

# The Principle of Tithing/Giving

## Why We Tithe/Give *Hebrews 7:1-10*

The subject of Tithing or sacrificial Giving is a controversial one. I have often said there are three subjects that inevitably get people worked up when I preach; Divorce, the Sovereignty of God and Tithing – Divorce because it affects **my right to be happy**, Sovereignty of God because it effects **my right to choose**, and Tithing because it effects **my right to keep what I earn**. Each of them are about me and my rights.

(ie) My brother's reaction to my Mom including tithe in her budget.  
There is also an anti-tithing movement in the church today... Barna, MacArthur

**NIV Hebrews 7:5-9 (See also Genesis 14:18)**

**1. This Melchizedek was king of Salem and priest of God Most High. He met Abraham returning from the defeat of the kings and blessed him, 2. and Abraham gave him a tenth of everything. First, his name means "king of righteousness"; then also, "king of Salem" means "king of peace." 3. Without father or mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life, like the Son of God he remains a priest forever. 4. Just think how great he was: Even the patriarch Abraham gave him a tenth of the plunder!**

**5. Now the law requires the descendants of Levi who become priests to collect a tenth from the people--that is, their brothers--even though their brothers are descended from Abraham. 6. This man, however, did not trace his descent from Levi, yet he collected a tenth from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises. 7. And without doubt the lesser person is blessed by the greater. 8. In the one case, the tenth is collected by men who die; but in the other case, by him who is declared to be living. 9. One might even say that Levi, who collects the tenth, paid the tenth through Abraham, 10. because when Melchizedek met Abraham, Levi was still in the body of his ancestor.**

The entire seventh chapter of Hebrews is given over to the event of Abraham giving tithes to Melchizedek. The point of the chapter is not to teach tithing, that was a foregone conclusion of all Jewish people under the law, but the point was to show the similarity of Jesus' priesthood to that of this Old Testament character Melchizedek. Only secondarily can we extract the conclusion that Jesus is greater than Melchizedek, therefore even more worthy of our allegiance and tithe.

Without a doubt chapter seven of Hebrews is a difficult one for a western 21<sup>st</sup> Century Christian to follow. The logic is impeccable but follows Jewish reasoning, combined with Old Testament concepts with which the Hebrew Christians were very familiar but of which we have very little knowledge.

So, in the process of the chapter, somewhere toward the middle our eyes glaze over and we get a brain-freeze until the end of the chapter.

## **Let me therefore summarize the chapter.**

Abraham came back from a battle of rescuing his wife and family and took back what belonged to him and the spoils of war. On the way back he encounters this priest of Salem (the former name of Jerusalem, long before David's changing the name) and he immediately offers him a tenth of all his plunder as part of his worship and thanksgiving to God. **Note:** There was no law saying he had to do this. This was many years before the law of Moses. This was a principle he learned that had been passed down from Adam, to Cain and Able and to subsequent generations of Adam.

So the author of Hebrews begins a lengthy explanation of why Jesus is like this character Melchizedek, who also was not of the priestly tribe of Levi, just as Jesus was not of the tribe of Levi. Melchizedek shows up on the scene with no genealogy, thus not father or mother or other pedigree to his credit, but he is a priest of God none the less.

He then logically deduces that since Abraham was the father of the tribe of Levi, then Levi himself, being the first Jewish priest, was also giving a tithe to Melchizedek, recognizing his greatness before God.

Then he argues that Jesus is a better priest than Levi, or earthly priests because they continually die, and another one take their place, but Jesus lives forever, therefore he is a permanent priest of God. Therefore Jesus is able to save to the uttermost because he ever lives to constantly make intercession for us (as a Jewish priest does).

Unlike the earthly priests he does not need to offer sacrifices for himself then for the people, since he offered himself once-for-all as the eternal sacrificial Lamb of God. He lives forever and is forever a perfect high priest.

**It is only incidental to the chapter that tithing is mentioned.** But it is none the less important, in principle and practice, for us to explore this well-known Old Testament and Jewish New Testament principle.

