:

"It was against my grain. For more than two years I had labored among a small band of people, taking such as they gave. The work grew slowly. I prided myself in the fact that our little mission had never lifted a collection, or asked anyone for one copper cent. Throughout the entire time, we were able to meet every indebtedness that came against us. I could not ask, or speak about money, lest haply, someone would think that I was in the ministry for what financial gain I could get out of it.

My clothes were second-hand and occasionally patched at the elbows and the knees. Oftentimes, my shoes were half-soled, from within, with folded newspapers, to keep my feet off the ground. My wife was contented and bore everything with patience. A faithful wife is a treasure. What little money that was deposited in the "Free-Will Offering" box on the post near the entrance, was used to pay the mission rent, fuel, and the light bills, and the balance went to the "support of the pastor." Thus, we lived and God only knows how.

It was on Sunday morning at the "five o'clock prayer meeting," that the Word of the

Lord came to me saying, "You must speak of tithes and offerings this morning." As I remained on my knees with about twelve of our little band of thirty saints, I pleaded with God to relieve me of the matter. To speak about money, I felt would be my ruin. I had preached for nearly three years without mentioning it. How can I do it now? The only text that I knew on the subject was, "Will a man rob God?" I wept before God as I continued pleading to be relieved. Finally, He showed me that I was keeping the people from a blessing.

At the close of the meeting I returned home, and afterwards began preparing for the 11 o'clock morning service. The time speedily arrived. I entered the mission again and immediately went to prayer. The saints gathered in, it seemed, one by one. Still I pleaded. I got no answers. What must I do? Suddenly, as if a voice spoke from heaven, there came these words into my heart: "Preach about Jacob's ladder." Thank God! My prayer was heard! I felt sure that God had relieved me of the responsibility.

I arose from prayer and after singing several hymns, I, at once, found the place (after some searching) and proceeded to expound the chapter verse by verse. As we spoke upon the Word, the Spirit of God filled the room. All the saints were rejoicing in the truths that were being unfolded. As I came to the last verse, expecting to close my discourse, I was astonished to find at the last of this chapter these words, "I will surely give ONE-TENTH unto thee."

It was like a thunderbolt from the sky. I thought I had escaped preaching tithes. Here it was right before my eyes, unexpectedly. There was nothing to do, but obey. From the last verse, I set before the people, God's financial plan. All eyes were riveted upon me. When I concluded, one of the elderly saints arose. I began to fear, lest she was rising to reprove me for speaking, for money. I waited my reproof. To my surprise, she said, "We have all been wondering why you have not taught us tithes and offering before." From that day forward, the saints began paying tithes and from a little band of about 30 saints, we have increased to over 1000, at this writing.



By Bishop G.T. Haywood

WHEN YE COME INTO THE LAND

Louis XI is said to have “executed a solemn deed of ownership” conveying to the “Virgin Mary” the entire of Boulogne, France, but reserved “all the revenues thereof,” for himself. Is it not possible that many today are giving to God in much the same way? It is easy to accept Christ as our Saviour. It is not so easy to embrace Him as our Lord, especially since that lordship reaches to our pocketbooks and our possessions. “My money is mine, and I will do with it as I please,” seems to be the attitude of a great many who have enrolled as followers of our Master.

But what does our Lord expect of us as Christians? What is the scripture teaching? Has He a method that is acceptable to Him?

A DEFINITE PLAN

One of the outstanding methods of raising government revenues is by means of

an Income Tax. It is deemed a fair, equitable, and acceptable method for raising national funds. Its payment is required by law and the government, is thus, maintained by those who enjoy its privileges. This plan, however, is not a new one. It is an adaptation of the tithing principle which has had so large a place in the financial program of the Kingdom of God. Few subjects in scripture have a more important place or are of greater interest to the follower of God.

THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE TITHE

From the beginning of known history, we find that man recognized it as a duty to present a portion of his income to his God, and that the amount so given was almost invariably one-tenth. It was given in Babylon as early as 2100 B.C., and very early in ancient Chaldes. Mythology locates it in Greece, as far back as 1300 B.C., while history gives evidence of its practice by the Greeks, Romans, Pelasgians, Samothracians, Silicians, Gauls, Britons, and Saxons. But when did the tithe system have its beginning? Who is responsible for its observance? The Bible, where is found not only a record of its early use, but a definite reason for its preservation down to the present time.

THE TITHE VOLUNTARILY GIVEN

The Septuagint translation of Genesis, made about 250 years before the Christian era, declares of Cain's offering, "If thou didst rightly offer, but didst not rightly divide, didst thou not sin?" This led Tertullian about 200 A.D., to write that Cain's fault lay in giving less than the tenth.

Obviously, there must have been some recognized proportion, or it would have been no sin to bring less. Abel's sacrifice was accepted. This was of the "firstling (first-born) of the flock" and many believe that it was one-tenth of the year's increase, since the tithe was set apart first.

The first definite instance of tithe-giving in scripture, however, is that of Abram's gift to Melchizedek, the Priest-King:

“And Melchizedek, king of Salem, brought forth bread and wine: and he was priest of Most High God. And he blessed him, and said, “Blessed be Abram of God most high, possessor of heaven and earth: and blessed be God Most High, who hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him a tenth of all.” This was 430 years before the Law.

The second complete record of giving the tithe, is that of Jacob. He incorporated it into a business vow at Bethel. This was accepted by God, and years later, an angel of God appeared to him and reminded him of his vow and of how God had blessed him in the keeping of it:

“And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, “If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on so that I come again to my father's house in peace, and Jehovah will be my God, then this stone, which I have set up for a pillar shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.” When Jacob vowed unto God, he was running from his brother. He had nothing to lean on, no home, no shelter from the storm; the world was against him. He had laid on the side of a mountain with a rock for a pillow, when he made a vow unto God at Bethel: “All of these things happened to them, for our example, and they are written for our admonition.” In describing the condition of Jacob, one must turn to Deuteronomy:

“He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him. He made him ride on the high places of the earth, that he might eat the increase of

the fields; and he made him to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock; butter of kine, and milk of sheep, with fat of lambs, and rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats, with the fat of kidneys of wheat; and thou didst drink the pure blood of the grape.”

Consider that Jacob worked seven years for Leah, seven years for Rachel, and seven years for the cattle, making a total of 21 years that had passed and still God loved him, and remembered him, because of his vow 21 years before to pay tithes. God never forgets when a man vows to pay tithes. He said: “I am the God of Bethel where thou anointedst a pillar, where thou vowedest a vow unto me: now arise, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy nativity . . .

“And the man increased exceedingly, and had large flocks, and maid-servants and men-servants, and camels and asses.”

