

# Finances and Generosity

*Give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.*

*(Luke 6:38)*



2019

The biblical texts transcripts in this booklet are in the English Standard Version.  
March, 2019.  
Contact: [injesuslikeness@gmail.com](mailto:injesuslikeness@gmail.com)

# SUMMARY

Finances and Generosity	5
Tithes and offerings	5
In the Old Testament	5
In the New Testament	6
Other Considerations	10
How superior is the New Covenant!	11
It is more blessed to give than to receive	13
The question regarding debts	13
Budget Sheet	14



## **Finances and Generosity**

This teaching is part of the whole counsel of God to the church. We can not stop teaching the truth, because some have used it for profiting. This unfortunate reality has been a barrier for many to hear about the kingdom of God. Many evangelical groups have put as the center of his preaching the material prosperity. The pulpits have been used to a continuous financial appeal. Preaching that "force" Jesus to serve the vanity of men. And we, who do not believe and do not do that, need to teach the disciples of Jesus to be stewards and generous.

## **Tithes and offerings**

### **In the Old Testament**

#### **a) Before the law (Heb 7:4-10)**

Back in that time there was no treasure house, so, the tithe was not to maintain anyone. Melchizedek, king of Salem, did not need to be maintained, however, Abraham gave tithes (requirement of God?). Jacob, his grandson, imitated him saying: "...And of all that you give me I will give a full tenth to you" (Gen 28:22). This sounds in a connotation of recognizing the sovereignty and authority of God. One manifestation of dependence and faith: "... that you may learn to fear the Lord your God always" (Deu 14:23).

#### **b) Regulated by law (Lev 27:30-34)**

The tithes were holy to the Lord and it was Himself who determined its use, giving them to the Levites. He was the inheritance of the Levites, and not left it as poetry: He made it real, materializing it in the tithes (Num 18:20-24).

#### **c) The Use Discriminated (Deu 14:22-29)**

- Not for profiting from the tithes. When it was not possible to hand them over, could be spent even with strong drink, but not to use what was of God to profit;
- Around a third of the tithes (once every three years) was used to help the orphan, the widow, the stranger and the local Levites.

d) How God treated the Infidels (Mal 3:6-12; 1:6-2:9)

In this text, God firstly rebukes and curses the infidel priests. However, still requires that the people bring all the tithes and offerings into the storehouse, accusing thieves and cursing those who do not do it. The tithes were the Lord's and it was Himself who gave it to the Levites. God never allowed the people to administer the tithes, judging whether or not to deliver them, even when the priests were infidels. That was God's problem. He dealt with the unfaithful priest in his trade (Num 18:23) and also with the unfaithful nation on the delivery.

e) Principles about the giving

- 1) Giving is a moral principle from God that came before the law.
- 2) The commitment of the Israelite was to tithe (10%) of all income. Why did God set a percentage? To they not steal from God. Because at the time of the law, Israelites did not have the blessing of a new heart and only a few had the Holy Spirit.
- 3) Principles regarding the tithing
  - . The O.T. says that the tithe was given to God and not to men (Lev 27:32; Num 18:24).
  - . When the man did not give the 10%, God considered him a thief (Mal 3:8-9)
  - . The blessing and curse of God depended upon the faithfulness of man (Mal 3:10-11).
  - . God used these resources to support the Levites (priests who worked only in the house of the Lord - Num 18:21) and orphans and widows (Deu 26:12 - every three years, beside the Levites, foreigners, orphans and widows, were also supported.)

## **In the New Testament**

a) Jesus Christ

- 1) Never was accused of not tithing;
- 2) Never taught against it;
- 3) Never taught in its favor.

The passage in Mat 23:23 has been used to support tithing in the NT. This text is not a teaching on the subject, however, a rebuke to the Pharisees for being extremely demanding and legalists in the delivery of tithes and yet so negligent in fulfilling the most important principles of law: justice, faith and mercy.

## b) The Apostles

The apostles never taught about tithing, but taught about the maintenance of those who live exclusively for the church and the help to the ones in need. **As assistance to the ones in need is a subject about which there is no doubts or questions**, we will consider only what is regarded to the maintenance of the ones living full time for the service in the church.

Reference	Text	Comments
1Co 9:1-15		Basic Text
Vs. 1-2, 10, 11, 13	<p>"...for you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord."</p> <p>"If we have sown spiritual things among you, is it too much if we reap material things from you?"</p> <p>"...Do you not know that those who are employed in the temple service get their food from the temple..."</p>	Unquestionable spiritual principle: the exchange of benefits.
Vs. 3-10	<p>"Do we not have the right to eat and drink?"</p> <p>"... Who plants a vineyard without eating any of its fruit?"</p>	Natural principle: the one who plants crops.
Vs. 12, 15	"If others share this rightful claim on you, do not we even more?"	Right
Vs. 14	"In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel."	An Order from the Lord Jesus.
Gal 6:6 Rom 15:27	"Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches."	Honor, gratitude, recognition and duty.

