

Short Answer Series #4

Why should a Christian pay tithes?

The word 'Tithe' means a tenth. Leviticus 27v30 'And all the Tithes of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, it is the Lord's: it is holy to the Lord.' V22 '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.' The Tithe did not belong to the person farming the land, it belonged to the Lord, because it was His blessing that brought forth the harvest. And the Lord chose to give His Tithe to the Priests and Levites, because their time was wholly given in Spiritual service in the Tabernacle. Numbers 19v21 'And, behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, even the service of the Tabernacle of the Congregation.' In Deuteronomy 12v19 the Lord said 'Take heed to thyself that thou forsake not the Levite as long as thou livest upon the earth.' The Levites had such an important calling in Israel that the Lord gave them His portion, and warned everyone that they must always be faithful to give their tithes for the Levites use.

When the old Covenant (the Law) ceased, and the New Covenant of Grace was brought in by Jesus Christ, He ordained a Ministry of Apostles (Missionaries), Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, and Teachers. (Ephesians 4v11) To labour in Spiritual service for His Church. And the Lord did not expect them to have to support themselves financially. Though many of them do. When He sent His Disciples out, He said 'And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire.' Luke 10v7.

In 1 Corinthians 9v14 Paul explained the position of tithing in the New Testament Church.' Do ye not know that they which minister about Holy things live of the things of the Temple? And they which wait at the altar are partakers at the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel.'

The last sentence says it all. The Lord has ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel. Even though most of us earn wages today, rather than farm, the purpose of the Tithe has not changed. And it still belongs to the Lord. (Lev 23v30) If I use it for my personal use, I am stealing from the Lord. See Malachi 3v8-9. Yes I am robbing the Lord, because that Tithe is not mine, the Lord placed it in my care, and I have stolen it. It is for the Ministry so they can give themselves to prayer and the Word and service of the Lord.

When we pay a Tithe we are only passing on something that is not ours, it is the Lord's. So it is not us giving. The portion we give is whatever we give over the Tithe. There is a promise of abundance associated with Tithing, found in Malachi 3v10-12, for the faithful.

In Second Corinthians 9v6-7, Paul explains giving. 'But this I say, he which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Everyman according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.' And everyone who pays Tithes soon finds that 90 dollars with the Lords blessing, buys more than 100 dollars without it.

And Tithes are not meant to make a Minister wealthy. So if a Minister is becoming very wealthy through receiving Tithes and Offerings, we should beware. He isn't really a Shepherd. He's a shearer, fleecing the flock.

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