THE TITHES COMMANDED TO BE PAID

It is customary to speak of the Ten Commandments given to Moses at Mount Sinai. The fact is that there were at least eleven. The first ten, which were to be put into effect at once, are recorded in Exodus. Another law, however, was given which was not to be called into im-mediate use. The reason for this was that Israel had just emerged from slavery and they were living on the first recorded Public Welfare Provision. But, beginning with chapter 25, specific directions for Israel, as they entered the land of promise. The first 24 chapters have to do with the minor laws, such as sanitation and were given to Moses “at the tent of meeting.” Chapters 25, 26, 27, however, were given to the children of Israel in Mount Sinai by Moses. The second and fourth commandments are reviewed since they were going into a land of idol-worshippers and where the Sabbath was not kept. Very definite instructions are given as to land tenure, care of the poor, the stranger, and the sojourner. The heart of the message is:

“And ye shall not wrong one another: but thou shalt fear thy God: for I am Jehovah your God.” To these are added an eleventh commandment, which requires that one-tenth of all the increase of all the land, the trees, the flocks, and herds, shall be set apart for God. Thus, the tithe became a definite law, binding upon God’s followers as they looked forward to a definite place of residence in the promised land and fixity of income. Its inclusion with the other commandments, places it on a par with them, in standing and importance. Every argument for their observance today is equally to the eleventh. It is interesting to note that from that time on, the tithe was paid, not given:

“And Jehovah spake unto Moses in Mount Sinai, saying, “Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them: “When ye came into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a Sabbath unto Jehovah.” These are the statutes and ordinances and laws, which Jehovah made between him and the children of Israel in Mount Sinai by Moses. And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is Jehovah’s: it is holy unto Jehovah. And all the tithe of the herd or flock, whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto Jehovah. These are the commandments which Jehovah commanded Moses for the children of Israel in Mount Sinai.”

For some time, the whole of this tithe was consumed on the altar. Then it was directed that it should be administered by the Levites in the carrying on of divine worship:

“And unto the children of Levi, behold I have given all the tithe in Israel, for an inheritance, in return for their service which they serve, even the service of the tent of meeting.”

A second tithe was later instituted which was a Vacation Savings Club and which, on the third year, provided for public welfare. It had no connection, however, with the tithe commanded at Sinai and was not required by the early Christian Church.

THE TITHE REINSTATED

When Hezekiah succeeded Ahaz as king about 715 B.C., he abolished idolatry and appointed two men to have charge of the tithes for which they made room in the temple:

“Then Hezekiah commanded to prepare chambers in the house of Jehovah; and they prepared them. And they brought in oblations and the tithes and the dedicated things faithfully: and over them Conaniah the Levite was ruler, and Shimei, his brother, was second.”

Nehemiah secured permission to return to Jerusalem about 444 B.C. He rebuilt the wall of the city, and repaired the temple and reinstated the paying of the tithes:

“Also we made ordinances for us . . . that we should bring the tithes of our ground unto the Levites: for they, the Levites, take the tithes in all the cities of our tillage . . . and when the Levites shall bring up the tithes unto the house of our God, to the chambers, into the treasure- house.”

THE TITHE TO MALACHI

Malachi is not the “Swan-Song” of the old dispensation, but distinctly a message of preparation for the Christian era. Through neglect of worship, Israel had broken fellowship with God. This resulted in the loss of reverence for His name and His honor, which had actually blighted their sonship to the extent that God, wished that someone would close the door of the house of worship. They are then told of the coming of the Messiah, and the appeal is made that as a preparation for His advent, they return to God. This return to God is to begin with the bringing in of tithes and offerings. A promise of great blessings and restored sonship is made. It is interesting to note that everything hinged on the paying of the tithe.

“Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, who ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in. Behold he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts . . . Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return? 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. 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. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts . . . And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels, and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.”

THE TITHE AND TAXES

There are those who confuse the tithe with taxes, thinking the tax takes care of both. The scripture, however, shows each to be distinct and separate. In Exodus, we may note a poll tax on the rich and poor, of a half-shekel. Samuel warned that Saul, as king, would demand one-tenth of all the seed and flocks,” in addition to other levies. Later, there is a revolt against the payment of this tax. While under Rehoboam, they plead for lighter taxes. Heavy taxes were laid upon them by the Assyrians, by the Persians, and by the Romans. In fact, Jesus was born in Bethlehem, while Mary and Joseph were there to re-enroll in response to the decree of Caesar Augustus that the tax lists must be brought up-to-date. Jesus paid tribute at Capernaum. Also, when the Herodians asked Him, “Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar or not?” He said, “Render unto Caesar, the things that are Caesar’s and unto God, the things that are God’s.”

Thus, we may see that the tithe and the tax were not identical at any time of history. The paying of the one never offset the paying of the other. In fact, the Jew paid

“tithes,” “tributes,” and “taxes,” and “tolls.”

CHRIST AND THE TITHE

He paid it. The Pharisees, who were constantly seeking to entrap Jesus, were strict in their observance of tithe-paying. The first charge that they would have brought against Him, had He not paid it, would have been that He was “robbing God.” However, this question was never raised by the enemies of our Lord, who was so anxious to hold Him up to scorn, as a transgressor of the Law of Moses, which was observed with such meticulous care. This is in strict accord with His statement, “I came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfill it.”

He sanctioned it. In talking with the Pharisees, Jesus rebuked them for thinking they had done their whole duty by simply paying the tithe. Then, lest He be misunderstood, He added that they should take heed to the weightier things and at the same time continue paying the tithe. Both, according to Christ, were binding upon them:

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye tithe mint and anise and cumin, and have left undone the weightier matters of the law, justice, and mercy, and faith: but these (the tithe-paying) ought ye to have done, and not to have left the other (the weightier matters)

undone.”

He has a right to receive it. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews gives an entire chapter to the superiority of Jesus, our High Priest, to Melchizedek, the Priest-King. The greatness of the old priesthood is evidenced by its right to receive the tithes, which is mentioned eight times in nine verses. Jesus is greater than Melchizedek. If men, therefore, paid tithes to the lesser, shall they not pay to Him that is greater? He, of whom, it can be said, “that he liveth.” Since Melchizedek was worthy to receive it, in

the old dispensation, surely Jesus has a right to receive it in the new:

“Now consider how great this man, (Melchizedek) was, unto whom Abram, the patriarch, gave a tenth out of the chief spoils. And, they indeed, of the sons of Levi that receive the priests office, have commandment to take tithes of the people according to the Law . . . And here men that die receive tithes: but there one, “of whom, it is witnessed that he liveth.”

THE TITHE IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

In writing to the Corinthian Church, Paul declares that God has ordained that the ministers of the Christian Church are to be supported as were the Levites: that is, out of the Church tithes. This, therefore, is the basis for the regular Church finances rather than the 16th chapter, where the method for taking an offering for the poor saints in Jerusalem is given.

“Know ye not that they that minister about sacred things, eat of the things of the temple, and they that wait upon the altar, have their portion with the altar? Even so, did the Lord ordain that they that proclaim the Gospel should live of the Gospel?”

