

In this tract, I will show what the Bible says about giving of our money and of ourselves. I will also answer the question, “Why doesn’t the church of Christ teach people to tithe?”

When a preacher starts talking about giving, some people think he just wants more money. I can understand why people think this way because when they watch religions programs on TBN and other church channels, they are constantly pleading with you to send them more money. They claim whatever you send them, God will give you back tenfold or more. No wonder many have negative thoughts when a preacher starts talking about giving. Don’t worry, you won’t find any pleas for money or false promise in this tract. All I want to share with is what God’s Word says about giving and that’s all. First, I want to show you that giving is a part of our worship to God.

1 Corinthians 16:1 Now concerning the collection for the saints: as I directed the churches of Galatia, so you also are to do. ² On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper, so that there will be no collecting when I come. (ESV)

The apostle Paul is commanding every Christian to give of on the first day of every week. The ESV, NIV and NASV capture the true meaning of this passage because the phrase “first day of every week” is there in the Greek, but for whatever reason, some Bible versions leave this word out. This same Greek word is used in Acts 20:7, which teaches us when we are to partake of the Lord’s Supper. So, this shows us that we are to give and partake of the Lord’s Supper on the first day of every week. Now someone might say that he was just talking about the church at Galatia and at Corinth. However, this is not the case because Paul didn’t teach one doctrine at one church and then a different doctrine at another church. He taught the same message at every church (1 Cor. 4:17). Therefore, his command to give on the first day of every week is a command for every Christian at every church.

Paul tells the Corinthians that, “Each of them is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper (1 Cor. 16:2).” He also says, “*So let each one give as he*

purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver (2 Cor. 9:7).”

Do you see what Paul is saying? He is saying that you are supposed to put some thought into what you are going to give. This means, we should decide beforehand how much money we are going to give to God each week. That is what is meant by giving as you purpose in your heart. This means giving is more than just dropping money into the collection plate. So, if we come to church and open our wallets or purse to see what we have leftover to give to God, then we are not giving as God has commanded. We are just giving God our leftovers.

This is what they did during Malachi’s time. In Malachi chapter one, we learn that the children of Israel started offering God their leftovers. They were supposed to give God their best animals for sacrifice, but instead, they were giving Him the sick and the lame (Mal. 1:8, 13-14). We can learn from this example not to give God our leftovers. Instead, we should give Him what we have purposed in our hearts or else we are no different from those people in Malachi’s day. Paul adds this:

2 Corinthians 9:5 Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren to go to you ahead of time, and prepare your generous gift beforehand, which you had previously promised, and that it may be ready as a matter of generosity and not as a grudging obligation. ⁶ But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.

This is not teaching if you give 100 dollars God will give you back 10 or 100 fold as some teach because giving to God is not a get rich quick scheme. However, some may be blessed with more money, but many times, we reap the benefits of giving in many other ways. So, sometimes we might reap monetarily, while other times, we may reap spiritually. We also need to keep in mind what Jesus said, “It is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20:35).”

Paul also teaches us that we are to give as we prosper (1 Cor. 16:2). The more money we make, the more

we can give. We have an example of this in the following verse:

Acts 11:29 Then the disciples, each according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brethren dwelling in Judea. (Also see 2 Cor. 8:12-15).

Each Christian gave according to their ability. Some could give a little, while others could give a lot. God does not ask us to give more than we have. However, if you are prospering right now, you should give more. Later, if you lose your job or your income changes, then you can give less. Most likely another Christian will start to prosper and will be able to make up the difference because it all works out in the end.

Another thing Paul tells us about giving “Is not to give grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.” When we give to God, we should not have the attitude that we have to give. Instead, we are to give cheerfully because God loves a cheerful giver. The word “cheerful” comes from the Greek word “hilaros”, which is where we get our English word “hilarious” from. So, it’s almost like our giving to the Lord should bring so much cheer to our hearts that we feel like laughing out loud. We have two great examples of this kind of cheerful giving in scripture. Our first example comes from:

Luke 21:1 And He looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury, ² and He saw also a certain poor widow putting in two mites. ³ So He said, "Truly I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all; ⁴ "for all these out of their abundance have put in offerings for God, but she out of her poverty put in all the livelihood that she had."

These rich Jews were just giving from their abundance and were not giving from their heart. However, this poor widow, who only had two small copper coins, gave all that she had to the Lord. As Jesus watched this, He teaches us that she gave more than these rich Jews because she gave from her poverty. You can see that she gave from her heart and did it cheerfully because she did not complain.

