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## GIVING & TITHING

Today I am talking about money.

The Bible talks a lot about money, 100's of verses relate to this subject. Of Jesus' 39 parables half are related to money.

**Why?** It tells so much about human character: righteousness, generosity, meanness, diligence etc.

Take covetousness: God says in His Word it is as serious as adultery--- read: 1 Corinthians 5: 11 *"But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner—not even to eat with such a person."*

Col. 4: 4-6 *When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience,*

We have to see all we have belongs to God including our possessions and money. We are stewards of it. He is LORD of our money. Jesus says, "If you say I am Lord and Master then Give me your car, your jewellery, your house, everything", – He then puts it back in our hand, He loans it to us so we can be His steward.

All money is tainted: it taint mine, it taint yours – tis all Gods.

God doesn't want to keep it in his safe, he means us to enjoy it, and if you are a hoarder you'll never enjoy it. If you are responsible and generous you'll attract God's favour and be joyful.

Read about Cornelius in Acts 10: 1-5, 31-32, 35, 44-45. He attracted the attention of heaven; his alms giving came up to God as a memorial, so God brought blessing to his household.

Now let's talk about tithing:

Firstly, in the Old Testament tithing was taught and practiced by all God's people. Up to 30% of their increase; 10% for the priests, 10% for running the nation and 10% for the poor etc.

First mention was Abraham's response to meeting a great divine personage: Gen. 14: 18-20, Heb. 7: 1-10. When we meet Jesus He become so awesome that we just want to give; our heart is expanded.

Jacob continued what his father and grandfather did. When he had a meeting with God He responded, Gen 28: 22 *"Of all you give me I'll give you one tenth."*

Duet. 14: 22-28, 26: 13 One tenth of the Israelites increase was to be given to the Lord.

Then in Malachi 3: 8 It was clearly taught. That was written for our day. God says, bring your offering (tithes into the storehouse (church) and prove Me, I'll pour out blessings so great you won't be able to contain them.

Some say, but tithing is not taught in the New Testament.

- I tell you the New testament teaches giving 'big time'.
- Why did God leave all those OT scriptures in the Bible as part of His Word. Malachi was for our day. We learn so much from the O.T. that flows into the New.
- Look at the giving in Acts 2, 3, 4. See verses 2:44-45, 4: 32, 34-35
- See what God says about sowing and reaping in 2 Cor. 8: 1-3, 8-9 and 9: 6-11, 13-15 – It's in the context of sowing our money (Paul's agricultural example).
- What happen when you eat the seed? There will be nothing to plant so nothing to reap.

- Maybe there's a little pain when we sow at first, but the pain goes away when we yield and sow cheerfully, and there's a joy in reaping.
- God has used the tithing principles to finance His kingdom down through the centuries. The gospel would never have spread throughout the world without abundant giving and tithing. It has blessed the givers and the receivers. We would never be in the blessing of God without the sacrifice and generosity of people. The Church would never have survived.

We need to give:

- To fulfil righteousness
- To be God's disciple.
- To share our responsibility. (Otherwise you rob off the brother or sister sitting beside you. They have to carry the burden of your lack.)
- To experience God's promised blessing.

Take the bold step of faith, set aside your tithe and offering and prove a faithful God. Our firstfruits are His. E.g. We gave our first lettuces to some people in need and a few days later God sent a couple of students to our door with a bag of cabbages. Be faithful in the small things then God will entrust you with bigger things.

Saying: "Do you giving while you're living, or others are lead while you're dead to give your gold to Satan's hold."

e.g. Colgate story:

William Colgate was born in a large poor family in America, His mother died and left his father to bring up and provide for the children. To help them have some money they made soap in the wash house copper bowl and sold this to paid the bills. When William was about 14 his father said he couldn't afford to keep him so told him to go out and find work. He decided to go to New York to make his fortune. On the way he had to cross a river on a ferry-boat. The ferry Master asked him where he was going; he replied to New York to make my fortune. The ferry master said, 'Young man just remember this, always give one tenth to the Lord – that is his portion.' Young William made that promise. When he arrived in New York some strangers took him in to live, but he couldn't find work. The only thing he knew was how to make soap, so he made it in a copper tub and sold it around the streets. William made a fortune, started by giving one tenth of his earnings; it is said, he gave more and more up to nine tenths of his increase. Colgates became a gigantic worldwide company.

The Toronto Church was the largest missionary giving church in its time. The pastor Rev. Oswald Smith reported that during the worldwide financial slump many came asking for money, but never did he ever have a person that tithed in the good times come in need in the tough time. God supplied, He rewards the righteous --- when we are faithful to His principles He is true to His promises.

*"We make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give."* Winston Churchill

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