

Tithes and Offerings

by George C. Clark, Sr.
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“Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed me. But you say, ‘Wherein have we robbed You?’ In tithes and offerings.” (Mal. 3:8)

“But remember this: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Let each one give as he has determined in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” (I Cor. 9:6-7)

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*“And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran. And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set. And he took of the stones of that place and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep, and he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven. And behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, ‘If God will be with me, and will keep me in the way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father’s house in peace, then shall the LORD be my God. And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God’s house, and of all that Thou shalt give me, I will surely give the tenth unto Thee.’” -Gen. 28*



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The tithe is the tenth of one’s income, which the righteous have always devoted to the Lord. Some teach that tithing belonged only to the time of the Law of Moses and, therefore, does not belong in the

New Testament. Yet, long before the time of Moses, we read that Abraham, the type of believer, paid tithes to Melchizedek, the type of Christ (Gen. 14:17-20; Ps. 110:4). *“If Abraham were your father,”* Jesus said, *“ye would do the works of Abraham”* (Jn. 8:39). Friend, this includes tithing, don’t you think?

Yes, the true sons and daughters of Abraham bring tithes to Jesus, our Melchizedek, by bringing their tithes to his servants. Here on earth, anointed men of God receive the tithes, *“but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth”* (Heb. 7:8). As Melchizedek received tithes, so Jesus does. Abraham’s blessing through tithing is ours, being a part of his blessing of justification by faith. God’s will concerning tithes and offerings has never changed, and the commandment to tithe cannot be repealed, so long as the priesthood of Christ lasts, even on the new earth which God has prepared for those who love him.

The refusal to bring tithes and offerings to the Lord is sin. Often, it is the sin of covetousness which prevents one from rendering his tithes and offerings to the Lord. The love of money hinders many from expressing proper gratitude to God for all His benefits. How much are the blessings of God worth? What would you give for your eyesight? your hearing? your limbs? your home, your clothes, or your food?



Covetousness undermines thankfulness, until one is rendered a helpless slave to his own possessions. Judas is not the only one who has traded his eternal heritage for a few pieces of silver. A second most common reason for failure to obey God in tithes and offerings is a government-despising spirit. When one brings his tithes to an anointed man of God, he is acknowledging the authority which Christ has established among the saints. By doing so, he places himself in a position to be blessed by God, as Abraham was blessed by Melchizedek when he acknowledged his authority and rendered tithes to him. If you patiently observe those who refuse to

bring their tithes to the Lord, you will in time discover the motivation for their rebellion, whatever it may be.

In the Law, we learn that *“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 unto the LORD. And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the LORD”* (Lev. 27:30, 32). Now, we know that *“the Law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient.”* In other words, a righteous man does not have to be commanded to render his tithes and offerings to God. Being a righteous man, his conscience tells him to do so. It was long before the Law was given that righteous Jacob promised God, *“Of all that Thou shalt give me, I will surely give the tenth unto Thee.”* Jacob was then on a perilous journey, without home or income, and friendless in a strange land; nevertheless, this vow and his faithfulness to it resulted in his return to his father’s house in peace and plenty. So, we see that righteous men lived according to the Law *before the Law was given*. The Law declared what righteousness was, but righteous men already understood it.

The tenth of all our increase is the Lord’s. That was true before the Law was given; it held true during the time of the Law, and it remains true. The tenth of your increase is not yours. It is merely left in your care to be given to the minister of God – for your blessing as well as his. We read in Numbers 18:21, *“Behold, I have given the children of Levi [anointed ministers of God] all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance for their service which they serve, even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation.”*

Listen now to our Creator, as He asks and answers this question: *“Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, ‘Wherein have we robbed Thee?’ In tithes and offerings”* (Mal. 3:8). The child of God who refuses to bring his tithes is stealing from God. In failing to render the tithe to God, one makes himself an enemy of Christ, undermining the efforts of those doing his work in

the earth. *“Thou shalt not steal”* is one of the Ten Commandments. Are we to construe this commandment to mean, *“Thou shalt not steal except from the Lord”*? Indeed, are we less guilty when stealing the tithe from the Lord than when stealing from man? Quite the contrary. I would be less guilty in taking your nine-tenths than I would be in taking the Lord’s one-tenth. His one-tenth is holy; your nine-tenths is not. Some have said that they believe in giving only as God prospers them. This condition is met perfectly by the tithing system. The man who earns only ten dollars must render only one dollar in tithes. Isn’t that *“as the Lord prospers”*?

It helps to understand these truths if we keep in mind that tithing is not *giving* anything. It is only rendering to God what belongs to Him. One does not *give* tithes; he pays, or renders, them. For instance, if one were to steal ten dollars from me, and then were to give me a dollar in an offering, I would have to consider the dollar a gift, but at the same time, I would have to consider the giver a thief. Similarly, if your tithe is ten dollars, and instead of paying your tithe, you give a dollar to the ministry, then you are robbing God of His tenth, and through pity or because someone asked, you are returning part of it. You are giving, but you are also a thief. It has been said that *“the tithe is the basket in which the Lord sends us the nine-tenths, and if we do not return His one-tenth, we steal the basket.”*

If the law of the tithe is to be ignored, then the ministers of Christ are without a system for financial support. God has given law and order to every phase of government on earth, from the home to the nation. Then, why should anyone think that God would leave the body of Christ, the earth’s highest form of government, without a system of financial support? Taxes are for the welfare of the state; tithes are for the welfare of the saints. One cannot neglect either and be a faithful follower of Christ, for Jesus said, *“Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and unto God the things which are God’s.”*

Paul emphatically confirms the tithing system

by saying, *“Do you not know that they who minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? And they who wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so has the Lord ordained that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel.”*

#### OFFERINGS

God said that His people had robbed Him not only in tithes but also in offerings. An offering is what we give to God *after* our tithes. The offerings must come from our nine-tenths, since the one-tenth is already the Lord’s. Because they have not understood the truth concerning tithes and offerings, many of God’s dear children have served Him for years and have never *given* one dime to support His ministers. All they have done is render tithes to Him. Concerning offerings (giving beyond the tithe) Paul wrote, *“Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver. But this I say, he which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly, and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.”* What kind of reaping awaits us, my friends?

#### MANNER OF GIVING

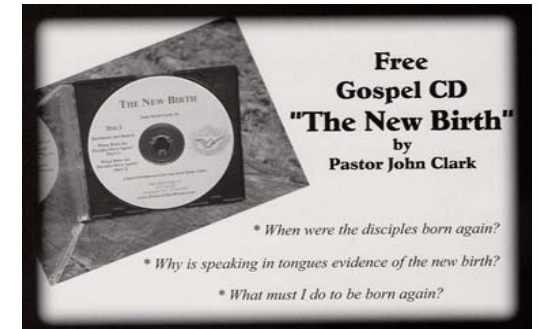
*“Give, and it shall be given unto you. Good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that you mete shall it be measured to you.”*

This is the manner in which God has taught us to give unto men: *“good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over”*. If God has commanded us to give to men in this manner, should we come to God with an offering that is insufficiently small, or that is not in *“good measure”*, or that has not been *“pressed down”*, and that we have not *“shaken together”*? Until we do this, we can never bring Him an offering that is *“running over”* with thanksgiving and faith. This is God’s way of giving to us, and He asks us to do nothing more than what

He Himself does. Oh, the depths of His love and mercy, and how tediously we take of it, and of His riches! How lightly we esteem His precepts! Should we not return to Him an offering worthy of His grace, to show our gratitude for that which He has done for us? Let us put into operation that challenging sequence of events described by the prophet Malachi: *“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open to you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.”*

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