

THE TEN MOST ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT TITHING

Innovation Church

In an effort to encourage the people of God to give biblically through tithes and offerings, and in full recognition of the misunderstanding that often surrounds it, we submit this dialogue of questions and answers. Although we respect those who may disagree, it seems to us at Innovation Church that tithing is God's way, and to fall short of that method, is to fall short of God's perfect purpose for you, your family and His local church.

QUESTION #1: WHAT IS TITHING?

Answer: Tithing is percentage or proportionate giving. Scriptural References:
Genesis 14:18-20 – Abraham gave tithes to the Priest Melchizedek, a Tenth part of all he had. Genesis 28:20-22 – Jacob promised God a Tenth of all he had.

Example: For every dollar, a Tenth or a dime is RETURNED to God.

\$10.00	We give	\$1.00
\$50.00	We give	\$5.00
\$100.00	We give	\$10.00
\$1,000.00	We give	\$100.00

QUESTION #2: WHY SHOULD I TITHE?

Answer: If we are biblical Christians (if we believe the Bible) then we discover that God commands that we do so. For example, read Malachi 3:6-12.

QUESTION #3: BUT THAT IS AN OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE. ISN'T TITHING A PART OF THE LAW? AREN'T WE NOW LIVING UNDER GRACE?

Answer: Of course we are under Grace, however, this does not exclude us from tithing. The first tithers lived and gave tithes before the Law was given. The standard for giving, that is, God's method for giving, was established before Moses had given the Law.

QUESTION #4: IF THIS IS TRUE, WHY DOESN'T THE NEW TESTAMENT PLACE EMPHASIS ON IT?

Answer: The New Testament church and writers took for granted the practice of tithing as the declared way of supporting the house of God. See Luke 18:10-14. Also, Jesus used a parable to illustrate the difference between a Pharisee and his pride, and a publican, who was blessed because of his humbleness. However, within the parable, Jesus has the Pharisee say, "I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess." It was not the fasting or the giving of tithes that brought the criticism, but rather the pride that caused the Pharisee to boast.

What he did was accepted, why he did it, was not. I believe that this is tangible evidence that Jesus accepted tithing as the established way of giving. Hebrews 7:1-10 explains how even Abraham tithed and in 1 Corinthians 16:2 Paul is obviously speaking of proportionate giving, a giving that is based on the amount of income. Indeed, for those who insist that the New Testament does not teach tithing, here is a good New Testament standard, which of course exceeds 10%.

QUESTION #5 TO WHOM DO I PAY MY TITHES AND WHAT IS MEANT BY OFFERING?

Answer: Malachi tells us to "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

Paul wrote to the church at Corinth, "Upon the first day of the week let everyone of you lay aside, as God has prospered him." 1 Corinthians 16:2

These scriptures indicate that your tithes are to be given to the place of your feeding - the pasture into which you as followers of Christ are being nourished and fed by a shepherd (Pastor).

Secondly, the purpose of tithes has always been designated for the upkeep of the Temple and Priests. Numbers 18:20-21 records, "And the LORD said to Aaron, 'You priests will receive no allotment of land or share of property among the people of Israel. I am your share and your allotment. As for the tribe of Levi, your relatives, I will compensate them for their service in the Tabernacle (Temple). Instead of an allotment of land, I will give them the tithes from the entire land of Israel.'" "

Although we at Innovation Church do not have a “priesthood” (the Bible teaches that all believers are priests unto God) the principle of supporting the “Levitical Priests” remains the same. The local New Testament church becomes our Temple and the Pastor/Shepherd is the spiritual leader (or priest).

WHAT ABOUT OFFERING? Tithes are that portion that we owe to God. Offerings are of that portion of giving that we give cheerfully and willingly, but beyond the responsibility of our tithes. The amount is voluntary and the motivation stems from a generosity to world missions and local community needs.

QUESTION #6: DO I PAY TITHES FROM THE GROSS AMOUNT, THAT IS, THE AMOUNT THAT I RECEIVE BEFORE ANYTHING IS TAKEN OUT (E.G., SOCIAL SECURITY, INCOME TAX, ETC.) OR AM I ONLY OBLIGATED TO PAY THE 10% FROM THAT AMOUNT TAKEN HOME?

Answer: Admittedly, there seems to be some questions and honest difference of opinion between those who preach and teach tithing. Some believe that we are only commanded to pay from that which we actually receive. Others believe that we are obligated from the salary that we earn, regardless of what is taken from it. Proverb 3:9-10 says that we “Honor the LORD by making him an offering from the first fruits (the best) of all that your land produces. If you do, your barns will be filled with grain, and you will have too much wine to store it all.”

The Word would seem to indicate that if we give God from the top (the gross), He will so bless that we need never worry about meeting our financial obligations. Since there is an honest opinion on both sides of the issue we are not dogmatic in support of either. (Certainly, if you were a self-proprietor business owner you might tithe from the Net after your business’s overhead is accounted for. In this unique case your Net would be your Gross.)

QUESTION #7: SUPPOSE MY HUSBAND OR MY WIFE DOES NOT BELIEVE IN TITHING, OR IS NOT A CHRISTIAN, SHOULD I DO SO ANYWAY?

Answer: If you do not work, and the income for the household comes from your mate, you must not insist on tithing from that source. However, if you have a personal source of income or an allowance for your own use, it would be quite proper to give a percentage, regardless of how small. Remember, it is not the amount, but the heart’s desire. Nevertheless, the scripture supports family harmony and the Lord would never be pleased with any deliberate or known effort to disrupt that unity even to support the ministry of Innovation Church.

QUESTION #8: SUPPOSE I DON'T PAY TITHES?

Answer: It will not affect your salvation, but it does place you in the position of being Disobedient to a command from God. Tithing or proportionate giving is God's will and to not make an attempt to seek that will renders us beyond the kind of blessing that comes to obedience.

QUESTION #9: WHY SHOULD I PAY TITHES?

Answer: 1. Because we are commanded to do so.
2. Because we honor the Lord by doing so.
3. Because we show our love and obedience by doing so.

QUESTION #10: WHAT WILL TITHING NOT DO?

Answer: 1. It will not save you.
2. It will not buy a special place in heaven for you.
3. It will not influence God for you.

However, it will trigger the very windows of heaven that blessings will overtake you. For there is a principal which works for the cheerful giver. Luke 6:38, "Give, and it shall be given unto you: good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that you give, so also, it shall be measured to you again."

In other words, as you give, so are you given. In 2 Corinthians 9:6-8 the Apostle Paul writes, "Remember this—a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop. You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. 'For God loves a person who gives cheerfully.' And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others."

Again, although we respect those who may disagree, it seems to us at Innovation Church that tithing is God's way, and to fall short of that method, is to fall short of God's perfect purpose for you, your family and His local church.¹

¹ Edited from a teaching by pastor Larry L. Macon