

(W.O.R.S.H.I.P) - Offer Finances

(*** Review previous lesson ***)

Before we talk about finances and offering our finances to God, let's discuss putting God first.

If God is first in your life, everything else will fall in place. This is not to say you will not have any problems, but if God is first in your life, things will tend to naturally fall in order.

In the following verse, God teaches the children of Israel to put Him first:

Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "Sanctify to Me every firstborn, the first offspring of every womb among the sons of Israel, both of man and beast; it belongs to Me." Exodus 13:1-2

In those days livestock WERE finances, money to the people. Here God is saying to sanctify, separate to Him EVERY firstborn. He did not say to wait until each family "has taken care of their needs first." He did not say to wait until the 10th or 11th offspring. Why? Because there is a principle of putting God first: when we put God first in every area of our lives, everything falls in order.

So now, let's talk about money/finances. If we put God first in every area of our lives, bringing to God through church our tithes, or **10% of our income**, is nothing more than an extension of our honoring God first.

In Malachi 3:10, God tells us to BRING the tithes and offerings:

"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test 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 there will not be room enough to store it."

We do not "give" our tithes because we cannot give what is not ours; rather, we "bring" our tithes. Note also that, indeed, there is a financial blessing in tithing! The principle of giving and the blessings of giving are woven throughout Scripture:

"I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" Acts 20:35

It is interesting to note that in the secular world, millionaires and billionaires continually give financially, and it might surprise you to know that many of them started giving BEFORE they became wealthy. They instinctively understand that it IS "more blessed to give than to receive."

Many Christians have testimonies of how their lives changed after they started tithing. Whether it be that they got promoted at work, or got a better job with more money, or their business started doing better, or started a new business, or money was provided to them in some way, Christians have testimonies of how tithing, giving, blessed their lives.

Note that tithing is specifically referring to giving money, finances, not time or merchandise or anything else. As we already noted, livestock in those days was money, finances to the people. Also, note that in Malachi 3:10 above, God asked the people to bring their tithes to "His house" which today refers to the church. Of course, one can give more than 10% if desired, and if you study giving in the Old Testament, people actually gave more than 10% - their tithes plus other offerings.

The tithe is separate from other offerings. For example, if we give to missions, building funds, outreaches, or any other causes, this should be separate, above and beyond, from the tithe.

Finally, we need to note that tithing precedes the Law of Moses.

Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine: and he was priest of God Most High. ¹⁹ He blessed him, and said, "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth: ²⁰ and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand." Abram gave him a tenth of all. Genesis 14:18-20

Melchizedek is a type of Christ. (Hebrews 7:3) Giving a tenth was, according to general custom, the offering presented to Deity. Abraham was acknowledging the divine priesthood of Melchizedek. Thus, tithing remained intact when the Old Covenant that includes the Law of Moses was replaced by the New Covenant.

Remember that in the New Covenant, we go directly to God and are forgiven our sins through faith in Jesus and His sacrifice on the cross.

In the New Testament, Jesus affirms tithing:

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others.

Matthew 23:23

Questions:

- 1) What in this lesson has stood out the most to you?
- 2) What do you think of the principle of putting God first in everything?
- 3) In light of God's Word on giving and tithing, do you think obeying in faith the principle of bringing our tithes, 10% of our income, would change our lives? How?
- 4) Share any personal stories of yourself or someone, Christian or not, that you know was blessed because they tithed/gave financially.