Our second example comes from:

2 Corinthians 8:1 Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia: ² that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality. ³ For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes, and beyond their ability, they were freely willing, ⁴ imploring us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

This church was giving more than their ability and you don’t find anywhere where they were complaining because they had the right attitude and were giving from a cheerful heart. These great examples of giving should encourage us to give with a cheerful heart and without complaining.

How much should we give and what should be our motivation for giving?

Many in the religious world will tell that you must tithe, which means to give 10% of your income. They get this idea from Old Testament passages such as Deuteronomy 26:1ff and Leviticus 27:30ff. In the Old Testament, the Jews would give a tenth of their produce and livestock to the Lord. However, in the New Testament there is not one command that tells us to tithe. It’s important that we understand that the New Testament is our authority today because Jesus nailed the requirements of the Old Testament to the cross (Col. 2:14). Therefore, we cannot bind Old Testament regulations on New Testament Christianity. With this in mind, let me give two reasons the church of Christ does not teach people to tithe.

1. We are not commanded tithe in New Testament.
2. 2 Corinthians 9:7 commands us to give what we purpose in our hearts. Now, if it the case that we are to tithe by giving 10% of our income, then how can we give what we purpose in our hearts if we are supposed to give 10%? That verse wouldn’t make any sense would it? So, we don’t tithe because God commands us to give what we purpose in our hearts.

The Truth About Giving



Well, this brings us back to our question, "How much should we give and what should be our motivation for giving?" First, it's important for us to realize that we are simply stewards of what God has given us because none of the things we have really belong to us because ultimately they belong to God (1 Cor. 10:26; 1 Tim. 6:7). Realizing this will help us to decide how much we should give. Every Christian has to make up their own mind on how much they can give. No one has the right to tell you that you should give 10%, 20% or any other amount because that is between you and God. However, I want to share with you several scriptures that will help you decide the amount you should give.

First, let's look at what God gave us.

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Did God give us His leftovers? No, He gave us His best, His only begotten Son. Jesus made it possible for us to have salvation because we could not save ourselves. We need to remind ourselves daily what Jesus did for us.

2 Corinthians 8:9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.

This shows us how much Jesus loves us because He was willing to give up His heavenly home and become poor so we could become rich. God blesses us in many ways. He blesses us physically by giving us the ability to enjoy our families and everything He has created for us on this earth. However, the greatest blessing that we receive as Christians are the spiritual ones (Eph. 1:3). So, God has blessed us physical and spiritual. Now, the question becomes, what will you give back to him? Only you can answer this question and decide what your will purpose in your heart to give to God. When we think about giving, we also need make sure that we are not covetous or greedy with our money. There are many today that put all their worth into how much money they have instead of how much spirituality they have. We need to remember what Jesus said in following verse:

Matthew 6:19 " 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.

Do you remember the rich young ruler in Matthew 19 who came to Jesus wanting to know what he must do? Well, Jesus named off several commands from the Law and the rich young ruler said he had done all these commands. However, he wanted to know what else he must do. So, Jesus said, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." This made the young man sad because he was very wealthy and he went away. This young man trusted in his riches and sold his soul to the devil because he wasn't willing to put God first in every area of his life. Notice what Jesus says in following verse:

Luke 16:13 "No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."

So, we need to be careful that we don't find ourselves serving our money instead of using our money to glorify God (1 Tim. 6:17-19).

Another important point about giving is that we should not give so others can see how much we are giving. I have heard of people who brag about how much they give and they make sure everyone knows it. This is no different from the Pharisees in the first century who said long prayers and did many other things so people would think they were so righteous and close to God. Jesus says people like this have already received their reward from man and they will not receive anything from God (Mat. 6:1-4). So, don't give just to be seen by others.

Nothing I have taught in this tract so far will ever matter unless you are willing to give yourself to God.

Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is your reasonable service.* ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

So, until you are willing to give yourself to God by putting your faith and trust in Him, you will never become the giver that you should be.

We must also learn to give of ourselves. There are several ways we can do this. We can give of our time, which would include time for prayer, time for study, time for teaching Bible classes or teaching the lost. We can also help others in need by giving to orphanages or helping our brother or sister who is in need. There are many ways that we can give of ourselves, and I believe it is important that we look for opportunities to serve others so we can bring glory and honor to God.

In conclusion, the Bible says a lot about giving, and as Christians we need to pay attention to what it says. We have seen that giving is a command and that we are to give on the first day of every week. We are not commanded to tithe, but instead, we are told to give what we purpose in our hearts and when we give we are to do it cheerfully. We have also learned that we must give ourselves to God, and then we will become the givers that we should be. So, not only are we to give of our money and ourselves to God, we must give of ourselves.

If you have questions or comments send them to lgchurchofchrist@cablone.net.

By: Cougan Collins