

Stewardship: Motives of the Heart

Lesson #7 Honesty With God

Memory Verse Get Scriptures to read

Luke 8:15 *“But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience”*

Joe the butcher was closing the store one Saturday night when his best customer Mrs. Brown came in and asked for a nice roasting chicken. Joe put the last one he had on the scales. "It's 2 pounds 4 ounces - - that will be \$1.35." "That's too small," she answered, "do you have a larger one?" He went to the cooler and then returned with the same chicken. Weighing it, he said, "Just 3 pounds. That will be \$1.80." Still not satisfied, his customer said, "I think I'll take them both!" Joe was speechless. He had been caught red handed, in a lie.

Deuteronomy 25:15 *You shall have a perfect and just weight, a perfect and just measure, that your days may be lengthened in the land which the LORD your God is giving you.*

A Matter of Simple Honesty

Colossians 3:9–10 (NKJV) *Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds,¹⁰ and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,*

Ephesians 4:28 (NKJV) *Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.*

***Luke 16:10** (NKJV) *He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much.*

Honesty or dishonesty is learned with pennies not dollars.

Luke 12:47–48 (NKJV) *And that servant who knew his master's will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.⁴⁸ But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.*

“Dishonesty is practiced all through our ranks, and this is the cause of lukewarmness on the part of many who profess to believe the truth. They are not connected with Christ and are deceiving their own souls.”—Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church, vol. 4, p. 310.

Honesty Covers Almost Every Commandment

Exodus 20:13–17 (NKJV) Don't have other God's. (Stealing God's worship.) Remember the Sabbath. (Stealing God's time).¹² “Honor your father and your mother, (Stealing respect), “You shall not murder. (Stealing a life).¹⁴ “You shall not commit adultery. (Stealing a wife).¹⁵ “You shall not steal. (Stealing stuff)¹⁶ “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. (Dishonesty stealing the truth).¹⁷ “You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's.” (Stealing in the heart).

Malachi 3:8 (NKJV) *“Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, ‘In what way have we robbed You?’ In tithes and offerings.*

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 to the Lord.*

The Life of Faith

Genesis 22:1–2 (NKJV) *Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, “Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.”² Then He said, “Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.”*

***Hebrews 12:2** *looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

The word finisher is used only in this one instance in the New Testament and also can be translated as “perfecter.” It means that Jesus is intent on bringing our faith to maturity and completeness

Hebrews 6:1 *Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,*

Romans 12:3 (NKJV) *For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.*

A Statement of Faith

Rightly understood, tithe returned to God is a statement of faith. It is an outward, visible, personal expression of the reality of our faith.

James 2:19 (NKJV) *You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!*

One of the most accurate indicators of a person, or congregation's, spiritual condition is how are they giving.

Ephesians 1:3 (NKJV) *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,*

Luke 11:42 (NKJV) *“But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass by justice and the love of God. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone.”*

Luke 18:12 (NKJV) *I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.’*

Honest Tithe: Holy to the Lord

Matthew 6:3–4 (NKJV) *But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴ that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.*

Hebrews 7:1–10 (NKJV) *For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, ² to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all, first being translated “king of righteousness,” and then also king of Salem, meaning “king of peace,” ³ without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually. ⁴ Now consider how great this man was, to whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils. ⁵ And indeed those who are of the sons of Levi, who receive the priesthood, have a commandment to receive tithes from the people according to the law, that is, from their brethren, though they have come from the loins of Abraham; ⁶ but he whose genealogy is not derived from them received tithes from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises. ⁷ Now beyond all contradiction the lesser is blessed by the better. ⁸ Here mortal men receive tithes, but there he receives them, of whom it is witnessed that he lives. ⁹ Even Levi, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, so to speak, ¹⁰ for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him.*

“In like manner a tithe of our income is ‘holy unto the Lord.’ The New Testament does not reenact the law of the tithe, as it does not that of the Sabbath; for the validity of both is assumed, and their deep spiritual import explained. . . . While we as a people are seeking faithfully to give to God the time which He has reserved as His own, shall we not also render to Him that portion of our means which He claims?” —Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 66.

The New Testament concept of giving is higher not lower than the Old Testament

***Ecclesiastes 5:4–5** (NKJV) *When you make a vow to God, do not delay to pay it; For He has no pleasure in fools. Pay what you have vowed— Better not to vow than to vow and not pay.*

Revival, Reformation, and Tithing

2 Chronicles 31:4–10 (NKJV) *Moreover he commanded the people who dwelt in Jerusalem to contribute support for the priests and the Levites, that they might devote themselves to the Law of the LORD. ⁵ As soon as the commandment was circulated, the children of Israel brought in abundance the firstfruits of grain and wine, oil and honey, and of all the produce of the field; and they brought in abundantly the tithe of everything. ⁶ And the children of Israel and Judah, who dwelt in the cities of Judah, brought the tithe of oxen and sheep; also the tithe of holy things which were consecrated to the LORD their God they laid in heaps. ⁷ In the third month they began laying them in heaps, and they finished in the seventh month. ⁸ And when Hezekiah and the leaders came and saw the heaps, they blessed the LORD and His people Israel. ⁹ Then Hezekiah questioned the priests and the Levites concerning the heaps. ¹⁰ And Azariah the chief priest, from the house of Zadok, answered him and said, “Since the people began to bring the offerings into the house of the LORD, we have had enough to eat and have plenty left, for the LORD has blessed His people; and what is left is this great abundance.”*

