

What The Bible Says About

Money & Giving



Good Hope
Baptist Church

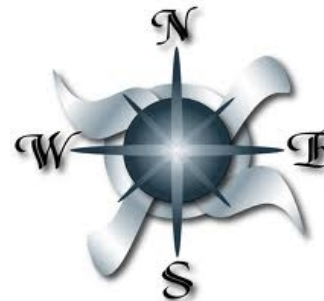
Living Together In The Love Of God

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FOCAL 2 Corinthians 9:6-8 But this [I say], He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. 7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, [so let him give]; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. 8 And God [is] able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all [things], may abound to every good work:

A young woman had just bought a new car and, as she was driving home, it started to rain. Unfamiliar with the instrument panel she turned on what she thought was the windshield wipers. The wipers didn't come on, but a message popped up on her console that said "**Drive car in 360 degrees**". Pulling over she found the right switch and turned on her wipers, but that crazy message, "**Drive car in 360 degrees**" kept blinking on her console. The next day she took the car back to the dealer and complained about that nutty message. When the dealer explained she understood. You see, the newer cars have



internal compasses and global positioning systems (GPS). If you break down or are in an accident the GPS - using the internal compass - will immediately call an operator for assistance. This only works when the internal compass is left in the "on" position. The young lady inadvertently turned off the internal compass of the car. When she turned it back on the compass - in order to reset itself and find *true north* - asked that she drive the

car in a circle. That reset the system.

Every Christian has an internal compass called a *conscience*, and a Global Positioning System (GPS) that keeps us pointing heavenward in our attitude and our actions. Our "GPS" is not a machine, but a Person. Every believer is indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God. The Apostle said:

Romans 8:9 ... if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

This indwelling Spirit is given to every Christian. It is part of our heritage, the Promise of our Savior and Lord. He told His disciples before He went to the Cross:

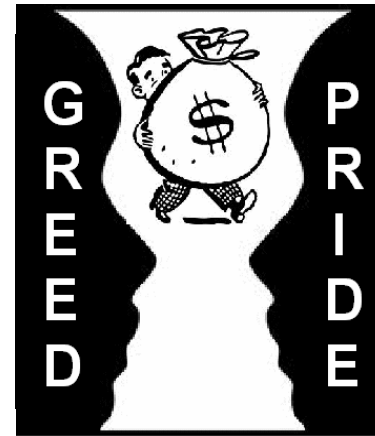
John 14:16-18 ... I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; 17 [Even] the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. 18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

The Holy Spirit keeps us pointing Heavenward, reminding us of the Word of Christ. But just like that young lady we can *turn off our internal compass*.

When a Christian lets sin come into his or her life and will not repent and turn to God, the *conscience can be disabled. Greed can disable your conscience.*

One of the greatest of all sins is the sin of **pride**. Pride is

the sin that caused Lucifer (Satan) to fall from Heaven. It is the sin that caused Adam to doubt God. Adam and Eve were placed in a perfect environment, had a perfect spouse, and had a perfect job. They served a perfect God and maintained order in a perfect world. Yet when Satan tempted them rather than run him off they said "**I want that, too**". That, dear friends, is *greed*.



Greed and Pride are twin sisters. The Face of Pride says, "Look at me - I must be the center of all life". The Face of Greed says "Yes I do", and then keeps its host busy chasing worthless paper.

Our Lord Jesus warned us in His *Sermon on the Mount*:

Matthew 6:19-21 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: 20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: 21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

People who are born again by faith in Christ know that their real treasure is not in the bank account, nor in their property. Their real treasure is the one which is in Heaven. I heard a preacher once say "The wallet is the last frontier". What he meant by that was the wallet is the last thing a Christian surrenders to God. It shouldn't be

that way, though.

Is your wallet your "last frontier"? Do you love your money more than you love your Lord? _____

How you give reflects who you love. Our Lord Jesus spoke much about money. He said:

Matthew 6:24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Word Study The word "Mammon" should be capitalized. It is the Greek word MAMMONAS (μαμμωνας pronounced *mam-mo-nas*), which was the ancient false god of money. In *The Dictionary of Phrase and Fable* Ebenezer C. Brewer wrote:



"Mammon. The god of this world. .. Mammon was the Syrian god of wealth, similar to Plutus of Greek and Roman mythology".