That the tithe was practiced by the early Christian Church is a historic fact. It was the method of support for worship, ministers, and missionaries. Clement, Cyprian, Ambrose, Chrysostom, and Augustine laid great stress upon tithing. Ten Church Councils, in the first 900 years, required payment. In fact, there is an unbroken record of tithe-paying for almost every decade since the founding of the Christian Church. Today, more people practice it than ever before. In the light of the place which has been given to the paying of the tithe, both by divine commandment and by the practice of the Church, there is no doubt that it is the minimum in the rendering of an honest stewardship to God.

Dr. Wm. Hiram Foulkes tells of standing one day on a great mountain top of solid

rock. Snow was falling. For some time he watched a single flake. As it neared the rock, it was driven back and forth by the wind. To him, it seemed as if the crystal was afraid to trust itself to the mountain. “All the time, said he, “the great rock seemed to be saying, “Try me, little snowflake, try me.” The world has made a sorry mess of its finances during the past decade. First came the years of false profits. Then followed, the years of no profits. During this period of testing, we have permitted ourselves to be driven to and fro, not knowing where we will land or what the future holds. To us, the Rock of Ages is saying, “Bring ye the whole tithe into the storehouse and TRY ME, MY CHILD, TRY ME.” We have tried everything else, why not try God?

TITHES ARE HOLY UNTO THE LORD

Tithes is a tenth. In dealing with tithes, one of the first things to be ascertained, is that the tithes are holy.

“All the tithes of the land, whether the seed of the land, or the fruit of the tree, is the Lord’s. It is holy unto the Lord.”

A tithe cannot be divided, as some think, because “tithes” means, one-tenth and to divide it would not fulfill the Word of God and would not constitute the holy part.

Try to assimilate this fact in order to understand tithing. It cannot be separated. God has always reserved a holy portion for Himself.

Many people say that they honour God, but no man is honoring God unless he is paying the tithes: “Honour the Lord with thy substance and with the first fruits of all thine increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine. My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord: neither be weary of his correction: for whom the Lord loveth he correcteth; even as a father, the son in whom he delighted. Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof, than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies: and all the things

thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her.”

The man or the woman is a wise person who reserves unto God his portion. There is a wealth of wonderful things in the Word of God.

“A son honoureth his father, and a servant, his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear? Said the Lord of hosts?

Moses said that you pay tithes to learn to fear the Lord, thy God.

David said, “Oh fear the Lord, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him.” Isaiah said of the true man of God, “The fear of the Lord is his treasure.” In Malachi, God says, “Prove me.” To prove God, one must start to do the things that God asked to be done. Pay tithes to learn to fear the Lord.

“Know ye, not therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham?” You prove your faith by paying your tithes, for you must have faith to believe that God will bless your nine-tenths and make it go farther than you could the ten-tenths.

PROFITABLE TO CHILDREN

In paying tithes, children and grandchildren receive blessings from God. If you are a tithes-payer, you will not have to bail your children out of jail. If your grandfather was a tithes-payer, you can claim your blessings. It will pay later in life. There will be no worry about children and grandchildren; they will be up and serving God for themselves.

God told Israel that if they forgot God’s law (and tithing was and is one of the main ones) that He would forget their children. Once God forgets your children, there is a sad situation.

“Seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children. Decide: Do you want God to forget your children? He was talking about the Israelites who had gone away from His ordinances: He was talking to the same Israelites as in Malachi: He was going to forget their children.

In Hebrews, we read one of the secrets in tithing:

“And as I may so say, Levi also who received tithes, paid tithes in Abraham: for he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchizedek met him.” This shows us that the offspring of a tithes-payer are in direct line for the blessings of God. Because Abraham was a faithful tithes-payer, Isaac, Jacob, and Levi were faithful to God in the same way and received the blessings. God is no respecter of persons and what He did for one, He will do for anyone.

The minister of God, who preaches tithing, brings the blessings of God upon the heads of the children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren of those who hear him.

DISCERNMENT

Discernment comes with obedience to the law of God. David said, “I understand more than my teachers because I keep thy law.” Young people need to pay tithes, for this blessing alone: you will be able to discern and select a good man. You may know whether he will serve God or not. You may select a good mate.

GENTILE LAW

The Gentiles are a law unto themselves. Once he starts to pay tithes, he will never see God’s face in peace unless he continues to do so. When a Gentile puts a law on someone else, that becomes a law unto himself. If I tell you to stop stealing chickens, I must already have quit stealing chickens in order to tell you to stop.

This applies in many ways. If God has convicted you, and therefore, you establish holy dressing, holy living, and paying tithes: you are a Gentile: you are a law unto yourself.

ABLE TO EAT

You can go to Church 365 days in a year: if you have not paid tithes honestly, you cannot eat before God, and God will punish you.

“Thou shalt truly tithe all the increase of thy seed, that the field bringeth forth year by year. And thou shalt eat before the Lord thy God.”

Here is one of the more important blessings in tithing. No book would be large enough to hold all that is in this verse. If you are not being fed, God’s Word tells plainly that, one must tithe to eat before Him. To eat is to give the body nourishment to grow spiritually, as well as naturally. God has a law which is in effect! No tithe, no eat! The spiritual must be nurtured, or he will die.

Many saints die of malnutrition; not because the pastor did not feed them. The food may be there, but the non-tither will somehow miss eating. Some pretty baby will get his attention just when the pastor makes his point; a chair will collapse just when they should hear the connecting link in His Word. Why? The tithe-teaching pastor could tell you. If there is anything that should cause a man to see tithes, it is going to God crying time after time in contemplation of another man’s troubles, “Why, Lord, did this happen?” and have Him say, “I am teaching them to fear me.” The honest preacher will cry, “Lord, let me fear you, too.” Then he hears Him say, “Tithe that you might learn to fear.”

It is a pleasure for the pastor to see his saints eat and grow: He can bring only condemnation on the God-robbers. He cannot cause them to be able to feed. When

tithing is taught, these will say, “This preacher is after the money. That is all.” He will try to blame the other man for that of which he is guilty himself. He wants to keep the money and cannot have fellowship with God. God will not have fellowship with a non-tither. He does that in order that you might fear Him. If you have no fear of God, start paying your tithes, and you will soon accumulate a fear of God.

TO OBTAIN THAT WHICH IS YOUR OWN

Pay tithes that others might pay you that which they owe you. Go to God. Put your finger on chapter, on verse, (learn His Word so that you can put your finger on chapter and verse), Luke 16, and say, “God I claim this.” And you will be surprised that God will honor this. God has taught this to many, and they said, “I’m seeing something now. I didn’t know that was tithes.” It says steward. You are God’s steward. God reserves a tenth of your income, your increase, of all that you ever receive. He tells you in Luke 16, that other men cannot pay you that which they owe you, that which is your own, and it really pays to teach this.

One storekeeper told me, “I sure wish I had known this a long time ago: that I could make men pay me what they owe me,” and it is possible, for God said, “If you have not been faithful in that which is another man’s, who shall give you that which is your own?”

