

**Tithing - Downtown@8:08
May 27, 2006**

Credits to Greg Boyd

Review of Last week's message – comments, response?

Whenever we talk about money things usually gets weird.

It seems to me that the spirit of greed likes to have power

It is hard to find the middle ground; we tend to go to the extreme.

In many ways we have to understand the past to understand the context of the teachings of Jesus, and the NT. In other words, we have to go back before we can go forward.

GIVE WALLET TO SOMEONE

TITHING IN THE OT

Genesis 14:7-20

7As Abram returned from his victory over Kedorlaomer and his allies, the king of Sodom came out to meet him in the valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley). 18Then Melchizedek, the king of Salem and a priest of God Most High, brought him bread and wine. 19Melchizedek blessed Abram with this blessing:

"Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth. And blessed be God Most High, who has helped you conquer your enemies."

Then Abram gave Melchizedek a tenth of all the goods he had recovered.

Voluntary/spontaneous act in recognition of what God had done for him

Genesis 28:16-22 – Jacob's Dream

16Then Jacob woke up and said, "Surely the LORD is in this place, and I wasn't even aware of it." 17He was afraid and said, "What an awesome place this is! It is none other than the house of God--the gateway to heaven!" 18The next morning he got up very early. He took the stone he had used as a pillow and set it upright as a memorial pillar. Then he poured olive oil over it. 19He named the place Bethel--"house of God"--though the name of the nearby village was Luz.

20Then Jacob made this vow: "If God will be with me and protect me on this journey and give me food and clothing, 21and if he will bring me back safely to my father, then I will make the LORD my God. 22This memorial pillar will become a place for worshiping God, and I will give God a tenth of everything he gives me."

Recognized that God is his sustainer/provider

Numbers 18:20-22 - Leviticus Law

A tenth of all fruit, produce, crops, cattle, income went to the priests

Malachi 3:6-11

6 "I the LORD do not change. So you, O descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed. 7 Ever since the time of your forefathers you have turned away from my decrees and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you," says the LORD Almighty. "But you ask, 'How are we to return?' 8 "Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. "But you ask, 'How do we rob you?' "In tithes and offerings. 9 You are under a curse—the whole nation of you—because you are robbing me. 10 Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test (experiment???) me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it. 11 I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not cast their fruit," says the LORD Almighty. 12 "Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land," says the LORD Almighty.

1.) Don't rob God, and 2.) See if what God says is true

TITHING IN THE NT

Luke 11:37-42 - Jesus' perspective on tithing

37As Jesus was speaking, one of the Pharisees invited him home for a meal. So he went in and took his place at the table. 38His host was amazed to see that he sat down to eat without first performing the ceremonial washing required by Jewish custom. 39Then the Lord said to him, "You Pharisees are so careful to clean the outside of the cup and the dish, but inside you are still filthy--full of greed and wickedness! 40Fools! Didn't God make the inside as well as the outside? 41So give to the needy what you greedily possess, and you will be clean all over.

42"But how terrible it will be for you Pharisees! For you are careful to tithe even the tiniest part of your income, but you completely forget about justice and the love of God. You should tithe, yes, but you should not leave undone the more important things.

LET'S TRY TO TIE IT ALL TOGETHER

God gave the law to show us what it looks like to live like Christ

Law tells us what we ought to do, but doesn't empower us to do it. Christ shows us and empowers us to do what we ought.

What was the law trying to show us with the Law of Tithing?

Christ always raises the standard. To live by the law is just what it takes to get by. Christ moves the standard from action to attitude.

So then, Christ moves the law of tithing from action to attitude. From just getting by, to becoming generous.

To legally tithe is totally the wrong motivation.

WHAT ARE SOME THOUGHTS/PRINCIPLES/GUIDELINES WE MIGHT HAVE WHEN IT COMES TO TITHING?

Our giving/tithing should reflect how Christ lived his life when he gave to others/us.

John 3:16
Water to wine

Voluntary and joyful – whats in your mind Heb 12

2 Corinthians 9:7

You must each make up your own mind as to how much you should give. Don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. For God loves the person who gives cheerfully.

Disciplined 1st day of week/1st fruits

1 Corinthians 16:2

2On every Lord's Day,[a] each of you should put aside some amount of money in relation to what you have earned and save it for this offering. Don't wait until I get there and then try to collect it all at once.

According to your means (10% might be too low)

2 Corinthians 8:12-14

12If you are really eager to give, it isn't important how much you are able to give. God wants you to give what you have, not what you don't have. 13Of course, I don't mean you should give so much that you suffer from having too little. I only mean that there should be some equality. 14Right now you have plenty and can help them. Then at some other time they can share with you when you need it. In this way, everyone's needs will be met.

Privilege

Acts 20:35

35And I have been a constant example of how you can help the poor by working hard. You should remember the words of the Lord Jesus: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' "

With a concern for justice (poor etc.)

Luke 11:37-42

Give with expectations (mal 3)

If you give in order to receive back, you are giving out of selfishness. When you give without expectations, you underestimate the generosity and provision of God.

WRAP-UP

Tithing is not a litmus test of Godliness

Tithing/giving is the normal pattern of Christ's disciples - ***God or Money***

Your giving pattern reveals your heart