

Tithing

Tithe means “one-tenth.” Tithing was a practice in many pagan cultures. How does God expect His people to give?

Pre-Mosaic law:

Tithing is only mentioned twice; Abraham to Melchizedek, and Jacob. Both were voluntary. There is no indication of any other regular giving. God’s only pre-Mosaic law specifying giving was in Gen 41 when all were required to give 20% to the government in preparation for seven lean years.

Mosaic law:

First 10%—(Lev 27:30 & Num 18:21) Given to the Levites in return for services they performed.

Second 10%—(Deut 14:22-23) To support national feasts and holidays

Third 10%—(Deut 14:28-29) Every third year for alien, widow and orphan. Welfare.

This makes 23%. Israel was a theocracy, not a democracy. It was essentially a tax used for the operation of the government. It was not free-will giving to God.

Old Testament voluntary giving:

Prov 3:9-10: Give to the Lord generously and first.

Prov 11:24: To increase your money, share it generously

Ex 25:1-2, 35:5,21: Raising money for the tabernacle. It was giving from the heart. In Ex 36:6 so much came in that people had to be told to stop!

2 Sam 24:24: Sacrificial. Don’t give to God that which costs you nothing.

New Testament voluntary giving:

Rom 13:6: Support the government; pay taxes like Israel did (Matt 17:24-27; 22:15-21)

2 Cor 9:7: Give cheerfully what you decide in your heart; not a percentage.

Luke 6:38: As you give, it will be returned; you can’t out-give God.

2 Cor 9:6: Give a little, get a little. Give much, receive much. From verse 8 we get “all that we need” —sufficiency and abundance.

1 Cor 16:2: Give regularly and first.

Summary Passage: 2 Cor 8:3

The biblical concept of giving (Old and New Testaments) is summed up in this verse – “For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own...”

1. “as much as they were able” —**proportionately**
2. “even beyond their ability” —**sacrificially**
3. “entirely on their own” —**freely**

The Principle of Contentment

Intro:

God says more about _____ than He does almost any other topic in the Bible.

The Principle:

What is biblical contentment?

How do I acquire this biblical attitude of contentment?

What is the key to being content?

Discussion Questions

1. How does what you heard today compare to what you knew before about tithing? How do you feel about what you heard?
2. How do you react to the principle of biblical contentment? Does it run counter to the way you were raised?
3. Which do you think represents the greater challenge to money management, having a lot or having a little?