THE TRUE RICHES

I could dwell for weeks or months on this: The true riches.

“If therefore you have been unfaithful in the unrighteousness mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?”

If you haven’t been faithful to the unrighteous mammon, He cannot trust you with the love of God. Many talk about the love of God, but they who are not tithes-payers do

not have it. Tithes-payers have it, for He knows who to trust and God trusts them with it.

It is a wonderful thing to be trusted with the true riches: to see cripples healed under your hand, to see sin relieved from the minds of men. They will give you the money, if they have any, when you give them the true riches, the Word of God.

God cannot send you if you are a God-robber, and God brings this judgment against anyone who is a non-tithes-payer, includes the preachers.

If God cannot trust you with a dime, He cannot trust you with much, because you would still be crooked. Consider the novice preacher who is in an assembly and cannot be faithful in tithing: God could never trust him with the true riches. Should he be trusted with the true riches who robs God in not paying tithes? He would over-ride God's laws at other opportunities and in other situations also. A holy, omnipotent, all-wise God would not trust you with the true riches. If you are not a tithes-payer, you have not been faithful with the unrighteous mammon, a part of which, is God's tenth.

STEWARDSHIP

Every pastor should take Luke 16 and teach where the Lord commended the unjust steward because he had done wisely; the pastor is at fault who does not teach that God recommended this crooked steward to us and told us that the children of this world are, in their generation, wiser than the children of light. Because he has done crookedly? No, because he had taken unrighteous mammon and converted it into friendship. Next, this crooked steward planned to transfer it again into money. Friendship can always be transferred into money, but Jesus recommends us to transfer our unrighteousness mammon into friendship, that when we have found some good thing in the Word of God, we might have someone to share it.

Every pastor should take Luke 16:10 and spend 2 or 3 hours teaching:

“He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also, in much.” He should reason and show that God has reserved a tenth to judge by, whether they will be faithful or not, what they are going to do.

Many men and women have not been faithful in tithing, yet, would like to see God save under their ministry. God does not trust you. You do not have the true riches. You are not sent by God. When people first are saved, the preachers must have the true riches. When Paul went to preach, the people were saved, and he wrote them later and said, “You would have given me your eyeballs when you were first saved.” That is one of the reasons why you should pay tithes. There are many, many reasons.

THE ROOT OF ALL EVIL

You pastors should emphasize Luke 16.

“For the love of money is the root of all evil.”

To love it so much that you cannot see that God has reserved a tenth unto Himself. Christ says, “No servant 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. You cannot serve God and mammon.” You cannot serve God and your money, and the person who is serving mammon is a God-robber.

MAKE 9/10 GO FARTHER THAN 10/10?

God reveals that for you to pay tithes, one must have faith that God can stretch your 9/10 farther than you can your 10/10.

Any businessman of any city, through his connections, could take a man’s income and make this happen through friendships and discounts and connections. How much more is it possible for God?

The furniture dealer works on 60/40 and almost all wholesalers of any kind make at least 20% profit. A man with a friend like this could get a discount on the necessities of life. So can a man with a friend like God. You must have faith in God.

Every man who pays tithes has faith in God.

SERVANT OF GOD

A man who pays tithes can defeat the devil when he approaches him and tells him, "You have done nothing." "You cannot sing, you cannot pray, you cannot talk." If he is a tithes-payer, he can say right back, "Get thee behind me, Satan. I pay my tithes. I pay a preacher who can talk.

I have a tank of clean water and seats to make it comfortable for anyone who wishes to hear the Gospel." The saint is really doing something who pays his tithes. This will defeat the Devil, causing him to stop talking to you, proving that he is the father of all liars. Every tithes-payer proves that he (the devil) is the father of all liars.

CHASTENING OF THE LORD

The chastening of the Lord comes to the one He loves and who pays tithes to learn to fear. "Despise not the chastening of the Lord." When one starts paying tithes and allows anything to come between him and the honoring of God; God chastens him by sending the devourer.

Here is the testimony of a young man whom it was my pleasure to pastor: it is typical of the Lord's chastening. He skipped his tithes for a week which was \$7. He was given a ticket for speeding which cost him \$23. When he came out from paying the ticket he was saying to himself, "I could have settled with God for \$7." He was learning to fear the Lord. God loved him and was chastening.

No book would contain all the chastening stories I could tell you.

One group of young people who started from Flint, Michigan to Athens, Tenn., had 15 flat tires, challenged one another whether they had paid the tithes, found that the owner of the car had not paid his, induced him to wire his tithes back to the pastor and never had a flat tire between Athens, Tenn., and Flint, Mich. God was chastening them.

“Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the Lord, and depart from evil. It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones. Honour the Lord with thy substance and with the first fruits of all thine increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses burst out with new wine.

My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; neither be weary of His correction: For whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, even as a father, the son in whom he delighteth. Happy is the man that findeth wisdom and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies: and all the things that thou couldest desire are not to be compared to her. Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand, riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace.

G. T. HAYWOOD

Remember all pastors are alike. They fear to teach on tithes lest the people should say that it is money that they are after. The devil knows what a time he has had with all tithes-payers down through time. He has never been able to defeat a tithes-payer.

Jacob is a good example. God will not permit him to send the devourer against a

tithes-payer.

When a man breaks God's law, it is automatic that the devourer must come. The transmission must go out of the car, the fire insurance run out before the fire, the blow-outs, the tire trouble, the garnishes.

THE GARDEN OF EDEN

"But of the fruit of the tree, which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, "Ye shall not eat of it. Neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." Here, God reserved a tree and asked them to not eat, or touch, lest they die.

That was Adam and Eve's test of their day. The same is your tithes today. They touched and ate of what God had reserved, to try them. What are you going to do with what God reserved in your day, his portion, the tithes? If you eat them, you will go from his presence as Adam. Return and get into his presence where there is fullness of joy. Cry unto Him as David did: "Make me to hear joy and gladness."

CAIN AND ABEL

"And in process of time, it came to pass that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground, an offering unto the Lord." Cain waited until the last to pay God. Abel gave the firstlings of his flocks: he pleased God. You will have to be like Abel to please God. Take his portion out first. Consider it God's and you will please Him.

You will be as Cain if you wait until the last or harvest time. Start putting God first and watch Him put you first. He wants you to be the head, not the tail. Teach tithes and be the head.

TITHES AND THE LAW OF MOSES

Some people say, "Oh, I don't believe in tithes. That was under the Law," and still claim to have the Holy Ghost and understand their Bible. Tithing began when God reserved the tree of the knowledge of good and evil unto Himself. He reserved a portion and the people ate. Adam and Eve ate of the tree which God told them they should not eat. Those who say tithes are under the law, simply do not understand that the tithe started in the Garden of Eden. They do not understand that it was 313 years before the Law, when Jacob laid down out there on the hill and had his dream. Nor that Abram paid tithes to Melchizedek, 430 years before the Law. Tithes were before the Law. The man or the woman who says that tithes were under the Law does not realize that Jesus came to fulfill the Law. Jesus did not diminish the Law in the least. In fact, He increased it.

