

Should I Tithe to the Church?

Intro: Have you ever heard any of these statements when the subject of money is discussed in the Church?

- ✓ *Money, money, money, that's all they talk about.*
- ✓ *Isn't the Church supposed to be about spiritual things - what's so spiritual about money?*
- ✓ *I go to Church to get away from everybody trying to get MY money.*
- ✓ *I am a member in good standing. What more do YOU want?*

Have you been promised a great return if you give money to God through a church or a TV ministry? Maybe you heard some testimonies of people getting rich and you were drawn to give whatever you can because someone said that if you sow your seed into their anointed ground it will bring a hundred fold return. The stories and testimonies are endless and so are the devastated lives from the unfulfilled promises to them.

Many preachers, churches and ministries have become very wealthy - especially television evangelists from practicing what they call seed faith. Many today live as king's in what would be called palaces and justify their luxury by using tithing as the law of God to have these blessings. However in closer examination there is no comparison between the enjoyers of the prosperity teaching in the modern day church today and the life Jesus Christ, John the Baptist, or how the Apostle Paul lived. Don't get me wrong, we should give, it is important to give (not just money). I assure you I'm not saying you should not support the church that you go to or ministries that do God's work. What I am asking you to do is two things.

(1) Question what your motive is in giving or more importantly, what is their motive in why they are telling you to give? (2) Look into the Scripture to see if what they are saying is Biblical by its context.

I Cor 16:1-2.....Concerning the Collection?

Explore it

1. When was the church at Corinth asked to set aside money for their gifts? _____

2. According to Paul's writing in verse 1, was this a... Command (or) Suggestion

3. Whose example was the Corinthian church to follow (v-1)? _____

4. For whom was the collection that Paul requested? Believers (or) Unbelievers

NOTE for Number 4: The collection referred to was a special offering being taken for the poor believers in Jerusalem (cp. [Romans 15:26](#); [1 Cor. 16:1, 3](#); [2 Cor. 8:1f](#); [2 Cor. 9:1f](#); [Acts 24:17](#)). For some reason the Jerusalem believers were suffering extreme poverty. Some commentators have speculated that the suffering was due to severe persecutions by the Jews (cp. [1 Thes. 2:14-16](#)).

5. What did Paul mean when he said "let every one of you lay by him in store" (v-2)? _____

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NOTE for Number 5: This could not mean that a person is to keep his offering "stored up" or set aside for long periods of time before giving it. Paul explicitly says that it is to be given to the church every week so that there will be no need for a special offering when he comes to the church.

6. How much money did Paul ask people to give? _____

II Cor 9:6-8.....The Cheerful Giver

What images come to your mind when you hear about a "cheerful giver"? Mark all that apply.

- Happy Excitement Joyful Sad Merry Negative Smiling
 Positive Dead Gloomy Depressed Cheery Jolly Miserable
 Wonderful Down Beat Bummed Out Blessed Good spirits Excellent

Explore it

1. Finish these two sentences...(v-6)
 - a. If I give sparingly, I will reap _____
 - b. If I give generously, I will reap _____
2. How should we give (v-7)? _____
3. What promise does God give to believers who do give generously (v-8)? _____

Proverbs 11:24 says, The person who gives freely, gains more; the person that withholds what is right, only becomes poor.

Get it

4. Someone once said, "The *attitude of your giving* is a true *reflection* of our daily walk with God". According to this statement, how would you rate your attitude of giving from 1-10?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5. What motivates you to give? _____

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6. What kind of giver are you? Cheerful Giver Grudging Giver

7. What could an unwilling giver do to become a more cheerful giver? _____

II Cor 8:1-5.....They Gave Even While in Poverty

Introduction: the churches throughout Judea were suffering great poverty and needed help badly. This is what this passage is about: meeting the desperate need of fellow believers and human beings who were being threatened with starvation and death, many of whom were without Christ and doomed to an eternity apart from Christ.

The need of missions is an *unending call, a call that never ends*. The desperate needs of the world must always confront man. Why? Because the world is sinful and corruptible, full of greed and covetousness, banking and hoarding. People who *have* more than they need should be helping and giving, serving and ministering. Instead they are banking and hoarding. The result is a world reeling in desperate need. The challenge to the church is clear! Give—give all you are and have to reach and help the desperate of the world.

1. Verse 2 tells us that the Macedonia church was going through a great trial of affliction. What else were they suffering from?

2. Although in deep poverty, Paul bare witness and was impressed with three things that the church did in vs. 3-5. What were they?

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

Get it

1. How have your views on giving changed over the years?

2. How can the example of the Macedonian church challenge those who have little money to give?

3. What prevents people from giving a fair portion of their money to the Lord for His work? _____

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To Whom Should the Church Give to?

While the Bible does not spell everything out in as much detail as we might like, it does give us some clear instructions on to whom we should give.

(1) We should give to the church. The church is the bride of Christ and God's unique institution in the world. As such, it is the first and worthiest recipient of Christian giving. Specifically, we should give to pay pastors for their work (1 Timothy 5:17-18; 1 Cor 9:1-14) and to support our missionaries (Philippians 4:15-19; Acts 28:10).

(2) We should give to the needy in the church. The Bible has a special concern for the poor and needy, specifically widows and orphans (James 1:27), the hungry, the thirsty, the sick, the naked, aliens, and prisoners (Matthew 25:34-40), as well as victims of calamity (Luke 10:30-37). Because the Christian church is our spiritual family, we are especially responsible for the Christian needy (Romans 12:13), in the same way that we give attention to our own spouses, children, and parents over other people.

(3) We should give to the needy in the world. While our first responsibility is to our needy Christian brothers, the Bible also instructs us to give to the poor and needy in general, Christian or not (Deuteronomy 15:11).

(4) We should give even to our enemies. This is perhaps the special mark of Christian generosity. Because God in Christ gave to us when we were His enemies, he calls us to be like him by giving to our enemies. This is the point of Jesus' story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37), and of Paul's instruction in Romans 12:20.

(5) We should give to the kingdom of God generally. The Bible sparks our creativity to give to God's work wherever we find it. We are first of all responsible for the church and for the poor, but beyond that, we can and should give imaginatively so as to seek the kingdom of God (Matthew 6:33).

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