

STEWARDSHIP OF TREASURE

Lesson #3 – October 3, 2007
Lesson by Pastor G. Richardson

Luk 6:37 Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven:

Luk 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 ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

Act 10:1 There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian *band*,

Act 10:2 A devout *man*, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway.

Act 10:3 He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius.

Act 10:4 And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God.

WHAT IF THE OCEAN SAID NO?

1. What begins as a tiny raindrop in Minnesota at Itasca State Park in Clearwater County, Minnesota forms the beginnings of what is known as Lake Itasca. From Lake Itasca, a small stream forms and begins to flow southward. At this point, you could easily cross this stream by foot. From there, it joins forces with the Minnesota River in Minneapolis, the Wisconsin River, the Illinois River and the Missouri River near St Louis, Missouri, and the Ohio River at Cairo, Illinois. It doesn't stop there. Gathering steam, its flow southward picks up more water as the Arkansas River flows into it and the Atchafalays River in Louisiana. When it's all said and done, 41% of the 48 of the neighboring states contribute their water to this amazing river that had it's beginning as a raindrop in Lake Itasca, Minnesota. So mighty is the flow of this river that once it reaches the Gulf of

Mexico, its flow rate in Baton Rouge, Louisiana is 450,000 cubic feet per second, almost triple the speed of its flow rate of 168,000 cubic feet per second in St. Louis, Missouri. By now, I sure you've figure out that I'm talking about the mighty Mississippi River. This great river takes in over 19 rivers along the way toward it's destination in Baton Rouge. So powerful is the discharge of the mighty Mississippi River that its waters snake around both the west and then the east coasts of Florida all the way to Georgia before the fresh water finally mixes completely in with the salt waters of the ocean. That's a powerful force of water. And to think that it had it's beginning as a tiny raindrop.

2. While the mighty Mississippi had its beginning as a tiny raindrop, its **origin, though** was somewhere else. Ecclesiastes 1:7 states, "All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again." In other words, the origin of the river itself was actually the ocean because the Bible says that all the rivers run into the place from whence they came. Every river originates from the ocean. The ocean is a very giving body. Two years ago, the ocean gave the United States two hurricanes that leveled Louisiana, Mississippi, and parts of Texas, but it did. Had the ocean the ability to decide, it probably wouldn't have done that, but you see the ocean doesn't think when it comes to giving. It just gives. Blindly, it gives. You want water, it's here for the taking. Don't have to ask or beg, I'll give. It's amazing that such a body of water would be so generous as the ocean is, but it really is. You see the ocean has learned something that we all could use a little help with today. It's learned that if I give, I'll see it again. The ocean has learned that if I give, somewhere down the road, it's coming back to me. I might give up some water to benefit the needed areas of the west, or Midwest or the east coast, but sooner or later, it's going to come back to me in some form or another.
3. Let's stop and ask a hypothetical question right now. What if the ocean said no? What if it decided to listen to its friends and stop giving. For a while, the Mississippi would continue to flow into it. For a while, the Arkansas river would continue to flow. For while all the tributaries would continue to deposit their waters into the others and the ocean would still have a flow. For a while. You see,

if the ocean decided to keep its waters because it needed them for itself and to sustain life that it give to the animals that call it home, it would survive, for a while. But then the flow would stop. The flow would cease. The devastation would be horrific because not only would the ocean lose, but all the animals that call the other rivers home would begin to die off as well. If the ocean refused, life would cease for those to whom it gives, but also to those that call it home as well.

4. The Work of God is dependent on my giving. You mean my tiny raindrop matters? You better believe it does. You mean my small river makes a difference? Your better believe it. All of our giving is creating a flow here at Tabernacle of Praise. Because once you give, you can't stop the flow that comes back. You see, we can learn something from the ocean. It realizes that it all comes back sooner or later. **Even the ocean realizes that they may never be full by giving so much and so freely, but they will never be empty either.**

Pro 11:25 The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.

**TITHES AND OFFERINGS ARE TO BE VIEWED NOT
AS AN OBLIGATION - BUT RATHER AS AN
OPPORTUNITY!**

Pro 3:9 Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase:

Pro 3:10 So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.