It used to be, "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth," but God changed that. It used to be that one had only to not commit adultery, but Jesus, when He came, increased the Law. He said, "that if you looked upon a woman, if you lusted after her, you committed adultery already in your own heart. Under the Law, all you had to do was to refrain from the act. Under the Law, He had to keep one day, holy. The Law was not diminished in any way. The Law was our school master to bring us to God.

The man or women who says, as an excuse for not paying tithes, that it was under the Law, does not realize that Jesus came to fulfill the Law and that Jesus was a tithes-payer. Let's go over quickly the benefits: Pay tithes to eat before God, to fear, to discern, to obtain the true riches, to obtain what is your own, for the children and grandchildren's sake, to keep the law of God.

I would like to challenge you to stack up ten dimes and then put 9 to one side and see how big 9/10 looks beside 1/10.

The God who was able to stop His people from planting the seventh year and then made the sixth year feed them three years, (you can read the story), that same God asks you to prove Him, by paying tithes, and is able to work against you also thus:

“Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothes you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes . . . Ye looked for much, and, lo, it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it . . . Therefore, the heaven over you is stayed from dew, and the earth is stayed from her fruit. And I called for a drought upon the land, and upon the mountains, and upon the corn, and upon the new wine and upon the oil, and upon that which the ground bringeth forth, and upon men, and upon cattle, and upon all the labour of the hands . . . Since those days were, when one came to a heap of 20 measures, there were but ten; when one came to the pressfat for to draw out fifty vessels out of the press, there were, but twenty. I smote you with blasting and with mildew and with hail in all the labours of your hands . . . Consider from this day and upward . . . Consider it.”

CONCLUSION

My friend, the God that gave Israel enough in the sixth year to last until the ninth year can make your 9/10 go farther than you can the 10/10. When I read the 25th chapter of Leviticus and know I have the same God, well, I could shout for joy.

This, I am sure of, that you are not acquainted with my God, Jesus Christ, the supplier of all good things. He wants you to get acquainted with Him.

This is an invitation and lesson with instructions on how to begin paying tithes. The first step is Malachi 3:10. Why not take it today?



The Blessed Life #1--Introduction & A Matter of the Heart

Gen 12:1-3

Page | 28

1 Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: 2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: 3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

What is the Blessed Life?

- Becoming a conduit. Abraham blessed to be a blessing in Genesis 12

The Blessed Life is...

- The Blessed Life is to have supernatural power working for you as opposed to having it working against you.
- The Blessed Life is walking in agreement with God, His will and His word.
- The Blessed Life is living with the current of God's favor as opposed to swimming against that current

The Blessed Life is not...

- The Blessed Life is not the Rich Life
- The Blessed Life is not a Life without Problems
- The Blessed Life is not a Life absent sickness

- No one can stop you from being blessed.
- No one can stop your life from being blessed.
- Not your spouse,
- not your boss,
- not your pastor,
- not your church; no-one... except you!
- The blessed life, is not related to GETTING, but it is, related to GIVING?

Why talk about giving?

- The principle of giving is much broader than the area of finances.
- These principles can be applied in a variety of ways to our lives.
- However, this series we will be talking about finances.
- I am convinced that the Lord is calling us to another level.
- To get to that next level will require giving.
- Before Abraham could be imputed to righteousness he had to give Isaac.
- Before God could redeem man He had to give man Himself.
- Before man could be reconciled to God He had to give himself.

Let's take a journey together. (Be Transparent)

- The Bible talks more about money than many things.

- The Bible speaks about prayer more than 500 times
- The Bible speaks about faith more than 500 times
- However, the Bible speaks about money & possessions more than 2000 times.

Giving imitates the heart of God. "For God so loved the world that He gave..."

- First of all I want to affirm the commitments of those who have already experienced the power and blessing of living a giving life.
- Secondly, I wish to challenge each of you who have not tested the Word of God in this area of living.
- Giving Enjoined to Blessing

Acts 20:35

35 I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

It Is All About The Heart:

Matt 7:1-3

"Judge not, that you be not judged. 2 For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.

Luke 6:37-38

37 "Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. 38 Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put

into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you."

- Judging is the subject of Matthew 7 and Luke 6.
- Money is not mentioned anywhere in this particular text.
- Give is the verb in v. 38 "you" is the implied subject, "it" is the objective pronoun which must be replaced with something.
- Whatever you give is the "it" in this scripture.
- Jesus is saying that whatever you give you will get back more than you give.
- Give judgment you get judgment back
- Give mercy get mercy back
- Give kindness get kindness
- The problem with preaching on this scripture is that "getting" is often preached as the motive for giving and not the reward.
- We need to get to the place as Christians that we give for the sake of giving.
- God implemented giving.
- He did not start giving so that He could get. He has everything.
- The one who needs nothing implemented giving not for Himself but for us.

4 things we must do in order to live a Blessed Life

1. Deal with a Selfish Heart

Deut 15:7-9

7 If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother:

8 But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth.

9 Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought; and he cry unto the Lord against thee, and it be sin unto thee.

Year of Jubilee considerations:

- The Lord had implemented by way of the law a means whereby one could be relieved
- Confront our natural tendencies.
- We are born selfish. We must root out our selfishness.
- Selfishness will keep you from giving.
- This is not just a problem for children, but I have had the unhappy privilege of knowing a good many adults who have yet to graduate from the school of unselfishness.

“Get all we can, Can all we get, Sit on the can”

2. Deal with a Grieving Heart

Deut 15:10

10 Thou shalt surely give him, and thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou putttest thine hand unto.

- The reason we grieve over money we lose or give or spend is because we think that it is ours.

3. Develop a Generous Heart

- Give generously

Deut 15:14

14 Thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor, and out of thy winepress: of that wherewith the Lord thy God hath blessed thee thou shalt give unto him.

- Your heart follows your treasure

Luke 12:34

34 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

- You put money in a stock, you will start following that stock.
- You'll even start praying for that stock and corp.
- You want your heart to be in the kingdom put your treasure there.

- More treasure you put into something the more your heart will be in it.
- If you want more of a heart for your family; invest your time, energy and resources. This is a principle in scripture.

4. Develop a Grateful Heart

- Giving in light of what has been given to you.

Deut 15:15

15 And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt, and the Lord thy God redeemed thee: therefore I command thee this thing to day.

- God tells them that they shall remember that they were slaves in Egypt.
- Therefore I am commanding you to be generous.
- If you need motivation to be generous remember where he brought you from.
- Why does this teaching change every area of your life?
- Where your treasure is there your heart will be also
- If you want your heart changed, set free, no worries, and God centered , get your treasure in the kingdom.
- God is my source and my provider. He is Lord and Keeper of my life.

The Blessed Life #2--What Test?

Gen 12:1-3

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Let’s take a journey together. (Be Transparent)

.....

What Test?

