

God Expects His People to Give

Malachi 3:7-12

“Bring all the tithes into the storehouse so there will be enough food in my Temple. If you do,” says the Lord of Heaven’s Armies, “I will open the windows of heaven for you. I will pour out a blessing so great you won’t have enough room to take it in! Try it! Put me to the test!” - Malachi 3:10

As you begin your time together use one or more of the following questions to get things flowing:

The title of our new series is “Give.” What is your initial reaction when you hear that word in church?

When did you first learn the concept of tithing, or giving in church?

Does giving in one area of life mean we are exempt from giving in others? Ex: “I volunteer my time, therefore I don’t have to give of my money.” Explain.

Talking about money isn’t an issue with most people...as long as you’re talking about someone else’s money! Most of us get more riled up about the subject of giving in church than we do about the subject of hell. Why is that? And is giving really a topic to be covered in church anyway? The Bible actually has a lot to say about the resources we’ve been given and how to use them wisely. Today we’ll examine what God expects of us when it comes to giving.

We are required to give our tithe simply because **GOD COMMANDS WE TITHE**. **Read Malachi 3:7-9 together.**

What does the word “tithe” mean? According to our verses, how does God see it when we choose not to tithe?

God says “Return to me and I will return to you.” Why do you think giving a tenth of our income is such an effective way of returning to God, and why don’t more people do it if it’s so effective?

Read **Genesis 2:15**. Did this verse say God gave Adam the Garden? What is the reality of our relationship to God’s creation, and how should this effect your perspective on the tithe?

The people in Malachi made excuses about why they couldn’t bring the whole tithe. What excuses do we make today to justify ignoring God’s command?

Christians are also required to tithe because **THE TITHE BLESSES THE RECIPIENT.** Read Malachi 3:10.

What has been your understanding of how the tithe is used in the local church?

Read **Nehemiah 10:38-39**. Based on this and Malachi 3, do other charities or organizations qualify as tithe recipients in a Biblical sense? Explain why or why not.

What affect could you tithe have when given through VillageChurch? Share any real stories you've experienced that would not have been possible without the generosity of others sacrificial giving.

The last reason we'll see today that Christians are to tithe is because **THE TITHE BLESSES THE GIVER.** Read Malachi 3:10-12.

Acts 20:35 says, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." What truth is there to this verse? How have you seen that in your own life?

Take a few minutes to share any stories you have about God "opening the floodgates" when you chose to trust Him with your finances.

What is God's description of the what the nation of Israel *could* be in vv.11-12 when they choose to give God the tithe? Could our nation be blessed like that?

Pray:

As you close your time together pray that God would speak to your heart about your obedience. Do you trust Him with all that you are and all that you have? Ask him to place a seed of trust in your heart if you don't already. Pray about giving for the first time if you haven't done so. Pray for God's faithfulness to be shown as you continue to give and tell Him you are putting Him to the test!

Connect:

Listen to the song "I Surrender" by Hillsong and draw near to God. Return to Him and He will return to you.