I have read several sources that suggested that the *golden calf* that Israel worshiped in the wilderness (**Exodus 32:1**). Our Lord Jesus said that we must all make a choice. We can worship the One True God, or we can worship the false god called "Mammon". You cannot serve both.

Those Saved By Grace Should Be Gracious, Not Greedy

To tithe or not to tithe - that is the question.

I took a little liberty with a familiar line from **William Shakespeare's** play *Hamlet*. Is tithing a New Testament concept, or something that just belonged in the Old Testament as a part of the Law of Moses? You see, there are many people who rightly quote the Scripture but wrongly apply it. They say:

John 1:17 For the law was given by Moses, [but] grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

and

Romans 6:14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

What *is* a tithe? What *tithe* did the Israelite pay under the Law? _____

They say **"We are not under the Law of Moses, we are under Grace. We are saved by Grace, we operate by Grace. The "Tithe" was a part of the Old Testament Law. Since we no longer sacrifice animals on altars, we no longer have to tithe"**.

It is true that the "tithe" was a part of the Law of Moses. In fact, the Israelites didn't give just one "tithe" or "one

tenth" of their income.

1 The first "Tithe" or "Ten Percent" was called **the Lord's Tithe**.

Numbers 18:21 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.** (see also Numbers 18:24; 18:28; 2 Chronicles 31:4)

This was a tithe given to those in *full time service to the Lord*. These people had no inheritance, no fields, no land, and no other way to make a living. They were devoted to serving God and training God's people. They were therefore supported in their work. The Apostle Paul said that the **full time New Testament Pastor** is supposed to be supported by those he ministers to. Paul wrote:

1 Corinthians 9:4-11 **Have we not power to eat and to drink? 5 Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and [as] the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas? 6 Or I only and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working? 7 Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? 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? 10 Or saith he [it] altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, [this] is written: that he that ploweth should plow in**

hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope. 11 If we have sown unto you spiritual things, [is it] a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?

Interestingly enough, Paul actually *quotes the Law of Moses* in order to support his point that the full time Christian Pastor is to be financially supported by those he serves. Not made rich, but supported.

2 The second "Tithe" was the **Festival Tithe (Deuteronomy 14:22-27; Exodus 23:16; Deuteronomy 16:13)**. Every year the Israelites had a celebration called **the Feast of Tabernacles**, also called **the Feast of Booths** or **the Feast of Ingathering (Hebrew Sukkot)**. Sukkot was held in the seventh month of the Hebrew



calendar. Sukkot could be considered the Jewish equivalent of our Thanksgiving. God told Israel:

Leviticus 23:40, 42-43 **On the first day you shall take the product of hadar trees, branches of palm trees, boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook. You shall live in booths seven days; all citizens in Israel shall live in booths, in order that future generations may know that I made the Israelite people live in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt.**

During Sukkot no person was supposed to work, but was

instead to worship the Lord and celebrate His grace in saving them from Egypt for seven days. The *Ten Percent Festival Tithe* was a collection given by every family to support this feast. To put it simply, it was like an *extended Baptist covered dish meal*. Everybody contributed a covered dish, and everyone came and enjoyed it for seven days. Now THAT is a celebration!

3 The *third Ten Percent Tithe* was a tithe for the poor.

It wasn't given every year, but every *third year* to help the poor and indigent:



Deuteronomy 14:28-29 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: 29 And the Levite, (because he hath no part nor inheritance with thee,) and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, which [are]

within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied; that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hand which thou doest.

It was probably this particular tithe that God was talking about through the Prophet Malachi. He said:

Malachi 3:8-10 Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, **Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.** 9 Ye [are] cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, [even] this whole nation. 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].

Notes _____ _____ _____

The Lord told Israel "**bring the all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in My house**". God doesn't need meat, nor does He need to store up food for later on. The storehouse was in Israel to give to those in need. Israel was supposed to be God's Nation - and it was offensive to God that there were poor and suffering people in Israel when their needs could so easily be met. This was not the only thing that the Lord commanded Israel to do for the poor. The Lord told Israel:

Leviticus 23:22 And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleanings of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: I [am] the LORD your God.

that they were not supposed to completely strip the land of all produce. When they harvested, the godly Israelite was suppose to leave food in the fields for the poor to harvest.