- Most believers don’t know that God gives us a test every couple of weeks
- How many get paid every week? Every other week? Monthly?
- How many never get paid? 😊

Every time we receive a paycheck we are actually tested.

- The test is "who are we going to thank for our provision and income?"
- Tithes and offerings is the only issue in the Bible, which the Lord openly invites us to test him.

Mal 3:6-12

6 For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

- He can't change because he is perfect.
- What he is about to say won't change

7 Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances , and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts . But ye said, Wherein shall we return?

- Ordinance = comes from the word ordinary. An ordinance is a principle of ordinary behavior.
- The phrase "saith the Lord of Host" is found in this passage a lot.

8 Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.

- In what way have we left (or gone away from) God?
- How have we robbed God?

9 Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.

- He does not say "I will curse you."
- You chose to put yourself under a curse. He did not curse them.

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 11 And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts. 12 And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts.

- There may be provision in my House (reason for tithing)
- Malachi is a book about returning to God:
 - Returning in our Faith
 - Returning in our Family
 - Returning in our Finances
 - God Returning to us
- Pastor's disclaimer. I know this will help you. It will change your life.

There is such a resistance to this for two reasons:

1. Because the enemy wants you cursed. So he throws all these arguments against it.
2. We live in a culture that affirms the "mine " mentality

Why is Mal. 3 not in NT. Missed by 15 vs.

- It is there because it is a Test.
- OT and NT but not an old god and new god.
- Reformed God, Mean God or Nice God.

1. Tithing is a Test

The word tithe literally means ten. The number 10 is not without significance.

Ten represents testing:

- 10 Plagues in Egypt (the Lord said I will test Pharaoh)
- 10 Commandments a test of Obedience
- 10 times Israel tested the Lord in Wilderness – Number 14
- How many times were Jacob's wages changed? 10
- How many days was Daniel tested?
- How many Virgins tested in Matt. 25?
- There are 10 Days of Testing mentioned in book of Revelations
- How many Disciples did Jesus have? Just testing 😊

- God chooses tithing (the tenth) to test us.
- Many Christians struggle with this very thing.

- It boils down to this:
- Tithe or not to Tithe
- Honor God or Claim it all for my own
- Tithe =blessed
- No tithe = cursed

- Deal with the I "can't be cursed" argument.

- Can I live anyway I want to and not suffer any consequences?

- He bore our sin.
- Since becoming a Christian have you ever sinned?

1 Peter 2:24

24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

- He bore sin. Have you ever been sick?

Matt 8:17

17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.

- The point is, that just because Jesus bore the curse, it does not mean that we cannot live under a curse.
- We do not have to, but we certainly can.
- Deal with “tithe under the law”
- There are many things under the law, which are still true in the NT. Lying, Murder etc.
- Mat 5:17-20 Law and Grace

Matt 5:17-20

17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. 18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. 19 Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

19 And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: 20 And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.

- 400 years before the Law

Jacob

Gen 28:22

22 And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.

- The tithe is the Lords: (This is why he said that you are robbing me.)

Lev 27:30

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.

Deut 26:1-2

And it shall be, when thou art come in unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, and possessest it, and dwellest therein; 2 That thou shalt take of the first of all the fruit of the earth, which thou shalt bring of thy land that the Lord thy God giveth thee, and shalt put it in a basket, and shalt go unto the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to place his name there.

Deut 26:12-15

12 When thou hast made an end of tithing all the tithes of thine increase the third year, which is the year of tithing, and hast given it unto the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that they may eat within thy gates, and be filled; 13 Then thou shalt say before the Lord thy God, I have brought away the hallowed things out of mine house, and also have given

them unto the Levite, and unto the stranger, to the fatherless, and to the widow, according to all thy commandments which thou hast commanded me: I have not transgressed thy commandments, neither have I forgotten them: 14 I have not eaten thereof in my mourning, neither have I taken away ought thereof for any unclean use, nor given ought thereof for the dead: but I have hearkened to the voice of the Lord my God, and have done according to all that thou hast commanded me. 15 Look down from thy holy habitation, from heaven, and bless thy people Israel, and the land which thou hast given us, as thou swarest unto our fathers, a land that floweth with milk and honey.

- I have taken your tithe from my house and brought it to Your house. THAT I MIGHT BE BLESSED.

Deut 26:4-11

4 And the priest shall take the basket out of thine hand, and set it down before the altar of the Lord thy God 5 And thou shalt speak and say before the Lord thy God, A Syrian ready to perish was my father, and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there with a few, and became there a nation, great, mighty, and populous: 6 And the Egyptians evil entreated us, and afflicted us, and laid upon us hard bondage: 7 And when we cried unto the Lord God of our fathers, the Lord heard our voice, and looked on our affliction, and our labour, and our oppression: 8 And the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with great terribleness, and with signs, and with wonders: 9 And he hath brought us into this place, and hath given us this land, even a land that floweth with milk and honey 10 And now, behold, I have brought the firstfruits of the land, which thou, O Lord, hast given me. And thou shalt set it before the Lord thy God, and worship before the Lord thy God: 11 And thou shalt rejoice in every good thing which the Lord thy God hath

given unto thee, and unto thine house, thou, and the Levite, and the stranger that is among you.

- Tithing is an occasion of worship
- Tithing is an occasion of remembrance & acknowledgement
- If Jesus said to you “you ought to tithe, would you do it?”

Matt 23:23

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.

- The one who saved me said I ought to do it.

Heb 7:1-8

For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; 2 To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; 3 Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually. 4 Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils. 5 And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham: 6 But he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises. 7 And without all contradiction the

less is blessed of the better. 8 And here men that die receive tithes; but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.

3. Tithe is a benefit:

- Hezekiah reading scriptures. Realizes that the people are not paying tithe.

2 Chron 31:4-10

4 Moreover he commanded the people that dwelt in Jerusalem to give the portion of the priests and the Levites, that they might be encouraged in the law of the Lord. 5 And as soon as the commandment came abroad, the children of Israel brought in abundance the firstfruits of corn, wine, and oil, and honey, and of all the increase of the fields; and the tithe of all things brought they in abundantly 6 And concerning the children of Israel and Judah, that dwelt in the cities of Judah, they also brought in the tithe of oxen and sheep, and the tithe of holy things which were consecrated unto the Lord their God, and laid them by heaps. 7 In the third month they began to lay the foundation of the heaps, and finished them in the seventh month. 8 And when Hezekiah and the princes came and saw the heaps, they blessed the Lord, and his people Israel. 9 Then Hezekiah questioned with the priests and the Levites concerning the heaps. 10 And Azariah the chief priest of the house of Zadok answered him, and said, Since the people began to bring the offerings into the house of the Lord, we have had enough to eat, and have left plenty: for the Lord hath blessed his people; and that which is left is this great store.

Two benefits:

- Kingdom Blessing
- Personal Blessing

- Tither vs. Non-tither testimony
- I am so blessed vs. I can never afford

Mal. 3:10-12

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 11 And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts. 12 And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts.

