

*Tithes and offerings*

*The*

***“CASH COW”***

*of the Modern  
Religious System*

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Every institution with regular expenditure requires a constant available source of income

The Old Testament tithe solves this problem for them admirably

Pastors will then use those tithes for their expensive cars, ambitious building programs, and salaries to finance lifestyles that most of their people could only dream of having.

But don't ever expect them to give any of their precious tithes to the poor and needy, they are far and away too smart for that.

## INTRODUCTION

God's method for financing His Kingdom on earth under the old covenant was through Tithing, and to a very lesser extent Offerings. (When we speak of offerings we are not referring to the sacrificial offerings of Leviticus).

### **With regard to tithing there are two schools of thought.**

**First:** That we are obligated to tithe (10%) on our income plus make offerings.

**Second:** That tithing is no longer applicable under the new covenant.

The word "new" immediately suggests that it is replacing the "old", and all that pertains to it is no longer in force.

It has become apparent to most saints that any form of *compulsory* giving is unacceptable to God under any circumstances. This is certainly true of the "new covenant."

Paul says in 2 Corinthians 9:7. "Not grudgingly, nor of necessity for God loves a cheerful giver."

"Any form of compulsory giving strengthens the hands of evil doers".

### **Let us take a look at the following.**

If someone believes they are obligated to obey something and don't do it, to him it is sin. James 4:17. In other words if you believe that you are morally bound to tithe as many do, then you are bound by the law of your conscience to obey. Unquestionably there are multitudes of Christians who can testify of God's provision and blessing as they faithfully tithed on their income. We believe them when they say God honoured their obedience with regard to what they believed. We tithed as believers for many years and can verify that God honoured what we did in response to our convictions. However we also know that many live in condemnation because they have been taught if they don't tithe they are disobedient and God can't bless them. In recent years a growing number of saints no longer accept that they are obligated to pay tithes and here are some of their reasons.

Before I continue I wish to go on record as saying, that when we were living under the burden of tithing we never gave to the Lord anywhere near as much as we do now.

### **"PERHAPS 10% IS A GOOD YARDSTICK BUT IT'S NOT COMPULSORY!"**

We have no doubt that we are exhorted to give, but when the clergy insist that New Testament believers *must* tithe, the view of a growing number of Christians is, this is simply not true. The survival of the professional class with their expansionary church programs is very much dependent on committed 'tithers'. In many churches anybody who doesn't tithe is considered an uncommitted member.

### **THE SNARE OF THE FOWLER.**

Ambition

Agenda Driven

Acquisitiveness

Most young pastors are seduced by these goals believing it is the way to get ahead and ensure success. Driven by their goals they seek to emulate their idols and fulfil their dreams. The above has snared many a promising servant. Each one feeds off the other as we shall see.

Unbridled Ambition leads to acquisitiveness. Eventually this shifts the focus away from God's will to their persona agenda. You can guarantee this will most certainly include an ambitious building program that is going to cost a lot of money. When completed it will establish them among the ranks of the "successful", and give them greater acceptance among their peers in the body of Christ. Without exception greed leads to loose living and immorality. They go together like ham and eggs. Covetous people are morally corrupt.

The "Cash Cow" that generates the revenue necessary to feed their grandiose schemes is the tithe. The saints are expected to show their commitment by getting behind them financially. Those who don't comply are embarrassed until they do. Preachers are more interested in the financial status of their dreams than the spiritual condition of the flock. Without this "Cash-Cow" the system would deservedly die. Ambitious preachers with building programs have destroyed more congregations than they ever edified. Many churches keep financial records on their members giving. This is common practice in the USA. It is not unusual nowadays to find an automatic bank teller machine in the church foyer that members are encouraged use. The preferred method for many pastors is to have their member's tithes and offerings paid by direct debit. This way they can fleece them effortlessly, particularly when they are away on vacation or sick. I thought giving was an expression of our love and compassion, an act of worship. This method reduces it to a cold mechanical operation.