The Israelite did not tithe merely ten percent. They
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tithed *thirty percent of their income*. The purpose of their tithe was to support the ministry, promote worship, and feed the poor.

Israelites Paid Tithes Under The Law Christians Aren't Under The Law, Are They?

Though the "tithe" was instituted by the Lord in the Law of Moses, if you study the Tithe you find out that it - like the Sabbath - is *pre-Law*.

The Tithe was observed long before Moses' feet ever hit Mount Sinai by our forefather Abraham.

The Bible tells us that **Abraham was saved by faith, just as we are saved by faith:**



For we walk
by faith, not by sight.
2 Corinthians 5:1

Galatians 3:6-7 ... Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. 7 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.

and yet Abraham paid tithes of all his increase to the Priest **Melchizedek** after that priest blessed him.

Genesis 14:20 And {Abraham} gave him tithes of all.

The tithe was in place several hundred years before the Law of Moses. You should also notice that there is nothing in the New Testament that says "Do not tithe any more". In fact, the Lord Jesus Christ in rebuking the Pharisees said:

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.

Jesus didn't say "You shouldn't tithe". He said, "You should have been tithing - but you should also be better examples of godliness to those around you".



The Pharisees loved to give. They loved to give Jesus a hard time. They loved to give tithes as long as everyone else saw them doing it. They loved to give judgment on those not like them. They were great at giving - all the wrong things. Jesus never said "don't tithe". He supported tithing.

The **Southern Baptist Faith and Message** states in **Article XIII:**

"God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding

stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. "

This is what the Old Testament Tithes did. The Tithe told Israel that **all we have and all we are we owe to God**. God wants His people to know that we are **under obligation to serve Him with our time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize ALL these as entrusted to us to use for the glory of God and for helping others**. Southern Baptist Theological Seminary faculty member **Douglas Walker** wrote:

"... God owns everything, and therefore we are to be stewards of all he gives us. ... We, in turn, are thus responsible for using his blessings for his glory, our benefit and the welfare of others. **The New Testament teaches that Christians should give even above the tithe as God so blesses. The tithe is not done away with in the New Testament, but a greater principle of giving is placed upon the disciple of Christ. Christians are to give sacrificially as God blesses them.**" (Exposition From The Faculty of SBTS on the Baptist Faith and Message 2000)

A Christian is not under the Law of Moses. He is, however, under the Law of the Spirit. Tithing as a concept existed before the Law, and was not removed by our Lord Jesus after He came.

I believe in my heart that tithing - like the Sabbath rest

- was given by God to man *for our benefit*. The reason our country - and our Churches - are in the mess we are in today is because we've treated money like God and God's Word like nothing.

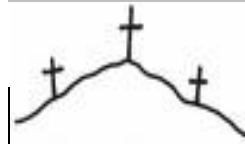
Greed has consumed America. Since 1940 the income of the average American household has increased dramatically. We have more stuff than ever before. In a

Year	Average Income
1940	\$1725.00
1950	\$3210.00
1960	\$5315.00
1970	\$9350.00
1980	\$19170.00
1990	\$28,960.00
2000	\$40,343.00

The **Barna Group**, which closely monitors American Christian practices, released a study in February 8, 2010 called "**The Economy's Impact**". In the report Barna said:

"**One measure of American generosity that has stayed**

relatively consistent – despite the economic turmoil – is the practice of tithing. This is the concept embraced by many Christians of giving ten percent (or more) of one's income. Overall, 7% of all adults reported donation levels equaling at least 10% of their income. The percentage of adults who tithe has remained constant since the beginning of the decade, falling in the 5% to 7% range."



When we give of our money to God we keep money in perspective. We are privileged to participate in His Kingdom by helping build it.

What Are Some Clear Guidelines On Christian Giving?