- The outcome of obedience vs. disobedience, is simply this:
- If you pass the test your blessed,
- If you fail it you are cursed.

The Blessed Life #3--Breaking the Spirit of Mammon

Luke 16:9-15

9 And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations. 10 He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. 11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? 12 And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own? 13 No servant 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. 14 And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him. 15 And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.

- Mammon is mentioned, 4X in Scripture. Once in Matt. 6 same context. 3X in Luke 16.

- What is Mammon – Aramaic word meaning riches.

mamonas (mam-o-nas') or mammonas (mam-mo-nas'); of Aramaic origin (confidence, i.e. wealth, personified); mammonas, i.e. avarice (deified):

KJV - mammon.

- Mammon was a Syrian god of riches.

- Originated from Babylon, and was connected to tower of Babel.
- The word Babel means confusion.
- Babylon = sown in confusion.
- It's was a prideful, arrogant spirit that did not need God. That is the spirit of mammon.
- Mammon says you don't need God, you need money.
- Mammon tries to replace God with things.
- All money has a spirit on it.
- The Spirit/spirit that rests on money, is up to, the possessor; God or Mammon
- Your money needs to be Sanctified/Redeemed.
- Give the first portion to God
- You bring your money out from under the spirit of mammon by redeeming it.
- Blessed money. Not touched by devourer.

Mal 3:11-12

11 And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the

time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts. 12 And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts.

- Mammon promises you everything and gives you nothing.
- It lies
- Mammon promises what only God can give.
- Mammon says if you SERVE me...
- Mammon looks for servants.

- Promises:
 - Security
 - Significance
 - Importance
 - Independence
 - Freedom
 - Power
 - Peace
 - Love
 - Joy

- You can only get these from God.

- Jesus said you will hate one and despise the other.

- Some believers despise God over money.

- If you despise one it is because you have been loyal to mammon.

- When our needs don't get met.

- And Things don't go the way mammon promised, we despise God for it.
- Mammon is the spirit of antichrist.
- Antichrist will rule through the threat of not being able to buy and sell.
- Many times we think I need one of two things.
- God to come through
- More money
- Mammon wants to be your God.
- Jesus never told anyone that the solution to their problem is more money.
- Mammon is Subtle.
- "If you had more money, you will be able to help more people."
- "If you will give me your gift of communication you can help more people and I will make you rich."
- You cannot serve God and Mammon!!!
- If you have the right...
- Clothes
- Job
- House
- Car
- "People would listen to you if you had more money."
- "You would have more", etc...

- Mammon is the spirit of this world and the spirit of antichrist.

1. Is money Evil?

- Money is neutral. Neither bad or good.
- Money is not root of all evil.
- The LOVE of money is the root of all evil.

1 Tim 6:10

10 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.

- The love of, service of, honoring of...
- Greed, covetousness, selfishness
- Money is a tool.
- Can be used for good or bad.
- Temporal or eternal.

Luke 16:9

9 "And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon, that when you fail, they may receive you into an everlasting home.

NKJV

- Key word is the word "fail" means die.
- "They" Take unrighteous mammon that has been submitted to the world and submit it to me.
- Lay treasure up in heaven. Use it to bring souls in the kingdom.

- One day we will meet those souls in heaven, who were impacted by our giving.

Luke 16:11

11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?

- If you've not been faithful.
- If you've Not redeemed that money.
- Who will commit to you true riches.
- Souls last forever.

CHANCE TO PASTOR. Pastor cannot commit souls and ministry responsibility to people who are not faithful in little things.

- I want my money submitted and redeemed by God.
 - There are people who would like to be in ministry and help people but...
2. What should I do with money?
- Be a good steward. God is looking for good stewards.

Illustration:

A steward stands between God and need. When we are a good channel God continues to funnel resources that way.

- "I have too little unrighteous mammon to be concerned with this message"

- He who is faithful in the least, faithful in much.
- He who is unjust in the least, unjust in much...

A LITTLE is a Test of faithfulness!

Good stewards(the faithful) get MUCH .

v. 12 if you have not been faithful with another mans.

- God owns it all.
- It is not how much it is, but whose it is.
- Be faithful, be a good steward and give generously!!!
- Because when you do:
- It'll be given back in GOOD MEASURE, SHAKEN TOGETHER, PRESS DOWN, AND RUNNING OVER!

The Blessed Life #4--Who's First or Who's Priority

Gen 12:1-3

1 Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: 2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: 3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

Recap of lessons

- A Heart of The Matter
- What Test?
- Breaking The Spirit Of Mammon!

- Every time you have increase you have an opportunity to worship, and someone to thank for that provision.
- You have an opportunity for blessing or cursing

- Remember, The Blessed Life, is being that conduit.

- We are blessed to be a blessing

1. Who's First In Your Life (who gets priority)?

Ex 13:1-2

1 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, 2 Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: it is mine.

Ex 13:1-2

1 The Lord said to Moses, 2 "Consecrate to me every firstborn male. The first offspring of every womb among the Israelites belongs to me, whether man or animal." (NKJV)

Ex 13:12-13

12 That thou shalt set apart unto the Lord all that openeth the matrix, and every firstling that cometh of a beast which thou hast; the males shall be the Lord's. 13 And every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck: and all the firstborn of man among thy children shalt thou redeem.

1. The Firstborn must be sacrificed or redeemed:

- If your livestock had its first newborn and it was clean it was to be sacrificed.
- If it was deemed unclean you were supposed to redeem it or buy it back.
- This is a critical principal of God.
- It goes all the way back to the first chapters of Genesis.
- Tithing started in the Garden of Eden.
- God said you can have all the trees but one. "That one is mine"
- This was a test from the beginning.
- This is so important to God because:
- Were you born clean/unclean?
- Was Jesus born clean/unclean?
- When Jesus was sacrificed, it was the clean for the unclean. To redeem us.

- He is God's tithe.
- He is God's tithe because you give your tithe first.

- Tithe is given in faith.
- You don't wait to see if you have enough left over then tithe.

- You give your tithe first.

- There are so many principles of tithe that bring the blessing, but the biggest is that it is given in faith.

- That is where the blessing is.

- God gave Jesus first. He did not wait to see if we would:
 - Repent
 - Clean up

- He gave Jesus while we were sinners, while we were mocking and spitting.

- He did not wait to see if we would get right.

Rom 5:8

8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

- God gave Jesus in faith believing for a return on His investment.
- He was a first fruits offering.
- He is the firstborn.
- The Bible calls him the first fruits.

1 Cor 15:20

20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.

Col 1:18

18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

Rom 8:29

29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

- The first portion is the redemptive portion.
 - If you give the first to God the rest is blessed.
 - Are you willing and trusting enough to give God the first.
 - Remember, it's a Matter of the heart.
 - Any first thing not redeemed must have its neck broken. (Ex 13:13)
 - Any first thing given is never lost.
 - Any first thing not given is always lost.
2. First Fruits Must be Offered

Ex 23:19

19 The first of the firstfruits of thy land thou shalt bring into the house of the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not see the a kid in his mother's milk.

