GENEROSITY AND TITHING

"Honoring God, With What He Has Entrusted to Us"

Primary Text: Malachi 3:8–12 - [8] Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, 'How have we robbed you?' In your tithes and contributions. [9] You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me, the whole nation of you. ..[11] 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. [12] Then all nations will call you blessed, for you will be a land of delight, says the LORD of hosts.

Supporting Texts: Proverbs 3:9–10. - [9] Honor the LORD with your wealth and with the first fruits of all your produce;[10] then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine.

Matthew 6:19–2 - Lay Up Treasures in Heaven
[19] "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, [20] but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. [21] For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Luke 6:38 - [38] give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you."

2 Corinthians 9:6–11 - The Cheerful Giver

[6] The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. [7] Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. [8] 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. [9] As it is written, "He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever." [10] He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. [11] You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God[7]

Acts 2:44–45 - [44] And all who believed were together and had all things in common. [45] And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to [all], as any had need.

Acts 4:32–35 - They Had Everything in Common
[32] Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common. [33] And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. [34] There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were

owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold [35] and laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

I. GENEROSITY BEGINS WITH THE HEART

Jesus taught that our attitude toward money reveals something about our heart.

Matthew 6:21

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

Notice Jesus didn't say:

"Where your heart is, your treasure will eventually follow."

He said: **"Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."**

Our giving can actually help direct our hearts toward God.

Giving is therefore an act of worship.

When we give, we are saying, "God, You are more important to me than what I possess."

Matthew 23: [23] "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former. [24] You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel.

II. GOD IS THE OWNER—WE ARE STEWARDS

The foundation of biblical giving is understanding **ownership**.

"The earth is the LORD'S, and all its fullness." — Psalm 24:1

Everything we possess ultimately belongs to God.

Our money, homes, abilities, businesses, time, influence, and possessions are things that God has **entrusted** to us.

1 Corinthians 4:2 "Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful."

A steward doesn't ask: **"How much of my money should I give God?"**

A steward asks: **"God, what do You want me to do with what You have placed in my hands?"**

That changes the entire way we look at giving. Our giving can actually help direct our hearts toward God.

Giving is therefore an act of worship.

When we give, we are saying:

"God, You are more important to me than what I possess."

III. WHAT IS TITHING?

The word **tithe** means **one-tenth**, or 10 percent.

The biblical principle of bringing a tenth to God appears throughout Scripture.

Genesis 14:20

Abraham gave Melchizedek: - Hebrew – "Melch Ha Tzadik" – King of Righteousness, a tithe of all.

Genesis 28:22

Jacob said "And of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You."

Tithing therefore predates the Mosaic Law. It is not simply an Old Testament fundraising mechanism. It represents a biblical principle of **honoring God with the first portion of what He provides**.

Tithing - in God's Instruction Book - The Bible.

Hebraic tradition, "tithes" (*ma'aser*) are a mandatory 10% tax on produce and livestock used to support the priesthood and the poor. "Offerings" (*terumah* or *minchah*) are freewill gifts of gratitude. Together, ancient Israelites gave over 20% of their annual resources to honor God.

The Hebraic view of giving breaks down into three distinct types:

- **The First Tithe (*Ma'aser Rishon*):** This is the basic 10% of a person's income or crops. In ancient times, this was given to the Levites, who were the tribe that took care of the religious duties. Because the Levites had no land to farm, this tithe was their salary.

- **The Festival Tithe (*Ma'aser Sheni/Second-Tithe*):** Every year, Israelites set aside a *second* 10% to take to Jerusalem. The family used this money to buy food and wine for the holy feasts. This ensured everyone celebrated together at the Temple.

- **The Poor Tithe (*Ma'aser Ani*):** Every third year, instead of using the second tithe for the feast, the Israelites gave it to the local poor. This was a built-in safety net for widows, orphans, and strangers.

Offerings (*Minchah* or *Terumah*)
Unlike tithes, which were a fixed 10%, offerings were given voluntarily. These Tithe were "heave offerings" or "gifts of the heart". People gave these when they felt thankful, had a special request, or to build the physical Temple. The total required and free gifts could equal up to 23.3% of what a person earned.

The Modern Equivalent
Today, the physical Temple no longer exists, and Jewish tradition adapts these rules. Most modern Hebraic and Jewish teachings treat the 10% tithe as a guideline. It is typically calculated on a person's net income after taxes. The funds are then used to support synagogues, rabbis, and charities.

IV. THE TITHE BELONGS TO THE LORD

Leviticus 27:30

"And all the tithe of the land... is the LORD'S. It is holy to the LORD."

Notice the language:

"The tithe... is the LORD'S."

This is important.

The biblical concept is not primarily:

"I am giving God ten percent."

It is:

"God has entrusted ninety percent to me while the first ten percent belongs to Him."

That changes the attitude from **giving something away** to **returning something that belongs to God.**