# 1. Tithing is Worship – honoring God with substance also, Submission to the Greater.

## Tithing is a Principle, not a law

Tithing preceded the Law of Moses where it was instituted as a Law for Israel. Jesus is the end of the law for believers, but he is not the end of biblical principles for New Testament believers. Principles are truths that precede and succeed the law. They are eternal principles. For instance worship was commanded by Moses law, but it was a principle of the heart long before the law made it a command. Honoring the Lord's Day (sabbath rest) is not just a law of Moses, but the principle behind it is still in effect today. Obedience to parents, do not murder, do not commit adultery, etc. were principles of God long before they became laws under Moses. Becoming a Christian does not negate those principles. They are eternal. There is a difference between laws and principles.

*(ie) Law of Gravity really is Principle of Gravity*

## (ie) Cain and Able

Jesus is greater than Moses, and Jesus is greater than Melchizedek and is worthy of all honor and praise. He is the King Eternal. He is the Lord of all things. All things belong to Him and were created by him. Tithing is a tangible, demonstrable expression of the Lordship of Jesus Christ in everything.

**Deuteronomy 8:17** And thou say in thine heart, **My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth.**

The issue of tithing is the issue recognition of who gives you power to get wealth? If it is God then give him the glory due His name. If it is yourself, then worship yourself and keep the tithe. Keeping what belongs to God, the tithe, is to make yourself like God, to put yourself in God's rightful place, and to accept your own person as who you worship for getting so much blessing. When you say, "**It is mine. I earned it.**" Then you are usurping God's rightful honor as your Provider.

Proverbs 3:9 Honor the LORD with your substance, and with the firstfruits of all your increase:

Jesus emphasized it as a principle not to be left undone.

## **Matthew 23:23**

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier *matters* of the law, **judgment, mercy, and faith**: these ought you to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

**"Love the Lord your God with all your heart..."**

(ie) Rich young ruler – could not let go and love God 1<sup>st</sup>

## 2. Tithing Tests our Faith

In tithing we do not worship the church. We don't tithe to the church, or the denomination. We tithe to God. We do it as surrender and submission to His authority over us. That is worship. We practice "**STOREHOUSE TITHING**" because that is what God commanded and that is what He promises to bless.

### **Malachi 3:10-11**

*10. 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. 11. I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not cast their fruit," says the LORD Almighty.*

God does not promise to bless you for giving a token, a tip, or pittance. God is not a beggar by the roadside waiting to be blessed by your good graces. He is not the organ grinder's monkey collecting tips for playing a good song. He is not your waiter that you should give him a tip for His good service. God is God! Owner of the universe, and Giver of all good things. **Tithing crowns Him for who He is.**

*(ie) I am told that 20% of Christians tithe regularly, if that is true 80% of Christian feel uncomfortable with the subject.*

## 3. Tithing Measures Sacrifice – above and beyond

*(ie) Jews gave about 23.3% in tithes and offerings*

*(ie) David, "I will not offer to the Lord what costs me nothing"*

*(ie) Old Testament building of tabernacle, temple – free will offerings*

Giving, that is, offerings given to God above and beyond the tithe were what people gave as their sacrifice of thanksgiving. **It is not tithes that build the temple, or provided for the tabernacle** – All that was giving above and beyond the tithe. The tithe was for the general fund of the temple, for the payment of the Levites who served in the temple and the purchase of the daily requirements. It was to cover the basic overhead of having ministry. God commanded that we should not "muzzle the ox that treads the corn."

Deuteronomy 25:4 Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out *the corn*.

1 Corinthians 9:9 For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen?

1 Timothy 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.

Paul explains that principle was not about the ox, but the laborer in God's harvest field. If you do muzzle the ox, you will soon starve the ox and not have anyone to tread the corn. If you do muzzle the ox in the spiritual sense then you will soon have no ministers who can afford to live doing ministry among you.