1Th 2:6-7 2Th 3.9	"though we could have made demands as apostles of Christ...."	Requirement and right.
1Ti 5:17-18; Mat 10:10; Luk10:7	"... the laborer deserves his wages."	Salary, payment.

These texts not only make clear the apostolic practice, as well as the principles that ruled it. Some have argued that Paul was not used this expedient instead worked "with his own hands". Let us exam the biblical truth:

- 1) Paul did not require maintenance of the churches of Corinth and Thessaloniki for quite clear reasons:
  - . Corinth - Paul wanted to establish a clear distinction between himself, a true apostle (1 Cor 3:6-10; 4:14-16, 9:1-2, 2 Cor 3:1-3, 11:1-3), preaching the gospel freely (2 Cor 11:7) and some so called apostles they were maintained by the Corinthians, whom Paul calls "deceitful workmen" (2 Cor 11:10-15). This intention is clear in 2 Cor 11:12 "... *to undermine the claim...*" even if it meant going through hardships (2 Cor 11:7-9).
  - . Thessalonica - that they were laborious, and workers should not be languid and meddling in other people's lives, being heavy to the others (2 The 3:6-12). Paul was the only one who could get off work and require sustenance, and yet he did not.
- 2) It is worthy to highlight, that during the time he was in these two cities Paulo was maintained by other churches:
  - . Corinth - 2Co 11:7-9;
  - . Thessalonica - Phi 4:15-16.

The churches of Corinth and Thessalonica were being benefited by Paul's ministry. However, to their shame and because of deficiencies in the life of these churches, he was maintained by other cities.

- 3) Sometimes Paul had to provide his own maintenance, for he was involved in pioneering work, in the formation of



new churches – was plowing with hope (1Co 9:10). That happened, for example, at the beginning of the church in Ephesus (Act 20:33–35). In Jerusalem there was not this problem: the vineyard bared fruit and the herd was producing milk and wool (1Co 9:4–11).

- 4) Paul did not lived on "making tents". This was something sporadic, when the situation demanded.
- 5) In 1Co 9:4–6, it is clear that all the apostles and even some who were not apostles, like the brothers of the Lord, were maintained by the church.
- 6) Paul had no wife and children, answering only for himself, and could accept the difficulties that would come, alone.
- 7) In Phi 4:17–19, Paul exposes a biblical principle that God blesses the one who is generous (here he is not talking about aid to the poor, but to maintain the ones who serve spiritual goods). And put it in commercial terms – an exchange: who had supplied for him would be blessed by God – as a true offering to God and not to men (observations in the NIV Bible and New Life). Would Paul be a mercenary or seeking his own interests? Read: 2Co 1:12; 4:2–5, 6:4–10, 12:14–18; 1Th 2:1–6; 1Ti 6:3–10.

c) Principles about the giving

- 1) The principles are exactly the same, with one difference: It says nothing that the percentage should be 10% (tithe).
- 2) Why the percentage was taken? Because the disciple of Jesus does not need a law to give. He has a new heart. All his righteousness comes from Christ that dwells in his heart (Col 1:27). Jesus demanded that our justice was much higher than that of the Scribes and Pharisees (they were zealous Jews on the law of Moses). In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said: "You have heard that it was said to those of old... but I say to you that" And then brought a much higher standard than the law.
- 3) We cannot forget that the principles remain the same. That is:
  - . This contribution (today we call it provision), is a commitment with God and not with men.

- . He who does not give his contribution, or give less than it is fair, is robbing God.
- . God's blessing on our financial life is completely conditioned to be faithful on these contributions (Luk 6:38; 2Co 9:6). Not only those who have more should give, but especially those who are in difficulties, to be blessed by God.
- . God uses these contributions for the support of the ones in need (Eph 4:28) and dedicated full-time workers (1Co 9:9, 11, 13, 14; Mat 10:10).

Give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you. (Luk 6:38)

## Other Considerations

Both biblical and historically there is no reference to a preestablished percentage or amount that was required from the churches. What is evident is a principle of honor, recognition and exchange of benefits, where each one gives accordingly as proposed in his heart. There is no improvisation when is time to give, like as for charity handouts, but a pre-determined thought and meditated before God in prayer. To avoid improvisation and lack of control, this value should be set at a percentage of the income of each one.

The one who understands that is benefited will liberally give. The one who is here "killing time" and think that those who live fully to the service of the church, do nothing more than their duty, will be mediocre their contribution.

Jesus is our only point of reference and the apostolic word our only source of information, there is still no reason why we still use the tithes. However, one question remains: if the tithe was something so important and sacred in the OT, since before the law, why then Jesus and the apostles did not teach anything about it?

