

Money Talks pt. 3
01-22-2023

- Sometimes, we get upset over how a church uses its funds. We feel a desire to control what we consider to be *our* money. When we view our money and possessions as an extension of our self-control, we have a hard time letting go without feeling like we still get to have a say in how they are used.
- Do you think of the church as the spiritual embodiment of God's people, or as a building or organization that peddles a product?

Tithe – Literally means tenth. Considered to be the first 10% of your “first-fruits”; in today's parlance, the first 10% of your income. There are three types of tithing found in the Old Testament.

Offering – Money presented to God's ministry that goes beyond the 10% of the tithe. May be voluntary or a more “mandatory” request of those who have the means.

Alms – Money given to the poor and needy around you, without any expectation of return.

Tithing Demonstrates Trust

Malachi 3:6-10 ESV

“For I the LORD do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed. From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from my statutes and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you, says the LORD of hosts. But you say, ‘How shall we return?’ Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, ‘How have we robbed you?’ In your tithes and contributions. You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me, the whole nation of you. Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And

thereby put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need.

- God's faithfulness is demonstrated in the continued existence of His chosen people, despite their unfaithfulness. They can return to Him if they stop robbing Him. Robbing isn't just taking what's not yours, it's also keeping for yourself what belongs to someone else.
- The way that we are called to return to Him is to trust in Him, as demonstrated through the full tithing. Tithing demonstrates trust: trust in God and in His faithfulness. Are you robbing God by holding back what is rightfully God's?

Tithing demonstrates trust in God's faithfulness

Leviticus 27:30, 32 ESV

"Every tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the trees, is the LORD's; it is holy to the LORD...And every tithe of herds and flocks, every tenth animal of all that pass under the herdsman's staff, shall be holy to the LORD.

- Money today is a symbolic substitution for something of value: labor, product, knowledge, etc. The OT priests used the tithe to feed themselves, but the practical side of tithing remains today
- A congregation's tithing or not directly impacts the ability of that ministry to hire, keep, and start/run new ministries. Tithing demonstrates trust in God, His faithfulness, and His people in the Church.
- How do we handle a church that doesn't use money the way we'd like them to? Often we withhold our tithe because the people in the organization may not use money the way that I want. Even

though this money isn't ours to control, we choose to cling to it as though it is.

Acts 4:32–35 NIV

All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had. With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And God's grace was so powerfully at work in them all that there were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned land or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone who had need.

- When we put our tithe last, we're putting God last. We're saying "God, I trust you, but I need to make sure that I have all my expenses covered first and *then* I'll give what remains to you, because this is my money *first*." Unfortunately, we always have a tendency to use up any of the money we've been given!
- Culture will tell you that you need the newest (*fill in the blank*), but this is a lie! So many of us have been conditioned by advertising and the news to think our needs are whatever the trending products currently are.

Tithing demonstrates trust in God for our benefit

- We aren't the ones responsible for how the money was being used. We can only ever control ourselves. Our responsibility is to demonstrate our trust where God has placed us. The leaders of the church are the ones who are responsible to God for the way they use the tithes of their congregations.

2 Corinthians 9:6-8 ESV

The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.