

GOD'S FINANCIAL PLAN

Tipping or Tithing?

Text: Malachi 3:8-10

1 Cor 16:2

→ *auto electric* *dynamite atomic*
INTRODUCTION: Success in evangelism depends on spiritual power. Any kind of power is constructive if properly used and is destructive if improperly used. Spiritual power would be dangerous if improperly used--it is needed to win souls.

If we will not accept God's financial plan, then can God trust us with spiritual power? The church or individual who does not accept God's money rule will be powerless in soul-winning.

"I wish the preacher would ^{stop} ~~not~~ talking about money, and preach the Gospel." It is impossible to preach the Gospel without preaching on giving. The Gospel is giving--John 3:16; Romans 6:23

The besetting sin of man is covetousness; hence the strong ~~hence the strong emphasis in the Bible on~~ stewardship. A major emphasis of the New Testament is the right use of material possessions. Money has a way of standing between a man and God. Love of money obscures spiritual vision and deadens power to hear the call of Christ.

Money is the acid test of a man's love for Christ and consecration to His cause. The Bible is filled with tragic accounts of lives that were wrecked by the wrong use of money.

Rich farmer; prodigal son; unjust steward; rich men in hell; unforgiving steward; rich young ruler; man with one talent; man with one pound; Judas; Ananias and Sapphira; Simon the sorcerer.

I have confidence in God's people. They will do what God wants them to do when they know.

I. GOD'S PLAN

1. God has but one plan of salvation. It would be unfair for God to tell us to be saved, and not tell us how to be saved.
2. God has but one financial plan. It would not be fair for God to tell us to give and not tell us how to give. God's rule is tithing.
3. Our God is a God of order, and law.

- (1) God of cosmic law: the planets move in their orbit with precision.
- (2) Natural law: the seasons without flaw will produce everything after their kind.
- (3) Physical law: immutable are the laws of the body and its well-being.
- (4) Social law: 10 commandments are the foundation stones for any well-ordered society.
- (5) Moral law: Galatians 6:7
- (6) Spiritual law: talents unused are talents lost.
- (7) Stewardship law: The tithe is holy unto the Lord.

God is not the author of confusion. (It is not to be supposed that God would ordain laws to regulate with precision every phase of His universe, including man's redemption, growth, destiny and then leave to chance the matter of God's ownership and man's stewardship.)

4. The tithe antedates the law of Moses.

- (1) Abraham
- (2) Jacob.

When Moses included the tithe in his law, and when the prophets thundered the law of the tithe, they were not simply following levitical regulations to provide for their needs, but were going down to the bed-rock of man's relation to God and His universe. The tithe was not the law of the levites to finance the temple; it was God's law for the spiritual beneficence of man.

5. Jesus' Relation to the tithe.

"not under law"

- (1) What law was passed away? Romans 3:31-"Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law."

The levitical laws of ceremony and sacrificed were passed away.

- (2) Jesus filled the law with greater obligation. The moral law did not pass away. Ex. 20:17-"Thou shalt not covet." This is still in effect.

Matt. 5:17-18-"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven."

Matt. 23:23-"Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrite 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 leave other

(3) Why does not Jesus and the New Testament say more about the tithe? It was so deeply imbedded in the thought and practices of the Jews that it was unnecessary to do so.

(4) Jesus practiced tithing--He was a Jew--kept the law. He never lowered an Old Testament standard, but always raised them. He was never criticized for not tithing.

One tenth of everything belongs to God--cannot afford to give less under grace than was required under the law.

II. WHY THE TITHE?

1. Deut. 8:18--"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..."

To spread God's word--Gospel.

The visible cause of Christ languishes in the earth because of the lack of money to support it properly. The American people waste their money on worldly things, etc. It is hardly to be expected that the unsaved would do otherwise, but when Christians do little better, surely our evangelism must claim God's direction upon the use of our money. The biggest thing in the world is to win the lost to Christ. No expenditure of money is too great if it helps to win some. (Revival).

2. MAIN REASON: RECOGNITION OF GOD'S OWNERSHIP.

God has always tried to teach this to man. Repentance involves basically a change in attitude towards God's property rights. Salvation restores this.

Grace: God's side
Faith: Man's side

God shows His grace by salvation, keeping His promise. People (cannot see faith) are to picture their faith by bringing an offering. When the faith is left off, the tithe will be left off.

God owns--we are stewards. We are tenants living in a world that belongs to God.

(1) God taught it with a day--the Sabbath--before the Mosaic law. One day belongs to God.

(2) God taught it with a tree. This was the first teaching of it to man in the garden of Eden. One tree belonged to God; they were not to touch it. Their sin was a sin against God's property rights.

(3) A City--When His people went into Canaan, God gave them every city except one--Jericho. That was His--they were not to take anything from it for themselves. Achan disobeyed--violated God's property rights. Israel was powerless. Is this the reason we are powerless?

(4) The Land. Every seven years God told them to rest the land--God's ownership of it. For 490 years they tilled the land without recognizing God's property rights. Then they went into Babylon--for 70 years--the exact number of years they owed God. God collects what is His.

(5) The tithe teaches God's ownership.

Mal. 3:8--Robbery: embezzlement--money you have a right to handle--but it is not yours.

Ill- Roy Angell--bought little boy sack of candy; "May I have a piece?" "No! It's mine!"

The tithe teaches us liberality--we teach this to children. In a child it is "ugly," but in a grown-up, it is SIN.

a. Some of you came here in stolen cars, wear stolen clothes, watch a stolen T.V. because you paid for these things with the tithe money you withheld from God.

b. State has a penalty for robbery and so does God. Mal. 3:9--Violate the law of gravity--but it will break you.

CONCLUSION: In giving the tithe man recognizes His dependence upon God--in refusing the tithe, he declares his independence from God. He violates the whole law of God.

Ill- Missionary and ship owner