

**Ancient Truths for Modern Times**  
**Biblical Principles to Guide Your Giving (Part 2 of 2)**

**Malachi 3:7-15**

Realized this week in a new way, that the issue of money and giving pierces people's hearts and reveals their walk with Christ more than any other issue of our day  
It reveals what you think about – God; His Word; His Church  
It reveals the true nature of your – Obedience; Humility; Submission to God's authority

Hope it's obvious – not preaching because of lack of giving, or desperate as a church  
I'm preaching this because it's part of God's Word, it's a key aspect of walking with Christ, and I want *you* to experience the blessing and joy of giving God's way  
And *us* to experience it together as a church  
And avoid the frustration and consequences of giving your way

Last week we looked at 3 biblical principles to guide your giving, starting with . . .

**Trust God (v13-15)**

Trust his commands/guidelines for giving; Trust his way

**Don't shortchange God (v7-9; 1 Chron 29:10-14)**

Don't rob him because . . .

- **God owns everything anyway**
- **God gives you everything you have**
- **God rules, you manage**

**Ancient Truth #9 – Obedience brings blessing (v10)**

ObeY me in this and I will bless you; Therefore . . .

Read Mal 3:10-12

**Give all that God requires (v10)**

*Bring the FULL tithes into the storehouse* – give all that God requires

This phrase makes it clear that . . .

**When I give all that God requires . . .**

• **I give a tithe/tenth of all my increase**

Tithe means tenth – that portion of our money/possessions that we are to devote to God  
Lev 27:30-33 – [A tenth of the land and all that it produces], *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.*

Do that – don't bring some partial amount, but bring the full tithe

In Mal's day that included \$, but most often meant a tenth of animals, grain, produce  
In our day it means . . .

- If you earn \$10, give 1 to God; If you get a bonus, give a tenth to God
- If you cash in a stock, give a tenth of your gain to God
- If you sell a piece of land/business, give a tenth of your profit to God
- If you receive a cash gift, give a tenth to God

When I give all that God requires, I give a tithe/tenth of all my increase; Secondly . . .

• **I give my tithe to my local church**

*Storehouse* was literally a room connected to the side of the temple, used to store grain, oil, and money that people gave  
The analogy you can't miss here is that . . .

The temple in ancient Israel is analogous to the local church today

The church is God's primary means of influencing our culture just like the temple was in Mal's day

When God says bring the *full* tithe into the *storehouse*, he's saying – give your full tithe to my primary work of ministry, which in our day is the local church

**Common objection**

"Tithing doesn't apply to me because it's part of the law, and I'm not under the law"

They cite Scriptures like –

Gal 5:18 – *If you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law*

But they leave out Scriptures like –

2 Tim 3:16 – *All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof [confrontation for sin], for correction, and for training in righteousness*

1 Cor 9:8-10 – The law was written for us, for our sake

Obviously there's a tension here – What does it mean that we're no longer under the law, yet it was written for us and is useful to us?

First – We're not under the law in that we do not gain our salvation by faith in, and obedience to, the law

Our salvation comes through faith in the *person* of Jesus Christ and what he's done on our behalf . . .

But the law is useful and written for us in that it's commands still apply to us in *principle*

The law reveals truths about God, how he works, and his standards for our behavior

Just like the laws of a country reveal the nature of those who govern

Because God never changes, *his* attributes and desires are still the same, and therefore apply to us just as much as they applied in Mal's day

That's the implication of 1 Cor 9:8-10 where Paul appeals to the OT Law to support his argument, which he couldn't legitimately do if it didn't still apply to us

And then explains how, by example, a particular law applies to us now, today

That example then, becomes our pattern for applying all the other command's of the law...

Where we need to –

1. Determine the original purpose of the law for the ancient Israelites
2. Glean the truths about God from that purpose
3. Apply those truths to our lives today

*Bring the full tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house.*

The *purpose* of the law is to provide sufficient means in the temple to minister to the people and support the priests

The *truth* about God is that he wants to provide for his work through the measurable and faithful giving of his people

The *application* for us is that we need to faithfully give a biblical portion of our increase to support God's work in our local church

If God used a tenth *then* to measure their portion . . .