In the NT God does not need to establish a percentage to the contribution of its people because we are under another spiritual principle. Consider the following table:

Old Covenant	New Covenant
God had to make a mark in the flesh of man to show his covenant with him (Gen 17:10).	God marks us in the heart, in our spirit (Rom 8:8-9, Eph 2:11-15, Phi 3:3; Col 2:11).
God gave the Law written on stone tablets. (Exo 31:18).	God writes his law on our hearts (Heb. 10:16).
God establishes a percentage on the income of every man to be returned to himself, in order to remind man that whatever he has comes from Him (Gen. 28:22; Deu 14:23).	God leaves us free, once we do not need anything from outside to remind us that we are his children. He gave us his own Holy Spirit, and in this position, not only our possessions are His, but we ourselves belong to him, for He not only bought us but also gave us life. Generated us by the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:12-17, Jam 1:18, 1 Pet 1:23)
Here speaks of a earthly nation with earthly hopes and promises (Acts 1:6).	Here of a spiritual nation, celestial, with eternal hopes and promises. Speaks to heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ (Rom 8:17; Phi 3:20-21, 1Joh 3:1-2)

## How superior is the New Covenant!

Therefore, paying attention to the Sermon on the Mount, we see how Jesus makes a comparison between the commandment of Moses (the Law) and his own commandment (Grace and Truth) "For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (Joh 1:17). It is notorious the superiority of Jesus' requirement. The requirements of the New Covenant are superior than the Old Covenant as well as the benefits and the promises. (Gal 3:19, Heb 7:18-19; 8:13; 11:39-40, 1 Pet 1:10-12).

Justice of the Law		Jesus Christ
Homicide was forbidden.	Mat 5:21-23	Anger is forbidden.
Adultery was forbidden.	Mat 5:27-28	The unclean look is forbidden.
Required the love of neighbor and allowed the hatred of the enemy.	Mat 5:43-44	Demands the love of enemy and praying for those who persecute.
Demanded tithes (Mal 3:8).		Requires the life and all that we have (Luk 14:25-33).

Therefore, God does not require from us a percentage – He requires ourselves, everything we are and have. He does not give us a law, gives us life. What move us is not a commandment, but the life and the feeling of Christ that is produced in us by the Holy Spirit.

Well, if those who lived under the law, it required ten percent, how much to be expected from those who received the abundance of life? (Joh 10:10; Rom 5:17; Heb 3:14; 2 Pet 1:3-4).

If under the Old Covenant God accused robber those who did not gave tithes and offerings (and these had no percentage), how would He treats those who omit themselves in the New Covenant?

In the history of the church tithe has often been questioned for being part of the Old Covenant. Hence, some denominations and groups have canceled the practice of tithing. But **CAUTION:** many have abandoned the Old Covenant, not to enter in a New one, but to justify stealing what belongs to God. They stop tithing but have not started giving as the church in the NT did.

It is strange that someone would be against tithing, claiming that this is the Old Covenant and want to give less than ten percent, when the brothers in the NT (New Covenant) have given so much more. If someone wants to be based on the Bible to do not tithe, why not to give more than the tithe as it is in the Bible?

For all those reasons, we believe that the church must exceed by much the tithe in their contributions.

For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. (Mat 5:20)

# **It is more blessed to give than to receive**

## **How to give**

- a) It can not be established as improvising. It needs to be predetermined before the Lord, to be an expression of generosity and not greed (2Co 9:5);
- b) Propose a percentage in your heart (2Co 9:7);
- c) Do this with joy and not with sorrow (2Co 9:7);
- d) To give from the firstfruits not of the leftover (Pro 3:9).

The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. (2Co 9:6-7)

## **The question regarding debts**

Pro 22:7 – Can we become slaves to men?

Deu 28:12 – The one who contracts debt or borrows, uses resources that the world offers, instead of waiting for the Lord's blessing.

Rom 13:8 – Do not owe anyone. We must understand that loans are also debts. When we make a loan (for example, to buy a stove), even if we pay the installments on time, we are debtors. If we do not pay on time, besides debtors we are unfaithful in contracts (perfidious).

Owe no one anything, except to love each other...  
(Rom 13:8)

...and the borrower is the slave of the lender. (Pro 22:7)

Note: We should also know that the purchase of a property or plot of land, although there is a financing involved, it is not a simple loan, but an investment. No one is spending money with purchases, but is making a kind of savings. If there is any tightness, you have the property as guaranty. You are not putting yourself as a servant to anyone. So the principle is not disobeyed.

# Budget Sheet

Owe no one anything, except to love each other...  
(Rom 13:8)

Here we find an important resource to do not incur in the error of the debt. As good stewards of the Lord, we must maintain our finances organized. The budget is a good tool for that.

Model of Budget Sheet	
Incoming	
- Salary	\$
Subtotal 1	\$
Offerings	
- Provisions:	\$
- Offers:	\$
Expenses	
- Rent	\$
- Water	\$
- Electricity	\$
- Groceries and Cleaning	\$
- Clothing	\$
- Transportation	\$
- School	\$
- ...	\$
- ...	\$
- Payment of Old Debts	\$
- For Savings	\$
Subtotal 2	\$
*Balance (Subtotal 1 – Subtotal 2)	\$

\* The balance is the difference between the entries (Subtotal 1) and the outs (Subtotal 2), and this balance should never be negative, ie, you should never spend more than you earn.