

# The Purpose Of Tithing

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**Christ Gospel Press  
P. O. Box 786  
Jeffersonville, Indiana 47131-0786**

Publisher: Christ Gospel Press  
P. O Box 786  
Jeffersonville, Indiana 47131-0786

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Excerpted from the book *The Riches of Tithing*

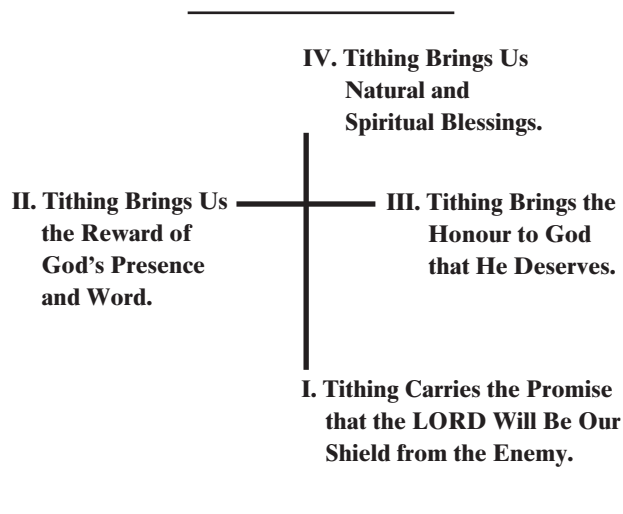
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# The Purpose Of Tithing

This is the purpose of tithing: that we may find God as our Shield, that we may find Him as our Reward; that we may give honour to God; and that we may receive God's spiritual and natural blessings. These reasons form a Stature of Truth.



## **I. Tithing Carries the Promise that the LORD Will Be Our Shield from the Enemy.**

The LORD gave His first Promise concerning tithing when He said to Abram: "Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward" (Genesis 15:1).

God does not take anything from us unless He gives back something of greater value. Who would

say that peace of mind, sound reasoning, and good mental health hold less value than money? These are things that money cannot buy. A person who, out of love and gratitude, heaves his tithes and offerings to the LORD will have fewer mental battles, fewer mental troubles, fewer doubts and fears, and less confusion than the person who refuses to tithe. This is true because the LORD promises to be a Shield to us if we tithe. God operates according to the same Principles that He did in Abram's day. If He promised to be a Shield to Abram, after Abram had been faithful to give the High Priest a tenth of all his possessions, then He will be a Shield to us when we are obedient to tithe. The Word of God will come as an armor about our minds to protect them from the Devil.

However, we cannot expect God's Promise to be fulfilled if we approach tithing in a mercenary manner. We do not purchase God's blessings with money, for our reward is measured not by the amount of money we give, but by the amount of willingness with which we give it. We all have heard of the widow's mite. She gave with her whole heart, and her mite was more than all the amounts given by the rich.

Malachi 3:10 and 11 says, "**Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse,...**" and "**...I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes...**" The Apostle Peter told us who the devourer is.

Be sober, be vigilant; because **your adversary the devil**, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: (I Peter 5:8).

Being obedient in tithing can purchase a greater arsenal of defensive weapons than a stockpile of hydrogen bombs, for God says that He will rebuke the one who would devour us. This is something only God can do. Our natural weapons cannot stop the mouth of the Devil from devouring us, but the Word of God will shield us from his onslaught. Jesus rebuked the Devil by using the Word of God when He said, "It is written." The devourer cannot penetrate the Shield of the Word.

If we withhold our tithes instead of bringing them into the storehouse, we bring a curse on ourselves. Tithes are God's part of our lives, whether it is a tithe of our money or our time. The Philistines took the Ark of God from its rightful place and set it where it did not belong. It became a curse to them because the Ark belonged in Israel in the House of God.

Our tithes belong in God's House. While money should be a blessing to us, it will become a curse if we keep the part that belongs to God. Our giving can be a Shield, a Reward, an Honour, and a Blessing when we give God His part first.

