

Q and A about Tithing:

Q: What is tithing?

A: The word tithing refers to the giving of “one tenth” of one’s income to the church. Leviticus 27:30 “A tithe of everything from the land, whether grain from the soil or fruit from the trees, belongs to the LORD; it is holy to the LORD.”

Let’s face it, *everything* we have is from the Lord. He simply asks for a tithe to be set apart to be holy. Giving to the church is an opportunity to share your blessings with others. The problem is that we live in a culture where we usually *need* all our blessings to maintain the lifestyle we have set up for ourselves.

Q: Why should we tithe?

A: Besides radical obedience, tithing takes the focus off ourselves and our own financial fears and concerns. It forces us to think of others when we write the check rather than ourselves. It causes our work money to be used for Jose in Peru rather than for Marianne at Kohls. Matthew 6:21 says, “For **where your treasure is**, there **your** heart will be also.” Open your checkbook and see where your heart is.

God also promises to bless us for our gifts. “‘Bring the whole **tithe** into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,’ says the LORD Almighty, ‘and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.’” Malachi 3:10.

I have always struggled with encouraging people who come to me for financial counseling with such upside-down budgets to tithe because “God will bless them” or just because it is being obedient. So I usually do a “soft sell” for tithing. But I am ALWAYS amazed how God does bless those who step out in faith. I had one person

receive a check FROM the electric company while another owed no taxes when she thought she would. Another found a “free” washer to replace her broken one while someone else had an old car just keep chugging along.

And sometimes we start giving and the car DOES break down and the kids DO get sick, but we look to the promises of God and we thank Him for all that we have been given in America. Checkout Globalrichlist.com if you want to feel really richly blessed. When people start tithing, they also usually begin to spend their other money more wisely.

Q: What if we have never tithed? How do we start?

A: Just start. Give ANY amount. Give it freely, cheerfully, with no strings attached. Set your money free and don't even follow how “well” it was used. The release of money from your control is often the bigger gift to you than how it is used by the receiver. Give systematically so it becomes just a natural part of what you do. Teach your children to be givers and learn from their innate generosity.

Q: What “counts” as tithing?

A: Despite our wanting to keep score, I think that God is more concerned with our hearts. Some people count the tithe as solely for the church while others count charitable causes like Cancer Research and United Way as part of tithing. Search your heart and do what you feel called to do. In the Old Testament, tithing was given to the chief priests to use.