

Tithes and Offerings

As God's child, our obedience in finances matters to the Father and yields abundant blessing.

- 1) What kinds of blessings accompany faithfulness in giving?

It is helpful to understand the Biblical significance, and difference between, the two disciplines of tithing and offerings.

Tithing: stop debating & start honoring.

- 1) Tithing is an issue of Stewardship
 - a) **What is Stewardship?**
 - b) 1 Chron 29:11-16—*"Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O LORD, and you are exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all. And now we thank you, our God, and praise your glorious name. "But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able thus to offer willingly? For all things come from you, and of your own have we given you. For we are strangers before you and sojourners, as all our fathers were. Our days on the earth are like a shadow, and there is no abiding. O LORD our God, all this abundance that we have provided for building you a house for your holy name comes from your hand and is all your own."*
 - c) Using God's resources to accomplish God's purposes
 - d) What are the specific things we are to steward?
- 2) **When did God institute the tithe?**
 - a) Gen 14:18-20—*"Melchizedek king of Salem...was priest of God Most High...And Abram gave him a tenth of everything."*
 - b) **How long before the Mosaic law did Abraham tithe? (500 Yrs)**
 - c) **What does that tell us about the principle of tithing?**
- 3) Heb 7:9-10—*"Levi himself, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham... when Melchizedek met him"* → Who is Melchizedek a type of? == Jesus
 - a) **Is this significant? Why?**
- 4) **What is the tithe?**
 - a) The concept of a *tithe*, a "tenth part" given in support of temple function and the priests' livelihood, was established by God
- 5) Lev 27:30, 32—*"Every tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the trees, is the LORD's; it is holy to the LORD...every tenth animal of all that pass under the herdsman's staff, shall be holy to the LORD."*
 - a) **Why Did God institute the tithe?**
 - b) Not as a tool to gauge our holiness through adherence (as the rulers above viewed it)
 - not to measure our level of commitment.

- c) Rather, 10% provided a starting point, a baseline by which His chosen race could express their humble gratitude and sincere obedience in contrast to the pagan religious practices of the surrounding nations. Not unlike in
- d) Deut 7:6—“*For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth*”
- 6) What did God do with his tenth, the tithe?**
- 7) Num 18:21—“*To the Levites I have given every tithe in Israel for an inheritance, in return for their service that they do, their service in the tent of meeting,*
- a) Why did God give the Levites the tithes of the rest of God’s people?**
- b) What did the other 11 tribes of Israel get as an inheritance? (Land, i.e. livelihood, way to make a living and support themselves)**
- c) Num 18:24—“*For the tithe of the people of Israel, which they present as a contribution to the LORD, I have given to the Levites for an inheritance. Therefore I have said of them that they shall have no inheritance among the people of Israel.*”
- 8) Did the priests tithe?**
- a) Num 18:26—“*Say to the Levites, When you take from the people of Israel the tithe that I have given you from them for your inheritance, then you shall present a contribution from it to the LORD, a tithe of the tithe.*”
- b) What was done with their tithe? → Sacrifices, given to the poor, etc.**
- 9) Many question whether the tithe is still required in the NT...
- a) What do you think? Why?**
- b) If not, what is required?**
- c) Matt 23:23—“*Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others.*”
- 10) How are Gospel Workers to be supported in the NT?**
- a) 1 Cor 9:13-14—“*Do you not know that those who are employed in the temple service get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in the sacrificial offerings? In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel.*”
- b) Sacrificial Offerings → Tithe == *In the Same Way*
- 11) In Jesus’ day, participating in such an intentional act of honor to the Creator meets the practical needs of those in service in the Lord’s House today and provides a base of support for the local church to fulfill its responsibilities.
- 12) We deceive ourselves if we think that we are somehow “giving to God” any specific percentage of something that is “ours.” As established in our first lesson, it’s all His in the first place; so our attentive stewardship of the 90% we get to “keep” is really the crux of the matter.

Is the tithe meant to be a literal percentage, or just a guideline to giving?

- 1) The idea of a “tenth part” dedicated to funding Kingdom work, in and through the believer’s local place of fellowship (i.e. their “temple”), is God’s idea, not man’s.
- 2) **How would our church’s opportunities improve if every member actually tithed into the general budget? → in terms of ministry, discipleship, missions and community impact?**
- 3) Tithing also serves as a guideline for *obedience* in giving,

“Over and above” funds are offered beyond what God asks of us through obedience.

1) What is an Offering and how does it differ from Tithes?

- 2) Ex 35:22—“*So they came, both men and women. All who were of a willing heart brought brooches and earrings and signet rings and armlets, all sorts of gold objects, every man dedicating an offering of gold to the LORD.*”

Luke 12:48—“*Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required, and from him to whom they entrusted much, they will demand the more.*”

Luke 16:10-13—“*One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? And if you have not been faithful in that which is another’s, who will give you that which is your own? No servant 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.*”

The inter-connectedness of these two passages reveal the weight placed by the Father on the responsible administration of resources by His children.

How do we prove ourselves responsible with little (obedience), thus showing the Father that we can be entrusted with much (over and above)?

PERSONAL / HOUSEHOLD APPLICATION

DISCUSS What is your attitude toward “how much” we are to give, and to keep? Consider your level of commitment to your local church as evidenced by the amount you give, especially in the context of other things you purchase that are neither needs, nor Kingdom-related.

DECIDE Establish a consistent, prayerful approach to every opportunity to give. Make a list.

DO! Follow through! Tithe, support Global Outreach, Set aside a special savings account dedicated to the Lord and give to needs resources become available