#### **4. Tithing Tests who is the RULER OF OUR HEARTS.**

**“Love the Lord your God with all your heart...”**

- (ie) Rich young ruler – could not let go and love God 1<sup>st</sup>
- (ie) Story of Randy Alcorn – The Treasure Principle
- (ie) Story of Wm Borden 1887-1913 – gave it all
- (ie) John Wesley and wealthy land owner
- (ie) Story of John Stewart's cancer – gave it all to Jesus, smile on face

These are difficult financial times. We know that. We have stretched ourselves to make ministry, not buildings our priority. God has blessed that prioritization. **Yet, this year even without a worship pastor on staff we are struggling to meet budget week after week.** We can miss budget occasionally and not be affected. It all averages out over the long haul. But when we are missing budget by large margins week after week in tough times it makes it hard to maintain a quality staff. **So far, your ministry staff has cut back severely in expenses so that even though we are not meeting budget we still can balance the books at the end of the month.** Now that we are bringing on a new worship pastors we will have the added, and normal budgetary demands. If we want quality ministry people we must be quality ministry providers by putting the Lord first in our finances.

#### **Practical Application**

Let me apply that in a very practical way. Many Christians take their tithe as if it were their own to divide up as they see fit. So, if there is a special project in the church they divert some of the tithe to that project rather than giving above and beyond to the project and tithing for the ongoing daily needs of the ministry. They do it unwittingly, not knowing or not understanding God's command concerning the tithe.

So what happens when there are many projects and challenges for your giving the tithe is taken from the storehouse and given to Christian broadcasters, radio personalities, your favorite ministry be it Billy Graham, Dr. James Kennedy, Radio Bible Class, or your favorite missionary or overseas ministry. The effect is that the tithe for the

local church ministry is leaked out to many worthy causes, but the local church ministry cannot meet its obligations.

Or, the church building program get top billing and siphons off many of the dollars that should be going to hire and sustain ministry staff, pay the electric bill or equip the local church ministries. The end result being the church needs to shrink its ministry staff, let go its paid staff, or cut back on ministries because tithe is going to build a building.

**Tithe was never intended to build the buildings be it a tabernacle or a Temple. All that was over and beyond regular giving.**

## **The Conclusion**

<p>Tithing is about worship and honoring God in first place. Where a man's treasure is there will his heart be also.</p>
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When the love of money, or love of our own income, or love of what's ours, or the prioritization of our own expenses and budgets **exceeds our love for God** there will be no room for tithing, just as the Inn in Bethlehem had no room for the Savior.

## **The Conclusion**

- 1. Give to God what is His**
- 2. Give Cheerfully**
- 3. Give Worshipfully**
- 4. Give Regularly**

***“Tithing and Giving are never obligations when you are in love.”***

## A Word of Encouragement

### Limited Incomes

Know that we are not here to fleece you. If you are out of a job, we are praying for you. We understand your present crisis. If you are about to lose your home in this mortgage crisis we understand. We are praying for you. **Be careful not to yield to the lordship of the crisis and abandon your God commitments.**

### Building Programs – General Fund

Three years ago we entered into a much needed, desperate, building program to add 10,000 square feet and 16 acres to our property. We have paid our first 3-years of pledged giving toward that campaign and have exceeded the goal by \$120,000. During this time have been paying the interest on this mortgage out of tithes and the general budget. This helps us apply all your above and beyond giving to mortgage principle. That, however, adds up to be about \$8,000 a month to our budget needs. That is about \$96,000 addition to our general budget – budget that is ministry focused not building focused.

### New Tithers

If you've never practiced tithing we encourage you to consider this faith discipline. We have resources available for you. **Financial Peace University** is one. We will be publishing stewardship principles and messages on a regular basis for your encouragement. We will be sharing testimonies of God's provisions by God's people in this church.

### Fall Capital Stewardship Campaign

This fall we will be challenging all of you toward making an "above and beyond" pledge toward our capital stewardship campaign of paying off our mortgage so we can move on to provide more ministry space.