We should use a tenth *now* to measure our portion

So while we are not under the law, and it does not bring us salvation, it does still apply to us in principle because of what it tells us about God and his expectations

When I give all that God requires, I give my tithe to my local church, and . . .

• **I tithe regularly and consistently (1 Cor 16:2)**

**1 Cor 16:2** – *On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper, so that there will be no collecting when I come.*

Paul was telling them to give regularly and consistently for a collection that wasn't even for their own church

How much more should we give regularly/consistently in our tithes?

So that an appeal doesn't have to be made

So that the work of ministry can continue un-impaired

So that plans can be made for the future

Right about the time we were starting our church I received a strange phone call (cell)

Joe; Kind of confused; Didn't really know who he was calling

I got your phone number from my wife in prison – that made me perk up

Just released from prison; God had radically changed his life; Having a hard time

Let me pray with you; Pulled the truck over; I started to pray and he started to weep

Called the very next day having just spoken with his wife in prison

Apparently one of her friends in prison was also a believer, and she wanted to get in touch with our church for some reason

I gave him our church office address – thought nothing would come of it

Within a week I received a 3-page letter, part of which I want to share with you . . .

Stamps totaling \$14.06

2 weeks later I received another letter with more stamps

Don't know about you, but that humbles me

We make this tithing thing so complicated when it's so simple

And we fight against it so much, when we shouldn't

End up losing out on God's richest blessing in our lives

Give all that God requires . . .

The second biblical principle to guide your giving is to . . .

**Offer all that God desires (1 Chron 29:1-9)**

Mal 3:8 – You rob me not only in your tithes, but your *contributions* –

Voluntary gifts for a special purpose

**When I offer all that God desires . . .**

• **I give over and above my tithe**

On occasion, God desires we give over above our tithes as he prompts, or as need arises

That prompting may be rare for some, and continuous for others

1 Chron 29:1-9 is a great example of an offering over and above a tithe

They were giving for a special cause – the building of the temple

David offered all of his riches – an amazing amount

The people gave sacrificially as well – a truly miraculous amount

Your offering . . .

Could be in response to a need, or simply a desire to give more to his work

It could be given to your church, or another Christ-centered ministry

The sky's the limit and the options are endless when it comes to offering all that God desires over and above your tithe

Secondly . . .

**When I offer all that God desires . . .**

• **I give with the right heart**

Safe to say that you won't offer anything over and above your tithe, and probably won't even give a tithe if your heart isn't right

And if you do, it's a moot point, because God desires that you give with a right heart

The people of David's day did that in **1 Chron 29:9** – They offered . . .

Willingly – not grudgingly

Wholeheartedly – no doubts, no regrets

Freely – generously; and under no compulsion

Joyfully – cheerfully as Paul put it in . . .

2 Cor 9:7 – *Each one must give as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.*

Giving with a right heart is the most important part of giving – tithes *and* offerings

Third . . .

**When I offer all that God desires . . .**

• **I keep what I need and give the rest away**

This is the ethic of the entire Bible for God's people – read 6 passages – **Stand**

Deut 15:11 – *I command you, 'You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in your land.'*

Is 58:7 – *Is not this the fast [the expression of true devotion] that I choose . . . to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?*

Acts 4:34 – *There was not a needy person among them [the believers], for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold and laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.*

2 Cor 8:13-14 – *I [Paul, in urging them to help the church in Jerusalem] do not mean that others should be eased and you burdened, but that as a matter of fairness your abundance at the present time should supply their need*

1 Tim 6:17-18 – *As for the rich in this present age . . . they are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share.*

1 John 3:16-18 – *If anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.*

It's dangerous to think that we satisfy some obligation before the Lord by giving a tithe and no more

There should be a steady flow of possessions/money from those living in abundance to those living in need

One commentator summed up this principle as lived and taught by Jesus this way . . .