## **II. Tithing Brings Us the Reward of God's Presence and Word.**

To see our Reward for tithing, we have to look again at Abram and see how the LORD rewarded him, for it was through him that the Law of Tithing and its Reward were established. Abram had been faithful and obedient. He had given a tenth of all his possessions to the High Priest. Then, the Word of the LORD came, saying, "I am thy exceeding great reward."

To understand just what the LORD really meant, we need to know that the Name *LORD*, spelled with all capital letters, was used by the King James translators of the Bible to distinguish it as being the Name *Jehovah*. This was the secret *tetragrammaton* Name of God (J-H-V-H), to which the vowels were later added to form the Name *Jehovah*. It means *the Self-existent One or the One Who reveals Himself*. This was the Name that was written on the tables of stone that were in the Ark. So the Word that was promised as a Reward to Abraham was from the LORD, from the One Who would reveal Himself. God said in effect, "If you are faithful to give Me your firstfruits,\* then I will allow you to become better acquainted with Me. I will reveal Myself to you." Could we ask a greater reward than to know more about our God?

The LORD promised to reward us with revelation from His Word. The Word of the LORD comes all the way down to us from the Ark at the top of Christ's Stature\*\* and becomes a Shield to protect our growth, all the way from our foundation at the foot of the Cross, to the top of the Cross.

Suppose we rent an apartment or a house; when we pay our rent, our landlord usually says something to us. He would not take the money from us and let us leave without saying a word. This is what the LORD does when we bring Him what we owe. He communes with us. He is our Reward. His Presence and His Word are our Reward.

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\* B. R. Hicks, *The Blessings of Giving Firstfruits* (Jeffersonville, Indiana: Christ Gospel Churches Int'l, Inc., 1992).

\*\* B. R. Hicks, *Precious Gem in the Tabernacle* (Jeffersonville, Indiana: Christ Gospel Churches Int'l, Inc., 1961).

We may feel we have too many bills to pay to be able to tithe, but if the LORD is our Reward for obedience, He will supply what we need. God said, “For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills” (Psalm 50:10). The Apostle Paul said, “But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:19).

If we find ourselves fulfilling the Prophet Haggai’s description of Israel in the following Scripture, then we need to check up on our tithing. Are we heaving (giving with a glad heart) a tenth to the LORD?

**Ye have sown much, and bring in little;** ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and **he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes** (Haggai 1:6).

One common-sense thing to do when we are in debt is to stop buying until our bills are paid. We can wear a few faded clothes. We also can eat beans and potatoes and re-sole our shoes. God does not ask for our tithe to make it harder on our budgets. He wants to test our obedience to His Principles. Then, He promises to reward our obedience by giving us the eternal Word of God that feeds and clothes us spiritually and by supplying our natural needs. Jesus said, “*But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you*” (Matthew 6:33). If we get our eyes off the kingdom of this

world, and if we look toward the Kingdom of God and strive to walk in His righteousness (His right acts), God will provide all we need.

### **III. Tithing Brings the Honour to God that He Deserves.**

Proverbs 3:9 tells us to “Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase.” Our substance represents a portion of our lives. To give it to God shows gratitude for the life and strength He has given us. God gives us rain, air, and sunshine — everything we need to sustain life. So we honour Him as the Creator when we give Him our firstfruits and tithe. All we have belongs to Him, but He asks us to tithe only a tenth — not because He needs it — but to offer us a chance to give Him the gratitude and Honour He deserves. God knows it satisfies our souls to say thank you.

*Honour* means to esteem one who is worthy. In Hebrew, it means to make weighty; to make glorious. Our tithe is like a living sacrifice, burning up into God’s Nostrils and bringing glory and Honour to Him.

Malachi 3:8 says: “Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.” What part of our tithes and offerings does God really get? He does not need our money as such. It is the *Honour* we give Him. We rob God of His Honour when we do not tithe. We steal His Honour as the Creator, the Revealer, and the Sustainer.

After we have paid tithes, we can easily get a self-righteous spirit and feel secure, but God said that the people had robbed him of *offerings*,



too. Many times God wants us to give love offerings. When we refuse, we rob Him of more Honour. The Principle of giving to receive operates here. We give Honour to God through our tithes and offerings; in return, we receive honour from Him through His revealed Word, His personal Presence, and His Spirit.