FOCAL 2 Corinthians 9:6 But this [I say], He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

The Lord has given us some very clear guidelines on giving in the Scripture. In our focal text the Apostle starts out with a farming term - something that every reader should be able to understand. He says "**he that sows sparingly shall reap sparingly, and he which sows bountifully shall reap bountifully**". Put it in



these terms: If I want 50 corn on the cob, I have to put *at least* 50 seed in the ground. I can put one seed in the ground if I want - but I'll only get back what that one seed would produce.

1 If I am generous giving, the Lord will be generous to me. The Law of Sowing and Reaping is as sure as is the Law of Gravity. God's people are saved by Grace, and we are called to be *Kingdom focused, not money focused*. Jesus tells His disciples:

Matthew 6:31-33 {Do not worry} saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? 32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek;) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. 33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and

all these things shall be added unto you.

that when we do HIS work, He will take care of OUR needs. If you sow little of your time, your tithe, or your talent, then you will not prosper. What we have, we have in stewardship from God for His glory. **Dr. Adrian Rogers** said:

"God wants to bless. He says, "Prove Me! I'll renew your faith, I'll rebuke your foes, and I'll restore your fruitfulness. Your fruit is not going to fall to the ground ahead of time. I'll make you fruitful in all that you do." You'll always do more with nine-tenths and God as a partner, than you do with ten-tenths by yourself. It's time we began to trust the Lord!

The Lord tells us:

Proverbs 3:5-10 Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. 6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. 7 Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil. 8 It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones. 9 Honor the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: 10 So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.

When we honor the Lord with our substance, and with the firstfruits of our increase, then He promises continued blessing. We read further:

FOCAL 2 Corinthians 9:7 Every man according as



he purposeth in his heart, [so let him give], not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

The word "**purposed**" is the Greek PROAIREOMAI (προαιρεομαι pronounced *pro-ah-ee-reh'-om-ah-ee*),

which means "**to decide to do**". It could be read "**let every man willingly choose to do this thing**" or "**do it from your heart**".

Do it from your heart. Give because you love the Lord.

2 The Lord doesn't want to coerce you to give. He doesn't want to twist your arm till it breaks. He doesn't want you to be forced to give a tenth. What He wants is your free will, not forced by free will offering. It is to be given **not grudgingly, nor out of necessity**. Dr. Charles Stanley said:

"What we do with our wealth demonstrates in a tangible way how well we trust, love, and honor God. Christians fully committed to Him will give generously to the work of the Lord. There is also a practical benefit to our generosity: it unleashes the Father's provision

Luke 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.

This scriptural principle is as changeless as the law of gravity. Those who give generously can expect God's blessings in their lives and eternal rewards in heaven."

3 The Lord wants you to be joyful in giving. He says in verse 7 "**God loves a cheerful giver**". The word "**cheerful**" is the Greek HILAROS (ιλαρος pronounced



hil-ar-os'), from where we get our word **hilarious**. Our Lord **loves a hilarious giver**. When it's time to give we should rejoice. We should rejoice because **God is asking us to participate in His work**. We should rejoice because **what we give will go to bless others and glorify Him**. We should rejoice because **we have it to**

give. We should rejoice because **what we give is temporary, but the reward we'll receive from Him is eternal**.

The Pharisees often made a great show of giving. There were *thirteen trumpets*, collection boxes that lined one wall of the Temple. The Pharisees often made a big show of "**sounding the trumpet**" (**Matthew 6:2**), noisily putting their money in these "trumpets" so as to gain everyone's attention as to how "good" they were. Jesus watched these people giving then, almost unnoticed, a widow came forward to give.

Mark 12:42-44 .. there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. 43 And he called [unto him] his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: 44 For all [they] did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, [even] all her living.



What would cause someone to give all that they have to the work of God? Love for the Lord. Knowing that He will care for them no matter what might come. **She was a hilarious giver - trusting the Lord her God.** To make sure that we understand the principle we read:

FOCAL 2 Corinthians 9:8 And God [is] able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all [things], may abound to every good work:

God is able to make all grace abound to us. He can and will meet our needs. Dear friends, we cannot out give God. As **Dr. Billy Graham** said:

"God has given us two hands -- one to receive with and the other to give with. We are not cisterns made for hoarding; we are channels made for giving. "

May God touch your hearts with His Word!