“Jesus was seeking a readiness among his followers to give and give and give. The Christian should never refrain from giving out of a love for his possessions. Love must be ready to be deprived of everything if need be. Of course, in a given case it may not be the way of love to give. But it is love that must decide whether we give or withhold, not a regard for our possessions.”

**Leon Morris**

Upon observing Christians, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century Philosopher, Aristides said this . . .

“He gives to him who has not, ungrudgingly and without boasting. When the Christians find a stranger, they bring him to their homes and rejoice over him as a true brother. If they find poverty in their midst, and they do not have spare food, they fast two or three days in order that the needy might be supplied with the necessities.”

**Aristides, 2<sup>nd</sup> Century Philosopher**

When I offer all that God desires, I keep what I need and give the rest away

The question is . . . What do I *need*? 3 Guidelines –

1. Enough to live in the middle of my culture, neither rich nor poor

**Prov 30:8-9** – *Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that is needful for me, lest I be full and deny you and say, “Who is the LORD?” or lest I be poor and steal and profane the name of my God.*

Choose a lifestyle in the middle of your local culture, and stick with it

Don’t keep increasing your standard of living as your income increases

Keep it the same and use the excess for the Lord’s work

2. Enough to be dependent on no one , now and in the future

**1 Thess 4:10-12** – *We urge you brothers . . . to work with your hands . . . so that you may live properly before outsiders and be dependent on no one.*

Plan and save appropriately; Set your priorities in line with God’s, & stick with them

Make sure you give first, save second, and spend third

3. Enough to provide for my family

**1 Tim 5:8** – *If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.*

When I offer all that God desires – I give over and above my tithe . . .

I give with the right heart; and I keep what I need and give the rest away

And the last biblical principle to guide your giving . . .

**Receive all that God gives (v10-12)**

This brings us back full circle to Ancient Truth #9 – Obedience brings blessing

10b – *put me to the test*

It’s God explicit guarantee that he will be faithful to bless when we’re faithful to give

Jesus said – *Give, and it will be given to you . . . For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.* (Luke 6:38)

Paul said – *Sow sparingly, reap sparingly; Sow bountifully, reap bountifully* (2 Cor 9:6)

While we must be careful that we don’t give to get, God does lay out . . .

The blessings we can expect to receive –

➤ Provision – to meet our needs

10b – *I will pour down for you a blessing until there is no more NEED*

11b – *Your vine in the field will not fail to bear*

Your means of income will sustain you

That’s provision to meet our *needs*

➤ Protection – for your livelihood

11a – *I will rebuke [make of no effect] the devourer for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of your soil*

That’s protection of your livelihood

Does that mean you’ll never get laid off, or never have a bad year in business? No

But it does mean that God will protect his people as a whole

The bad year and subsequent need of one person will be offset by the good year and subsequent plenty of another

Receive the blessing of protection that God gives

➤ Opportunity – to praise God and give him the credit

12 – *All nations will call you blessed, for you will be a land of delight*

People notice God’s blessing

It’s an opportunity to turn that recognition back to praise

Embrace the opportunity that God gives

➤ Passion

You will have a passion for the things of God when you give all that God requires, and offer all that God desires

Mt 6:21 – *Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also*

When you invest your money in the work of God, that’s where your heart/passion will be as well

Obedience brings blessing, so receive and embrace all that God gives

**Summary**

David Jeremiah is a pastor in San Diego and tells the story of a man in his church who approached him after a message on tithing, and was very skeptical

I’m a successful businessman, I have never tithed, and I’m not real sure it’s good idea

Pastor Jeremiah said –

How about this – how about you tithe for the next 12 months, and if God doesn’t

bless your business and life, I’ll give you your money back. Will you do *that*?”

The guy was like – “Sure, I’ll do *that*”

To which he responded – So you trust my word, but not God’s?

You trust my word to give you your money back, but you don’t trust God’s word that he will bless you and provide for your every need . . .

If you give all that he requires and offer all that he desires?

There’s no money back guarantee – I’d rather have God’s promise of blessing anyway

Trust God; Don’t shortchange him; Give all that he requires; Offer all that he desires

Receive all that he gives, because obedience brings blessing every time