Malachi 3:9 then tells us what happens when we rob God. Stealing is a serious offense; it carries a curse.

**Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me,** even this whole nation (Malachi 3:9).

God had warned the Israelites, as they entered the Promised Land and began to subdue it, that the cities and everything in them were accursed and were to be completely destroyed, except for the silver, gold, and vessels of brass and iron. These items were consecrated unto the LORD and were to be brought into the treasury. When Achan kept the accursed thing and stole the gold and silver that belonged to God, he brought dishonour to the LORD, defeat to the whole nation, and death to himself and all his possessions.

Moses instructed Israel to bring to the Priest the first of all the fruit of the earth in the land that the LORD would give because the firstfruits were hallowed (Deuteronomy 26:2-13). When we keep our firstfruits, we are keeping the hallowed part. God has warned us in His Word and given us an example through Achan of how keeping the LORD's part will bring a curse and death to us and dishonour to God. We will not be ready for the LORD's returning in the air if we hold on to what is hallowed to the LORD.

When we have brought our firstfruits and the tithe of our increase into the storehouse, then we can say about ourselves what Moses said to Israel in the following verses:

**Thou hast avouched the LORD this day to be thy God, and to walk in his ways, and to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and to hearken unto his voice: And the LORD hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promised thee, and that thou shouldest keep all his commandments; And to make thee high above all nations which he hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honour; and that thou mayest be an holy people unto the LORD thy God, as he hath spoken (Deuteronomy 26:17-19).**

*Avouch* means to guarantee. Tithing guarantees that the LORD is ours and that we are the LORD's.

By honouring God, we get the next thing He has for us, which are blessings.

#### **IV. Tithing Brings Us Natural and Spiritual Blessings.**

**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 3:9,10).**

Blessings were also promised after the charity tithe.

And **the Levite**, (because he hath no part nor inheritance with thee,) and **the stranger**, and **the fatherless**, and **the widow**, which are within thy gates, **shall come, and shall eat** and be satisfied; **that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hand** which thou doest (Deuteronomy 14:29).

God promised abundant Blessings to those who shared their bountifulness. He said that their barns would be *filled* and their wine presses *bursting*. This was a Promise of rain, sunshine, and blessing on the earth to provide for the people's natural needs. If we bless the Creator with our natural substance, then He will bless the Creation. Our jobs will flourish, and our crops will be bountiful. God also promised spiritual Blessings.

**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 (Malachi 3:10).

In Hebrew the word for *blessing* means spiritual Blessing. Giving is the key to revival. When people give their money, time, and themselves to God, He promises to "open the windows of heaven." Revival Fires are lit when Christians heave their tithes and love offerings up to the LORD because it establishes God's Will in their midst, and God puts Fire

around His Will. He also puts His Word and Life around His Will. There is nothing that will bring spiritual life, and even miracles, as abundantly as true giving. This means we are to give with praise, worship, and adoration. The LORD said for Israel to prove Him. “Give me your tenth,” He said, “and there shall not be room enough to contain the spiritual blessings that I will give to you.”

God also will bless us with His Love when we give. In Romans 12:8, the Apostle Paul told us the secret to real giving. He said, “[H]e that giveth let him do it with simplicity.” The word *simplicity* in the Greek has to do with sincerity, humility, and honesty. In other words, we are to give simply, with the motive of praising and showing gratitude to God, with no pretense, and with a sincere heart that desires to do God’s Will. We are to be cheerful in our giving. This is how we get God’s Love flowing down to us. How many times have we all recognized our need for more of God’s Love? He places His Love on a cheerful giver. This is why it is more blessed to give than to receive.

I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to **remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive** (Acts 20:35).

We get the highest part of God — the Love of the Bridegroom — when we give.

Tithing is included in the entire Principle of *Giving*, along with *Forgiving*. Forgiving can be said to stand for the fact that we are “for giving.” We need to be “for giving” of our natural

substance and *forgiving* in our hearts. God wants us to be “for giving” mercy and compassion to our brothers in Christ.