### **Closing Song**

Ruler of My Heart Call My Name – Mark Reeves

## **Illustrations**

(ie) Cain and Able

(ie) The Widow of Zaraphath

(ie) All of Elijah, and Elisha

(ie) The Loaves and Fishes

## **Outline of Hebrews 7**

- 1. Tithing preceded the Law of Moses**
- 2. Tithing was a principle of submission to the greater.**
- 3. Tithing was worship – honoring God with your substance.**
- 4. Tithing was a test of the Ruler of your heart.**
- 5. Practical Application**
- 6. Conclusion**

## Hebrews 7

1. This Melchizedek was king of Salem and priest of God Most High. He met Abraham returning from the defeat of the kings and blessed him, 2. and **Abraham gave him a tenth of everything**. First, his name means "king of righteousness"; then also, "king of Salem" means "king of peace." 3. Without father or mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life, like the Son of God he remains a priest forever. 4. **Just think how great he was**: Even the patriarch Abraham gave him a tenth of the plunder! 5. Now the law requires the descendants of Levi who become priests to collect a tenth from the people--that is, their brothers--even though their brothers are descended from Abraham. 6. This man, however, did not trace his descent from Levi, yet he collected a tenth from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises. 7. And without doubt the lesser person is blessed by the greater. 8. In the one case, the tenth is collected by men who die; but in the other case, by him who is declared to be living. 9. One might even say that Levi, who collects the tenth, paid the tenth through Abraham, 10. because when Melchizedek met Abraham, Levi was still in the body of his ancestor. 11. If perfection could have been attained through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the law was given to the people), why was there still need for another priest to come--one in the order of Melchizedek, not in the order of Aaron? 12. For when there is a change of the priesthood, there must also be a change of the law. 13. He of whom these things are said belonged to a different tribe, and no one from that tribe has ever served at the altar. 14. For it is clear that our Lord descended from Judah, and in regard to that tribe Moses said nothing about priests. **15. And what we have said is even more clear if another priest like Melchizedek appears, 16. one who has become a priest not on the basis of a regulation as to his ancestry but on the basis of the power of an indestructible life.** 17. For it is declared: "You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek." 18. The former regulation is set aside because it was weak and useless 19. (for the law made nothing perfect), and **a better hope is introduced, by which we draw near to God.** 20. And it was not without an oath! Others became priests without any oath, 21. but he became a priest with an oath when God said to him: "The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind: `You are a priest forever.'" 22. Because of this oath, Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant. 23. Now there have been many of those priests, since death prevented them from continuing in office; 24. but because **Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood.** 25. Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them. 26. Such a high priest meets our need--one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens. 27. Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself. 28. For the law appoints as high priests men who are weak; but the oath, which came after the law, appointed the Son, who has been made perfect forever.

## **NIV Hebrews 7:5-9**

5. Now the law requires the descendants of Levi who become priests to collect a tenth from the people--that is, their brothers--even though their brothers are descended from Abraham.

6. This man, however, did not trace his descent from Levi, yet he collected a tenth from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises.

7. And without doubt the lesser person is blessed by the greater.

8. In the one case, the tenth is collected by men who die; but in the other case, by him who is declared to be living.

9. One might even say that Levi, who collects the tenth, paid the tenth through Abraham,

10. because when Melchizedek met Abraham, Levi was still in the body of his ancestor.

## Tithe/Tithing

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

Leviticus 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.

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

Leviticus 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.

Numbers 18:24 But the tithes of the children of Israel, which they offer as an heave offering unto the LORD, I have given to the Levites to inherit: therefore I have said unto them, Among the children of Israel they shall have no inheritance.

Numbers 18:26 Thus speak unto the Levites, and say unto them, When ye take of the children of Israel the tithes which I have given you from them for your inheritance, then ye shall offer up an heave offering of it for the LORD, *even* a tenth *part* of the tithe.