The People Give More Than Enough

Exodus 36:2–7 *Then Moses called Bezalel and Aholiab, and every gifted artisan in whose heart the Lord had put wisdom, everyone whose heart was stirred, to come and do the work. ³ And they received from Moses all the offering which the children of Israel had brought for the work of the service of making the sanctuary. So they continued bringing to him freewill offerings every morning. ⁴ Then all the craftsmen who were doing all the work of the sanctuary came, each from the work he was doing, ⁵ and they spoke to Moses, saying, “The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work which the Lord commanded us to do.” ⁶ So Moses gave a commandment, and they caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, saying, “Let neither man nor woman do any more work for the offering of the sanctuary.” And the people were restrained from bringing, ⁷ for the material they had was sufficient for all the work to be done—indeed too much.*

Tithing Outline

I. God Owns All

When we recognize that God owns everything and all blessings come from Him, our role as managers, or stewards, becomes evident. We also see the multitude of blessings for which we can be thankful.

Therefore, money is not our possession; it is God's possession. We are merely stewards, or managers. He allots different amounts to us, based on His plan and purpose for our lives, and we will be held accountable for the way we manage allotments distributed to us.

II. One Should Have A Right Attitude Towards Tithing.

1. 2 Cor 9:6-8; 1 Tim. 6:10; Matthew 6:24; Acts 20:35.
2. We demonstrate who is first in our life by our TITHING.
 - A. The tithe is the FIRST TENTH of our income. Not what is left over (Proverbs 3:9-10).
 - B. Tithing is a demonstration of worship. It shows who is first in our lives (Gen. 14:18-20; 28:20-22; 32:9-10).

III. Responsibility And Blessings Of Tithing

1. The tithe belongs SOLELY TO GOD
 - A. Lev. 27:30, 32; Heb. 7:4-8; Matt. 23:23.
 - B. Some say that the New Testament does not teach tithing. That is not true. Jesus lives after the order of Melchizedek. When we set aside our first tenth unto Jesus, we prove His High Priesthood as Abraham. If we are children of Abraham and walk in his steps then we must handle our money the way he did.
2. Wonderful blessings result from tithing (Malachi 3:7-12).
 - A. Everything we have belongs to God. All that He asks is that we return a tenth of it. This is not for His benefit but for ours.
 - B. The Storehouse: The place where one receives his or her spiritual food (Numbers 18:21, 24; Gal. 6:6; 1 Tim. 5:18; 1 Cor. 9:7-14).

IV. Responsibilities Concerning The Offering

1. The OFFERING goes beyond our tithe (Deut 12:6).
 - A. We do not OFFER tithes to God because it is already His (Lev. 27:30), The tithe is ten percent of your income. Anything beyond that is an offering.
2. Giving is by FAITH and can be sacrificial (2 Cor. 9:12-13).
 - A. Some say that they cannot afford to give. Actually you cannot afford NOT to give (Luke 6:38; Mark 12:42-44; 1 Kings 17:13-14).

V. Giving to God is investing in the Kingdom of God

1. Matt. 6:19-21; Luke 16:11.
 - A. Right giving insures that God will provide for us here on earth, but we are also laying up treasures in heaven in proportion to what we give on earth.
 - B. Many will be disappointed when they come before Jesus and see the results of their stinginess on earth (1 Cor. 3:12-15).

CONCLUSION: Tithing is important to both you and God. It is important to God because He wants to bless you and it is important to you because you desire to be blessed. Give God all that He is due and He will open for you the windows of heaven!

Quotes On Tithe By Ellen White

"God's plan in the tithing system is beautiful in its simplicity and equality. All may take hold of it in faith and courage, for it is divine in its origin. In it are combined simplicity and utility, and it does not require depth of learning to understand and execute it. All may feel that they can act a part in carrying forward the precious work of salvation. Every man, woman, and youth may become a treasurer for the Lord, and may be an agent to meet the demands upon the treasury" (*Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 73).

"Great objects are accomplished by this system. If one and all would accept it, each would be made a vigilant and faithful treasurer for God, and there would be no want of means with which to carry forward the great work of sounding the last message of warning to the world. The treasury will be full if all adopt this system, and the contributors will not be left the poorer. Through every investment made they will become more wedded to the cause of present truth. They will be 'laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life'" (*Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 389).

"Acts of generosity and benevolence were designed by God to keep the hearts of the children of men tender and sympathetic and to encourage in them an interest and affection for one another in imitation of the Master, who for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich. The law of tithing was founded upon an enduring principle and was designed to be a blessing to man" (*Reflecting Christ*, p. 270).