

STEWARDSHIP, TITHING, GIVING

The most sensitive subject in churches today is, by far, money. Everyone behind a pulpit is begging for money. Someone said, "It seems every time I go to church, all they talk about is money." Try this: go to McDonald's and order a "Happy Meal" and see what they talk about. Pump \$10 worth of gas into your automobile and see what the attendant talks about. It takes money to operate anything going forward. Most of Jesus' parables spoke about money. Why? Jesus knew what a grip money would have on people. He even said, "...Ye cannot serve God and mammon (money)." Matthew 6:24; Luke 16:13. He also said, "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Matthew 6:21; Luke 12:34 It is of utmost importance that a Christian gets proper and correct insight with scriptural stewardship.

What is stewardship? The word "steward" means the manager, treasurer, or one who takes care of the Master's business until He returns.

I Corinthians 4:1-2 says: *"Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful."*

Titus 1:7 says a Pastor is to be a "blameless steward". Stewardship is no option. The moment you got saved, you became a steward. **How you manage what God has given you will determine what kind of steward you become.**

As a Christian you must cultivate the fact that all you are and have has been entrusted to you by God for his glory. The evil heart begins when we think we are the owners. A lack of stewardship causes us to be self-willed, self-indulgent, and God-forgetting. We then spend and use all we have on us.

Psalms 24:1 says: *"The earth is the LORD'S, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein."*

Psalms 50:10-11 says: *"For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine."*

Haggai 2:8 says: *"The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the LORD of hosts."*

EVERYTHING BELONGS TO GOD!

I POSSESS - GOD OWNS!

I EARN - GOD ENABLES!

Pride creeps in as we think we are a self made man, "I pulled myself up by my own boot straps" is an untrue statement. The air we breathe, health, intelligence, sight, body, freedom, education, etc. has all been a gift of God.

STEWARDSHIP TAKES THE PRESSURE OFF

If we can realize we are only **managers** of what we possess, it takes much pressure off of us. Our automobile, boat, clothing, home, pets, etc. are God's. If I take good care of my car and I get into a wreck, why should I fret? It is God's car. There is no pressure on me. God does expect me, however, to keep my possessions in the best shape possible.

(Read Matthew 25:14-30 and Luke 16:1-12)

One day this world will burn up along with all of the “possessions” which we so highly esteem. II Corinthians 5:10 says: *“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”*

WHAT ARE CHRISTIANS STEWARDS OF?

TIME

Ephesians 5:16 commands Christians to “redeem the time”. Redeem means to “buy back”. “To whom much is given, much is required.” If God gives us a long life we will answer more to God for what we did with it. Jesus affected the world with a 33-year life. David Brainard died at age 29 after evangelizing the American Indian. Missionary Bill Borden only lived 24 years. We are to be stewards of our years, months, weeks, hours, minutes, and seconds. Time is the most precious commodity a Christian possesses.

TALENT

Every Christian has something they can use for God. Moses had a rod, Samson a jawbone, the widow a mite, Elijah a mantle, Dorcas a needle, etc. What has God enabled you to do that could be used for Him? Can you teach, type, visit, drive, organize, sing, play an instrument, hammer a nail? Use it for God.

BODY

I Corinthians 6:19-20 says: *“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.”*

Our body belongs to God. Our eyes, ears, hands, feet, minds all belong to God and are to be used for Him. We are to treat our body well. No harmful substances in it or permanent marks (tattoos) on it. It is a Holy temple for God. Proper eating and exercise can determine how high its performance is.

THE GOSPEL

I Peter 4:10 says: *“As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”*

What a privilege to manage and be entrusted with the saving gospel! Paul in Romans 1:14 said he was a debtor to preach the gospel. He was being a good steward.

OPPORTUNITIES

People who live in America have so many opportunities to do great things for God. The availability of the Bible, Christian books, and the freedom to witness gives us an awesome responsibility to use these opportunities for God.

CHILDREN

Hannah said her son was “lent to the Lord”. In reality, the son was lent to her by God. When Samson was “loaned” to Manoah, he asked the angel how to rear him (“...How shall we order the child...” Judges 13:12) **If you are a parent, you must realize God has let you have the privilege of rearing a child for Him. You are a manager, not an owner.**

FINANCES

Deuteronomy 8:18 says: *"But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day."*

A Christian does not own any money. He only possesses and manages it.