Numbers 18:28 Thus ye also shall offer an heave offering unto the LORD of all your tithes, which ye receive of the children of Israel; and ye shall give thereof the LORD'S heave offering to Aaron the priest.

Deuteronomy 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:

Deuteronomy 12:11 Then there shall be a place which the LORD your God shall choose to cause his name to dwell there; thither shall ye bring all that I command you; your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, your tithes, and the heave offering of your hand, and all your choice vows which ye vow unto the LORD:

Deuteronomy 12:17 Thou mayest not eat within thy gates the tithe of thy corn, or of thy wine, or of thy oil, or the firstlings of thy herds or of thy flock, nor any of thy vows which thou vowest, nor thy freewill offerings, or heave offering of thine hand:

Deuteronomy 14:22 ¶ Thou shalt truly tithe all the increase of thy seed, that the field bringeth forth year by year.

Deuteronomy 14:23 And thou shalt eat before the LORD thy God, in the place which he shall choose to place his name there, the tithe of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the firstlings of thy herds and of thy flocks; that thou mayest learn to fear the LORD thy God always.

Deuteronomy 14:28 At the end of three years thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thine increase the same year, and shalt lay *it* up within thy gates:

Deuteronomy 26:12 ¶ When thou hast made an end of tithing all the tithes of thine increase the third year, *which is* the year of tithing, and hast given *it* unto the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that they may eat within thy gates, and be filled;

2 Chronicles 31:5 And as soon as the commandment came abroad, the children of Israel brought in abundance the firstfruits of corn, wine, and oil, and honey, and of all the increase of the field; and the tithe of all *things* brought they in abundantly.

2 Chronicles 31:6 And *concerning* the children of Israel and Judah, that dwelt in the cities of Judah, they also brought in the [tithe](#) of oxen and sheep, and the [tithe](#) of holy things which were consecrated unto the LORD their God, and laid *them* by heaps.

2 Chronicles 31:12 And brought in the offerings and the [tithes](#) and the dedicated *things* faithfully: over which Cononiah the Levite *was* ruler, and Shimei his brother *was* the next.

Nehemiah 10:37 And *that* we should bring the firstfruits of our dough, and our offerings, and the fruit of all manner of trees, of wine and of oil, unto the priests, to the chambers of the house of our God; and the [tithes](#) of our ground unto the Levites, that the same Levites might have the [tithes](#) in all the cities of our tillage.

Nehemiah 10:38 And the priest the son of Aaron shall be with the Levites, when the Levites take [tithes](#): and the Levites shall bring up the [tithe](#) of the [tithes](#) unto the house of our God, to the chambers, into the treasure house.

Nehemiah 12:44 ¶ And at that time were some appointed over the chambers for the treasures, for the offerings, for the firstfruits, and for the [tithes](#), to gather into them out of the fields of the cities the portions of the law for the priests and Levites: for Judah rejoiced for the priests and for the Levites that waited.

Nehemiah 13:5 And he had prepared for him a great chamber, where aforetime they laid the meat offerings, the frankincense, and the vessels, and the [tithes](#) of the corn, the new wine, and the oil, which was commanded *to be given* to the Levites, and the singers, and the porters; and the offerings of the priests.

Nehemiah 13:12 Then brought all Judah the [tithe](#) of the corn and the new wine and the oil unto the treasuries.

Amos 4:4 Come to Bethel, and transgress; at Gilgal multiply transgression; and bring your sacrifices every morning, *and* your [tithes](#) after three years:

Malachi 3:8 Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In [tithes](#) and offerings.

Malachi 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*.

Matthew 23:23 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay [tithe](#) of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier *matters* of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

Luke 11:42 But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye [tithe](#) mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

Luke 18:12 I fast twice in the week, I give [tithes](#) of all that I possess.

Hebrews 7:5 And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take [tithes](#) of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham:

Hebrews 7:6 But he whose descent is not counted from them received [tithes](#) of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises.

Hebrews 7:8 And here men that die receive [tithes](#); but there he *receiveth them*, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.