**But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven:** (Luke 6:35-37).

The Principle of Giving to Receive operates here again. If we give mercy and forgiveness, then we will receive God’s Mercy and Forgiveness.

As ministers, we can teach tithing, but if we are harboring an unforgiving spirit against someone who has mistreated us, we are not one hundred percent “for giving.” The one who has done the hurt needs all the mercy and compassion we can give him. If we forgive him with joy in our hearts, it will not matter whether he loves us in return, for God promises to love those who give cheerfully. There are ways to give of our natural substance *and* our spiritual substance. All giving brings us into the Presence of the Bridegroom’s Love. This is why whatever we give is worth giving.

As Jesus ate dinner in the home of one of the chief Pharisees, He taught about another Blessing of giving.

Then said he also to him that bade him,  
When thou makest a dinner or a supper,  
call not thy friends, nor thy brethren,  
neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours;  
lest they also bid thee again,  
and a recompence be made thee.  
**But when thou makest a feast, call the poor,  
the maimed, the lame, the blind:  
And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee:**  
for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just (Luke 14:12-14).

One of the guests answered Jesus in the following way: “Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God” (Luke 14:15).

God wants to reward us with Bread in His Kingdom. We may never be invited to dine at a king’s table in this world, but we already have an invitation to dine at King Jesus’ Table. On Resurrection Morning, Jesus said, we will be rewarded for our sincere giving — for what we give with a desire to please Him.

As we tithe, the Word of God becomes our Shield that rebukes the devourer and protects us from a curse. As a Reward for our giving, God gives us His Word and meets our natural needs. We tithe to show honour to God and to give Him gratitude; then, bountiful Blessings, both natural and spiritual, come in the forms of Revival, Love, Mercy, and Forgiveness, and we have the additional Blessing of being able to buy Bread in the Kingdom of God.

# **Tithing Originated In The Old Testament And Is Confirmed In The New Testament**

When Jesus rebuked the Pharisees and scribes, He called them hypocrites, but not because they had tithed. He said, "This ye ought to have done." Rather, He admonished them for omitting their *spiritual* giving.

**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 (Matthew 23:23).**

God requires the spiritual along with the natural. The fountainhead of the Spirit and Word flows from the pulpit. This is why a minister should endeavor, as much as possible, to be a doer of the Word and to stay under subjection to the Spirit of God, for the Waters of the Spirit and the Word will rise only as high as their source. The same Principle applies to giving. The minister who demands the obedience of the people in giving their natural substance cannot withhold his spiritual obedience, or there will be a spirit of disobedience springing up from the pulpit that flows out to the people and hinders their willingness to give.

If, as ministers, we give in the natural realm and the spiritual realm, God will see that the people obey in giving. He is a faithful God; when we do our part by obeying the Word and keeping the right spirit, God will move on people to give so that the needs of the ministry will be met.

In his teachings, Paul confirmed the Principle of Tithing. In First Corinthians 16:2, he said: "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 gathering when I come." The amount of their increase, which was to be laid aside, had been established in the Old Testament as a tenth. Paul was admonishing them not to forsake this practice.

Giving was an important part of New Testament living. Paul told the people the following:

But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and **he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.** And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, alway having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work: (As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever (II Corinthians 9:6-9).

If we sow sparingly, then we will reap sparingly of God's Honour, Blessing, and Revelation.



But if we sow bountifully, God will reward us with overflowing Revelation of His Word.

Every time you get ready to give, think about what God has given to you. Would you have anything (small or great) without Him? Have you been blessed with children? Do you have a home — no matter how humble? Did you feel the thrill of His Presence when you prayed? Did you have food to eat? Then, bring your tithes and offerings to the storehouse with a cheerful heart. The LORD offers you much in return, and what He already has given for us, before we ever have given anything to Him, is enough to secure us a place on top of Mount Zion. When we accept all that He so freely gave on Mount Calvary, we have everything it takes to go all the way with Jesus and to grow into the mature Stature of the Fullness of Christ, as Paul explained in Ephesians 4:13.

One of the greatest Principles in the Bible is learning to give, both naturally and spiritually.