The issue is not how much of my money will I give to God, but how much of God's money will I keep for myself. God is very interested in what we do with the money He has given us. Notice these Scriptures on **stewardship, giving, and tithing:**

Malachi 3:8-10: *"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."*

Proverbs 3:9-10: *"Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine."*

Proverbs 11:24-25: *"There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself."*

Matthew 6:19-20: *"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:"*

Matthew 6:24: *"No man 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."*

Matt. 6:33: *"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."*

Luke 6:38: *"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again."*

II Corinthians 8:8,24: *"I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love. Wherefore show ye to them, and before the churches, the proof of your love, and of our boasting on your behalf."*

A Christian steward is to wisely use the money entrusted to him. It should not be wasted or spent on evil things. A great missionary said, "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep in order to gain that which he cannot lose."

WHAT DOES A GOOD STEWARDSHIP PROVE?

It is a proof of our love. We sink our money into what we love. God looks at our heart, not just at the gift. We can give without loving, but cannot love without giving.

OUR TEMPTATION

Our temptation is to misuse finances God has given us and to forget Him. First, we are tempted to covet (reach after) and want more and more money. Second, we are tempted to walk by sight instead of by faith and think we need all the money we receive for us. The third temptation is to doubt God and think it is vain to serve Him. This is what the people in Malachi's day did. Their heart was not in giving. So, when it came time to sacrifice to God, his people brought the lame, blind, and halt lambs to God. They brought Him "leftovers". God was very angry!

How would you feel if after ordering at a restaurant the waitress brought you the leftover food from another customer's table? You would be furious! I wonder how God feels? God is not pleased with his people spending all "their" earnings on themselves during the week, then dropping leftover money in the offering plate on Sunday.

WHEN ARE WE TO GIVE

I Corinthians 16:2 says: *"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."*

The first day of the week (Sunday) is what God commanded! Weekly giving reminds us on a more regular basis.

WHO SHOULD BE GIVING?

Every Christian. (Notice I Corinthians 16:2 again). Giving is not for the rich, but for all God's people.

WITH WHAT SPIRIT?

II Corinthians 9:7 says: *"Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."*

The word "cheerful" means hilarious. **Our spirit should be excited about giving back to God.** Jesus said, *"...It is more blessed to give than to receive."* (Acts 20:35)

IN WHAT MANNER?

Matthew 6:1-4 says: *"Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly."*

Giving is between a Christian and God. It is to be done secretly and "heartily unto the Lord!" A Christian will not get glory from God if he is seeking it from man.

God enables us to earn the funds and expects the first 10% back. Then if we love Him, and are able to, we are to give over and above the 10%.

PROPORTIONATE GIVING

Not every Christian can give the same amount per week to God, but they can give the same percentage. God asks no more from the rich than from the poor.

WHAT IS THE TITHE?

Genesis 14:20: *“And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.”*

Numbers 18:26: *“Thus speak unto the Levites, and say unto them, When ye take of the children of Israel the tithes which I have given you from them for your inheritance, then ye shall offer up an heave offering of it for the LORD, even a tenth part of the tithe.”*

Leviticus 27:30: *“And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or the fruit of the tree, is the LORD’S: it is holy unto the LORD.”*

Deuteronomy 14:22: *“Thou shalt truly tithe all the increase of thy seed, that the field bringeth forth year by year.”*

Mattheew 3:8-10: *“Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.”*

Matthew 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.”*

Tithe means Tenth. God not only wants 10% of all of our income but it must be the first 10%.

Proverbs 3:9 says: *“Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase.”*

It is not equal giving but equal percentage giving.

The story is told of a man who began tithing \$1 on the \$10 that he made each week. God blessed and he soon made \$100 per week so he tithed \$10. Time passed and he made \$1,000 per week. So he tithed \$100 per week. Surprisingly soon he was making \$5,000 per week. He told his Pastor he was not sure he could tithe \$500 per week. So, the Pastor said, “Let us pray God brings your income back down to \$10 a week, so you can afford to tithe.”

WHERE TO TITHE?

In the Old Testament tithes were brought to a certain place. In Malachi this place was called the storehouse.

Deuteronomy 12:5-6, 11-14:

"But unto the place which the LORD your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come: And thither ye shall bring your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, and your tithes, and heave offerings of your hand, and your vows, and your freewill offerings, and the firstlings of your herds and of your flocks: Then there shall be a place which the LORD your God shall choose to cause his name to dwell there; thither shall ye bring all that I command you; your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, your tithes, and the heave offering of your hand, and all your choice vows which ye vow unto the LORD: And ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God, ye, and your sons, and your daughters, and your menservants, and your maidservants, and the Levite that is within your gates; forasmuch as he hath no part nor inheritance with you. Take heed to thyself that thou offer not thy burnt offerings in every place that thou seest: But in the place which the LORD shall choose in one of thy tribes, there thou shalt offer thy burnt offerings, and there thou shalt do all that I command thee."