Hebrews 7:9 And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth [tithes](#), payed [tithes](#) in Abraham.

**Luke 6:38**

Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

**Proverbs 3:9-10**

Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; 10. then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.

**Genesis 14:18**

14. When Abram heard that his relative had been taken captive, he called out the 318 trained men born in his household and went in pursuit as far as Dan. 15. During the night Abram divided his men to attack them and he routed them, pursuing them as far as Hobah, north of Damascus. 16. He recovered all the goods and brought back his relative Lot and his possessions, together with the women and the other people. 17. After Abram returned from defeating Kedorlaomer and the kings allied with him, the king of Sodom came out to meet him in the Valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley). 18. Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. He was priest of God Most High, 19. and he blessed Abram, saying, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth. 20. And blessed be God Most High, who delivered your enemies into your hand." Then Abram gave him a tenth of everything.

**2 Corinthians 9:7 (NIV)**

7 Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

**1 Corinthians 16:1–2 (NIV)**

16 Now about the collection for God's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. 2 On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.

**Numbers 18:26 (NIV)**

26 "Speak to the Levites and say to them: 'When you receive from the Israelites the tithe I give you as your inheritance, you must present a tenth of that tithe as the Lord's offering.

**Deuteronomy 14:24 (NIV)**

24 But if that place is too distant and you have been blessed by the Lord your God and cannot carry your tithe (because the place where the Lord will choose to put his Name is so far away),

**Leviticus 27:30 (NIV)**

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.

**2 Chronicles 31:5 (NIV)**

5 As soon as the order went out, the Israelites generously gave the firstfruits of their grain, new wine, oil and honey and all that the fields produced. They brought a great amount, a tithe of everything.

**NIV Luke 20:24-25**

24. "Show me a denarius. Whose portrait and inscription are on it?" 25. "Caesar's," they replied. He said to them, "Then give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's."

**Luke 20:24-25**

Shew me a penny. Whose image and superscription hath it? They answered and said, Caesar's. 25 And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's, and unto God the things which be God's.

**Deuteronomy 6:5**

And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

**Mark 12:30**

And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this *is* the first commandment.

**Luke 11:42**

But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

## **Question: "What does the Bible say about Christian tithing?"**

**Answer:** Many Christians struggle with the issue of tithing. In some churches tithing is over-emphasized. At the same time, many Christians refuse to submit to the biblical exhortations about making offerings to the Lord. Tithing/giving is intended to be a joy and a blessing. Sadly, that is sometimes not the case in the church today.

Tithing is an Old Testament concept. The tithe was a requirement of the law in which all Israelites were to give 10 percent of everything they earned and grew to the Tabernacle/Temple ([Leviticus 27:30](#); [Numbers 18:26](#); [Deuteronomy 14:24](#); [2 Chronicles 31:5](#)). In fact, the Old Testament Law required multiple tithes which would have pushed the total to around 23.3 percent, not the 10 percent which is generally considered the tithe amount today. Some understand the Old Testament tithe as a method of taxation to provide for the needs of the priests and Levites in the sacrificial system. The New Testament nowhere commands, or even recommends, that Christians submit to a legalistic tithe system. Paul states that believers should set aside a portion of their income in order to support the church ([1 Corinthians 16:1-2](#)).

The New Testament nowhere designates a percentage of income a person should set aside, but only says it is to be "in keeping with income" ([1 Corinthians 16:2](#)). Some in the Christian church have taken the 10 percent figure from the Old Testament tithe and applied it as a "recommended minimum" for Christians in their giving. The New Testament talks about the importance and benefits of giving. We are to give as we are able. Sometimes that means giving more than 10 percent; sometimes that may mean giving less. It all depends on the ability of the Christian and the needs of the church. Every Christian should diligently pray and seek God's wisdom in the matter of participating in tithing and/or how much to give ([James 1:5](#)). Above all, all tithes and offerings should be given with pure motives and an attitude of worship to God and service to the body of Christ. "Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver" ([2 Corinthians 9:7](#)).