Prov 3:9

9 Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase:

- Jeircho: Give me the first of the first City
- It took faith to give all of the silver and gold from the city and give to God.
- Joshua 6 the city is consecrated for the house of God.
- But when Achan took it he calls it cursed.
- If you keep it in your house it becomes cursed.
- Abel's Sacrifice:

Gen 4:3-5

3 And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. 4 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: 5 But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

- God is all ways first. 2500 years before the Law.
- Cain's offering was in the process of time and "an" offering.

3. The Tithe Must be Brought First

2 Chron 31:5

5 And as soon as the commandment came abroad, the children of Israel brought in abundance the firstfruits of corn, wine, and oil, and honey, and

of all the increase of the fields; and the tithe of all things brought they in abundantly.

- The Bible never uses the word "give" in relation to tithe, always the word "bring."
- Illustration: Someone who is borrowing my vehicle does not give me my car back they bring it back to me.

The Bible always says:

- Storehouse
- House of God
- House of the Lord
- It never makes reference to other areas or ministries of our choosing.
- It is not yours to designate.
- Bring the tithe of everything.
- Do you tithe on the gross or the net?
- Which do you want blessed.
- Do you want what you give to the IRS blessed 😊

Luke 20:25

25 And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's, and unto God the things which be God's.

- How do you know which is the first of your increase?

- The one you pay first.
- Don't give away your redemptive portion.

1 Cor 16:1-2

1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. 2 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.

- Nothing legalistic about this.
- It is about the attitude of the heart.
- Putting God first.
- The first thing I am going to do every time I have increase, is honor God.
- I am preaching this because it will help you.
- Putting God First...
- Rich Young Ruler:

Luke 18:18-23

18 And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? 19 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is, God. 20 Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not

bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother. 21 And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up. 22 Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me 23 And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich.

Exodus 13:14-16

14 And it shall be when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What is this? that thou shalt say unto him, By strength of hand the Lord brought us out from Egypt, from the house of bondage: 15 And it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that the Lord slew all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man, and the firstborn of beast: therefore I sacrifice to the Lord all that openeth the matrix, being males; but all the firstborn of my children I redeem. 16 And it shall be for a token upon thine hand, and for frontlets between thine eyes: for by strength of hand the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt.

The Blessed Life #5--Am I Generous?

John 12:1-8

1 Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead. **2** There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him. **3** Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment. **4** Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him, **5** Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? **6** This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein. **7** Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this. **8** For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.

- We have been talking about the Blessed Life which has to do with every area,
- But we've focused on financial b/c Jesus said where your treasure is your heart will be.
- You are catching it. You are catching a biblical principle that will change your life and build the kingdom. Today:

But the question is, Am I generous?

- We all have to answer this question.

- Our scripture text is an amazing passage because we see two hearts on display.

- A Generous Heart and a Selfish Heart.

- What displays a heart? Giving.
- Her heart by giving.
- His heart by response.

- Why did she give so much?
- Why did it bother him so much?

- 1. The enemy of Generosity: Selfishness

- Everyone is born selfish.
- From the time we are kids. That's Mine!

- Many never grow out of it.

- It's one of the most difficult thing in marriage.

- Selfishness is all about self
- Selfishness promotes self
- Protects self
- Provides for self

- God is the one who is supposed to do these things.

- Selfishness tries to take the place of god.

- When Selfishness takes precedence....

- It becomes a Stronghold .
- It's like the enemy has a fortified place in our lives and
- It starts as children and he tries to fortify that place more and more as we get older.
- Judas uses the excuse " why wasn't it sold and given to the poor."
- Our selfishness is many times displayed in the presence of generosity.
- We know better than to say "you should have kept that for yourself"
- So we deride generosity with religious overtones.
- Judas is trying to cover up his selfishness.
- He was looking for a kingdom.
- All of them were
- Are you going to set up the kingdom
- Where is the kingdom
- When is the kingdom
- Once Jesus caught them arguing over who was going to be the greatest in the kingdom
- Even after His resurrection they asked Him; "Are you now going to establish the Kingdom"
- Judas was a thief.
- Jesus said did not I choose twelve of you and one of you is a devil.

- Judas was taking money out of the box.
- Who gave him the box? Jesus.
- Why?
- He did not set him up for failure. He set him up to succeed.
- He gave him responsibility in the area of his weakness.

1 Cor 10:13

13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

- Judas' correlation to tithing was that...
- He was taking money out of the offering box.
- The question that remains, is...
- Is it the same thing to not put money in that belongs to God as it is to take it out.

2. The Extravagance of Generosity

John 12:3-5

3 Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment. 4 Then saith one of his disciples,

Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him, 5 Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?

- This was an offering of one years salary.
- Would that be an extravagant gift?
- Would it be extravagant to take one year's salary buy perfume and pour it on someone's feet?
- What gift could you give to God that would be extravagant?
- How much could you give to impress God?
- 1 Million?
- 100 Million?
- 100 Billion?
- Before you say yes, let me remind you what He owns
- Let me remind you about His house.
- Street of Gold
- Walls of Jasper
- Gates of Pearl
- No Amount would impress God....But we all can impress God with our giving

2 Corinthians 8:3-5

3 For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves; 4 Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the

saints. 5 And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.

- Give yourself. Giving yourself is your most extravagant gift.
- Let me remind you that your wallet comes with you!
- Where your treasure is there your heart will be also.

Widow's Mites

Mark 12:41-44

41 And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. 42 And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. 43 And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: 44 For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.

- Her offering was in today's dollars about ½ of 1 penny.

Three levels of Giving in Bible:

- Tithes
- Offerings
- Extravagant Offerings

- Most Christians never get beyond the first. 5-7% Tithe

- Every person who gets to the first level gets to the second level.
- Then God speaks at times and calls us to give extravagantly.
- Mary gave extravagantly.
- She did not know why (the real reason) she was giving this:
- This is the only anointing that His body got for burial.
- He died as the Sabbath was coming so they quickly took Him off and buried Him.
- The ladies were returning the first day of the week to anoint Him with 100 pounds of spices.

3. The Reward of Generosity

- This is the exact same story we read in John 12

Mark 14:3-9

3 And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head. 4 And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made? 5 For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her. 6 And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me. 7 For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always. 8 She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to

the burying. 9 Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.

- This scripture is fulfilled this night
- She came not expecting a reward.
- She wasn't doing this to become famous.
- She just came to honor the Lord.
- Why would she do this?
- Her brother had just been raised from the dead 2 months before.
- Do you think that would change her perspective.
- Let me remind you that you have been raised from the dead.
- She got rewarded even though she was not looking for it.

Heb 11:6

6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

- God is a REWARDER
- Only place in the Bible this word is used.

- It is a combined word meaning
- first to pay wages,
- secondly to reward over and above.