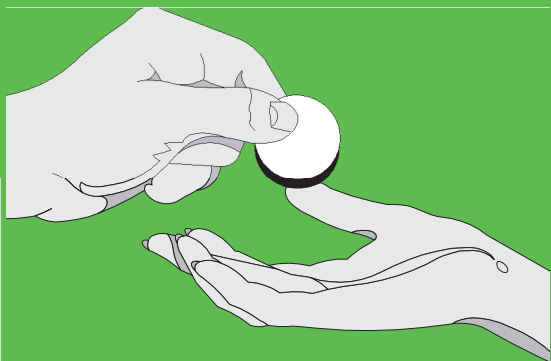


*What
about*



TITHING?



Giving under Law

Tithing, which is the giving of one tenth, was definitely taught in the Old Testament as part of the law of Judaism (Lev. 27:30-32; Dt. 14:22-29).

In fact, in Malachi 3:8-9, the people of Israel were charged with robbing God because they were not paying their tithes. In no uncertain terms, they were reminded that they were not prospering because they were selfish. They were further promised a blessing from God for tithing.

Giving under Grace

However, the New Testament brings in Christianity, where we “are not under law but under grace” (Rom. 6:14). In full harmony with this grace, the Christian principle is not tithing, but giving in proportion to how much God has prospered us (1 Cor. 16:2).

Many Christians who understand and enjoy the grace of God give far more than one tenth. And they do it not out of a sense of lawful obligation, but out of grateful response to the grace of God. God delights in such giving (2 Cor. 9:7).

Giving Cheerfully

The New Testament teaches us to give cheerfully, rather than grudgingly or out of necessity. It promises that as we give liberally and with a positive attitude, we will be blessed in return (but not necessarily materially) so that we can give more! “God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work ... while you are enriched in everything for all liberality” (2 Cor. 9:8-11).

It further instructs us to be purposeful, practical and orderly in our giving (1 Cor. 16:1-2). It gives us the example of some early Christians in deep poverty whose liberal giving reflected their joy in the Lord and their surrender to Him (2 Cor. 8:1-5).

The Lord taught us to give secretly with these words: “When you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing” (Mt. 6:3).

The entire New Testament creates the atmosphere of humble, quiet, joyful devotion to the Lord – even in giving. In a coming day, He will reward us openly.

Giving Out of Love

We urge you to get hold of the Lord's wonderful promise: "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" (Lk. 6:38).

Remember that Christianity is not a matter of keeping the law. It is a matter of allowing the grace of God to reflect our love of Him in every area of our lives – including our giving. We love because He first loved us. We give because He has given so much to us!

– G. W. Steidl

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