

DIFFICULT QUESTION, REAL ANSWERS
SUBJECT 3
TO WHOM DOES THE MONEY BELONG?

No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.

Matthew 6:24

Who has not heard this?

**The Only Thing that the Church is Interested in is Your Money*

**All of the Tithes are the Pastor's*

**The Church Does Not Know How to Manage Money That is Why I Do Not Tithe*

Because we live in a culture dominated by consumerism, to speak about giving in monetary terms, is something very difficult for the church. First, because the world does not know about God, it is easy for them to point to the church as an institution that is worried about money.

MONEY BELONGS TO GOD

In Haggai 2:8 the Bible says, *"The silver is mine and the gold is mine, declares the Lord Almighty."* It seems that God wanted the people to understand who the owner of the money is.

OUR CONCEPT OF MONEY REVEALS WHETHER OR NOT OUR LIVES ARE TRULY SURRENDERED TO GOD.

Let us see how the Bible describes someone who loves money more than God.

Ecclesiastes 5:10 says, *"Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless."* This passage explains the dilemma that there is in human beings. Money is something that cannot satisfy us. The explanation that many people give in not being faithful in their financial dealings with God is because they feel like owners of their money and believe that accumulating more and more will one day be able to give to God. That is a lie.

1 Timothy 6:9 says, *"People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction."* Sadly, having been a pastor for almost 20 years, I have noticed that the people who come to the Lord without anything and later become a little rich, will stray from God because they have changed their loyalty. The loyalty and the trust that they had in God at the beginning, have now poured into their riches. They have demonstrated with their lives that they cannot serve two masters and prefer to serve the god of money and not the Owner or the silver and gold.

Colossians 3:5 says, *"Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry."*

The Word of God explicitly says that greed is idolatry and that it is even with fornication and impurities. Nobody would equate fornication with greed. However, this is exactly the result of trusting more in money than in God.

THE TITHE IS THE MINIMUM MEASURE OF GIVING GOD WHAT BELONGS TO HIM

DOES THE BIBLE SPEAK OF THE TITHE?

The answer is this, “of course it does.”

The references to this begin from the first book of Genesis 29:22. You will notice the declaration that Jacob was not saying: “from what I have I will give”, rather “from what you give me” I will give a tithe. From that time, those who walked with God affirm that money and possessions belonged to God. The last book of the Old Testament also speaks about this in Malachi 3:8-10.

THE TITHE IS THE MINIMUM, NOT THE MAXIMUM

The tithe is the minimum that God hopes to receive. Those who give much less than the tithe justify themselves, thinking that at least they are “tithing” something. While what is really happening is the contrary. **It seems that the god of money is receiving more tithes than the God of the Universe.**

MYTH: “GOD KNOWS THAT I DO NOT HAVE ANYTHING TO GIVE HIM.”

A very common way that is used to avoid giving God how we should is to justify that we have nothing to give him. Think for a moment is this declaration is true or not. At this moment, think about what you have. Do you have a cell phone? Do you have a television at home? Do you have more than one article of clothing? Do you have an automobile? Do you live under a roof? How many times a day do you eat? These questions indicate that we all have something and that in a certain way we acquired it. It is probable that we acquired them with “money” and that money belongs to God.

In Acts 5:1-11 we find a story of someone who used that excuse. They tried to justify their offering or tithe and sadly paid serious consequences, not with the Apostles but with God. *“You have not lied to men, but to God” (verse 4)*. As you can see, to say “I don’t have” is dangerous because you are guilty of lying. Serving the god of riches has eternal and grave consequences.

IF MONEY BELONGS TO GOD, WHAT SHOULD I DO WITH THE TITHE? The answer is simple, “give your tithe to God.” Let us see what it is to be a giver and a tither.