Mal 3:6 For I *am* the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

Mal 3:7 Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept *them*. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return?

Mal 3:8 Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.

Mal 3:9 Ye *are* cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, *even* this whole nation.

Mal 3:10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that *there shall not be room enough to receive it.*

Mal 3:11 And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts.

Mal 3:12 And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightful land, saith the LORD of hosts.

WHERE DID TITHING AND OFFERINGS ORIGINATE?

1. **What is Tithe?** Tithe is an old English word meaning tenth or 10%. To “pay tithes” is to give, or return to God 10% of your income.
2. **Tithing and offerings originated by God to support the ministry and to further the Work of the His Kingdom on the earth.** Tithing is a Bible plan that originated before the Law, was then incorporated into the law, and was then included in the New Testament dispensation of Grace as God’s method of financial support for His work.

BEFORE THE LAW

1. **Before the Law:** Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek. (This is the first mention of tithes in the scripture.

Gen 14:20 And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.

(**Jacob**) Gen 28:22 And this stone, which I have set *for* a pillar, shall be God’s house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.

UNDER THE LAW

1. **The law stipulated all the particulars of what, when, where and how of tithing.** All the tithe of the land; if a part was redeemed, they added 1/5 to it. When counting the cattle, oxen or sheep, the 10th one to pass under the rod was to be given to the Levites. (Lev. 30:34)

Lev 27:30 And all the tithe of the land, *whether* of the seed of the land, *or* of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD'S: *it is* holy unto the LORD.

Lev 27:31 And if a man will at all redeem *ought* of his tithes, he shall add thereto the fifth *part* thereof.

Lev 27:32 And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, *even* of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the LORD.

2. **The Levites (Tribe of Levi) were chosen of God as a special group to care for the tabernacle, they were to have no inheritance among the people, therefore, they were supported by the tithes of the rest of Israel. (Numbers 18:20-24)**
3. **The Tithe was to be paid in the place God designated, not anywhere Israel wanted to pay them. Of course they were paid to the Levites.**

Deu 12:4 Ye shall not do so unto the LORD your God.

Deu 12:5 But unto the place which the LORD your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, *even* unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come:

Deu 12:6 And thither ye shall bring your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, and your tithes, and heave offerings of your hand, and your vows, and your freewill offerings, and the firstlings of your herds and of your flocks:

4. **Israel had been robbing God of tithes and offerings and a curse was upon them,** Yet God promised them a blessing if they obeyed. (Mal. 3:8-10).

UNDER GRACE

1. **The Scribes and Pharisees paid tithes.** They were not hypocrites for paying tithes but rather were hypocrites for leaving other things undone. (Matthew 23:23; Luke 18:12; 11:42).
2. **Abraham paid Tithes:** (Gal. 3:7) They which are of faith are the children of Abraham. (John 3:39) If you are Abraham's children, you will do the works of Abraham.
3. **Paul taught that God ordained the tithe system as the method of supporting the ministry.** "They which preach the gospel should live of the gospel"

1Co 9:11 If we have sown unto you spiritual things, *is it* a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?

Gal 6:6 Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

1Ti 5:17 Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.

1Ti 5:18 For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer *is* worthy of his reward.

IS TITHES AND OFFERINGS FOR US TODAY

1. One verse in every four in Matt; Mark; Luke; and John, and one out of every six in the New Testament deals with the question of money and covetousness. Nothing that we possess is exempt from the law of Christian Stewardship. Giving needs not no more apology than does praying. In the Bible there are 1539 Passages which refer to giving while there are only 523 passages which refer to praying. The average church is suffering from "Partial Participation Paralysis." Stewardship enriches the soul. So long as sin remains in the world we are obligated to get the Gospel to men. Tithes and Offerings will give one an enlarged vision, a willing mind, a liberal heart and a closer relationship to Jesus.

THE MACEDONIAN BRETHERN

2Co 8:1 Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia;

2Co 8:2 How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.

2Co 8:3 For to *their* power, I bear record, yea, and beyond *their* power *they were* willing of themselves;

2Co 8:4 Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and *take upon us* the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

2Co 8:5 And *this they did*, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.