Nehemiah 13:12: *"Then brought all Judah the tithe of the corn and the new wine and the oil unto the treasuries."*

In the New Testament the tithes were brought to the church to lay at the apostle's (church leader's) feet.

Acts 4:35: *"And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need."*

Acts 4:37: *"Having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet."*

Acts 5:2: *"And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet."*

Individuals did not designate where the money went. It was determined by need. Budgets in churches today determine where tithes are spent. Notice the following:

I Corinthians 16:3: *"And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem."*

II Corinthians 8:1-3 *"Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; ¼ "*

Philippians 4:18: *"But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God."*

Acts 11:27-30: *"And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. And there stood up one of them name Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar. Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judea: Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul."*

WHEN TO TITHE?

Every week (regularly).

I Corinthians 16:2 says: *“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.”*

WHY TITHE?

1. To teach us to fear (deeply respect) God.

Deut. 14:22-23 says: *“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, in the place which he shall choose to place his name there, the tithe of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the firstlings of thy herds and of thy flocks; that thou mayest learn to fear the LORD thy God always.”*

2. To remind us that our possessions are not our own.

Acts 4:32 says: *“And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.”*

3. To protect your resources.

Proverbs 22:4 says: *“By humility and the fear of the LORD are riches, and honor, and life.”*

Malachi 3:10 says: *“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.”*

Tithing rebukes the devil (devourer). There is a curse on non-tithers. (See Haggai 1:6-11)

4. To prove sincerity of our love. (See II Corinthians 8:8-14)

5. To remove pride and greed.

6. To test our faith. (See Luke 6:38)

7. It is a practical way to keep church ministries going, support the priest (I Cor. 9:13-14), and further the gospel.

REWARDS FROM TITHING

Genesis 15:1 says: *“After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.”*

Abraham was blessed.

Malachi 3:10 says: *“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.”*

The windows of heaven's blessings will be open to you.

You will also reap rewards of souls saved through your eternal investment. (See Philippians 4:17)

QUESTIONS ON TITHING

Is the tithe all God expects? No. Tithing is the minimum. Hebrews 7:9 says: *“And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, paid tithes in Abraham.”* To pay tithes is to give back to God what belongs to Him. Giving begins after the tithe. It is a proof of our love. Every Christian should give **tithes and offerings**.

Should a person tithe if in debt? Yes. Not tithing is often the reason for debt. God judges those who rob Him.

Should a person tithe on his gross or net? His gross. God wants the first fruits.

What if I cannot see how it will work in my situation? Do it anyway. God wants your faith to grow. God blesses faith! (See Heb. 11:6)

EXAMPLE:

Income for mowing grass is \$10 - tithe is \$1.00.

Income for painting is \$100 - tithe is \$10.

Gross \$500 per week. Net \$425 per week - tithe is \$50.

HOW DO I START?

1. Write your tithe check first.
2. Pay bills.
3. Give offering
4. Have a written budget.

If a Christian cannot trust God with the first 10% how can he go further to surrender his entire life to Christ? Even the tip at a restaurant is 15%. Customers gladly pay the tip. How much more does God deserve us to be good managers of His money? God gives us a challenge when He says, "prove me" in Malachi 3. **Put God to the test. See how true His Word is!**

NAME _____

REVIEW STEWARDSHIP - STEP 9

1. What were the majorities of Jesus' parables about? _____
2. Give one definition of stewardship: _____
3. Everything belongs to _____
4. I possess - _____
I earn - _____
5. Name four of the seven things you are a steward of:

6. Finish this quote: "He is no fool who _____
_____ in order _____

7. Stewardship is a proof of our _____
8. The people in Malachi's day brought God _____
9. A Christian is to give _____ly.
10. God loves a _____ giver.
11. Tithe means _____
12. Which tenth of income is a Christian to give? _____
13. Where are tithes to be given? _____
14. The reason for tithing in Deut. 14:22-23 is: _____
15. Tithing lets God rebuke _____
16. What is an offering? _____
17. Should a person tithe if in debt? _____
18. What is the tithe of \$500 gross / \$425 net? _____
19. Write your _____ check first.

20. Date or year you have decided to be a faithful tither and giver: _____