- **TITHER? APPLYING THE PRINCIPLE OF “EVERYTHING”**

The argument of lots of people is the term tithe does not appear in the New Testament and that Jesus did not demand it. The answer is simple to that argument is that it is true. However, the answer is not going to please those who reject tithing by using this argument. A story from the gospels will answer why Jesus does not ask for a tithe. The story is found in Mark 12:41-44. It is a brief example in which Jesus cancels the argument of those who for the love of the god of riches deny having to be generous and giving with God. Jesus applied the principle of “everything”. If we are going to argue about percentages, Jesus says that we are as the “rich”, we give what is left over. Do you understand the principle? God is not after your money, it already belongs to Him. He wants His children to give Him the tithe and more because He take care of them.

- **WHAT SHOULD I DO? BEGIN TO TITHE AND OR ADD TO YOUR TITHE**

Here are the results:

***Acts 20:35 says,** *“It is more blessed to give than to receive.”*

***Luke 6:38 says,** *“Give and it shall be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”*

***Proverbs 11:24 says,** *“One man gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty.”*

- **HOW DO I DO THIS? GIVE WHAT YOU HAVE PROPOSED.** How much do you earn on a weekly basis? There are many people who have their own house or rent a house, they have a car that they pay on a monthly basis, they go out to eat to restaurants, they buy personal articles and toys for their children. This means that it is very probable that

their income is much more than the minimum salary, but when it comes to the offering or the tithe that belongs to God, they bring five dollars or a dollar or nothing at all to the altar of God.

Do you think that this makes you a liar before God? When Paul wrote to the church of Corinth, he declared in 2 Corinthians 9:7, *“Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”* In this context, I am sure that now a day this would not have been referred to as one or five dollars. I believe that this reflected the spirit of a people who knew that money belonged to God and that they were going to give generously and with joy.

PRACTICAL STEPS TOWARDS GIVING TO GOD WHO IS THE OWNER OF ALL THE MONEY.

Do it. Decide today to begin to give the minimum to God. Take your calculator. Figure out what you make. Take out 10% for God and bring it every time you get your salary.

2. Teach your Family to give Offering and to Tithe. Next week, be sure that each member of your family gets to church with something to bring to the altar. Deuteronomy 16:16

3. Help with your Faithfulness – The life of the church rotates around not only working but also in the maintaining of the building, amplifiers, furniture, salaries for the personnel and the pastor, and projects and work. You are not only a consumer but also a helper. Your faithfulness helps next to others in the work of the local church.

4. Get out of Debt - Debts are the territory of the god of riches. That god does not give but only takes. When you show a genuine faithfulness, this is what God promises. Deuteronomy 28:12

THE CHURCH IS MORE EFFECTIVE WHEN ALL OF US HAVE A GOD LIKE THE LORD OF OUR MONEY

A church is called to advance the Kingdom of God not only through the preaching but also through its actions. It is not right to be receiving special offerings only to be able to help. Malachi says that bringing the tithes to the storehouse was part of the way that the people could fulfill the legacy of service to God by supplying the needs.

WHAT HAPPENS TO GOD’S MONEY? The responsibilities of the church are met.

- The church is part of an organization that preaches the gospel around the world. Therefore, the church tithes to the international offices so that the work can continue forward through the programs and salaries of its directors.
- The church also covers its local commitments like the mortgagee, insurance of the building and equipment, maintenance, utilities, repairs, and programming.
- The church covers the salary of the pastors and the personnel. That means that the TITHE DOES NOT GO TO THE PASTOR. The pastor receives a salary according to the government of the church dictates. Biblically speaking this is right. 1 Timothy 5:18 says, *“For the Scripture says, “Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain,” and “The worker deserves his wages.”*

When everyone gives according to how the Lord has prospered, great things can be accomplished for the Kingdom of God.

HOW DOES GOD PAY? The Bible is clear when it comes to a generous God. When we allow God to manage our money, then this beautiful promise will be fulfilled in our lives. Philippians 4:19 says, *“My God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”*

Let us allow our faithfulness to open the windows of heaven and that God would bless us in order to be more of a blessing.

QUESTIONS

- What is your opinion of the tithe?
- In your opinion, is there a difference between what the tithe is today compared to what it was before Christ came?

- Have you experienced the blessing of God when you have been faithful with your tithes and offerings? Could you share an experience?
- Do you consider your participation in the tithes and offerings as important?