#### **"THE CHURCH HAS BEEN HIJACKED BY THIRTY AND FORTY YEAR OLDS"**

Young men and women nowadays are graduating from bible institutions where they have had their heads filled with religious rhetoric. Trained in techniques taken from outdated business manuals they are programmed to pursue unscriptural goals. After gleaning a smattering of theology, they're turned loose on gullible seat warming saints in the current religious system. In some cases young men have inherited churches from their parents in much the same manner that Prince Charles is heir apparent to the throne of England. It's called "Nepotism", which according to Oxford dictionary is the *undue* favour from the holder of patronage to a relative. This practice flourishes in Pentecostal circles. Quiz: How many pastors can you think of who have given their church to their darling boy?

1 JOHN 2:16. "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father. But of the world."

#### **THE PERENNIAL FAVORITE**

Malachi Chapter three is the great favourite used during the happy hour on Sunday mornings to bring the saints into line just before the tithes are gathered. It is claimed that Christians not supporting their local church with 10% or more of their income are robbing God. That is an absolute lie; a dishonest interpretation of God's word. And you know where liars are headed unless they repent

This chapter is addressing the oppression of four classes of people by the rulers. The hireling of his wages—widows and fatherless—the priests—and strangers in the midst, who were suffering because of the people's hard-heartedness.

Throughout the Old Testament God's tender mercy towards the weak and poor is evident Deuteronomy 14:29. It's clear beyond contradiction that God instituted the storehouse mentioned in these verses for the provision of the unfortunate. God's heart has always been thus inclined.

Jesus continually crystallized this concept amongst those who would listen, driving home a fact

that is self-evident beyond all argument that, “As you've done this to the least of my brethren you've done it unto me.”

However it is only reasonable that if you attend such a church, and accept the benefits of that institution, then you have a moral obligation to support it. Although why anyone in their right mind would want to attend such a place to be fleeced on a regular basis is hard to understand.

One can't help but draw this parallel that the church that does not support the poor and destitute consistently and generously, but demands the tithe to consume on itself and its grandiose dreams is robbing the poor, and dishonouring the wishes of the Lord.

### **MUZZLE NOT THE OX**

This is the flip side to the coin. Because although we are not compelled to tithe we do have responsibilities to discharge for the Master towards the servants of the Lord. We are stewards and as such we shall be called to give an account of our stewardship on that day when we shall all have to stand before Him.

**2 CORINTHIANS 4:2** Amp. “Moreover it is essentially required of stewards that a man should be found faithful, proving himself to be worthy of trust.”

Grain in the East is usually threshed by spreading the sheaves out on a floor, over which oxen and cattle are driven back and forth until the grain is trodden out. Moses ordained that the ox was not to be muzzled while threshing. It was to be allowed to eat both the grain and the straw. Deuteronomy 25:4. We are not saying it is wrong to receive financial support, but our service should be gratuitous and always free from expectation.

It is clear that scripture plainly teaches for the believers to give as God gives, liberally and freely. And that it is right for those who labour in the Gospel to be supported from the offerings of the people to whom they minister.

If we follow the pattern of the Apostle Paul, he worked at tent making to support himself and others throughout his ministry, yet he gladly accepted what on occasions was given to him.

Five times Paul mentions how he laboured with his hands. Acts 18:3; 20; 34; 1 Corinthians 4:12; 2 Corinthians 9:8-9; 2 Thessalonians 5:8. And not only for himself but also on occasions for those that travelled with him Acts 20:34. But in Galatians 6:6 Paul plainly states that those that are taught in the word have an obligation to communicate, and distribute material support to those that minister.

### **PHILIPPIANS 4:14-19.**

“Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction. Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. But I have all and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God. (I have all: or, I have received all) But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”

They received offerings from only one church during the first two missionary journeys. Modern missionaries are very reluctant to go anywhere without guarantees.

## **NEW TESTAMENT GIVING.**

The giving of alms has an unfamiliar ring about it. To many the word sounds quite alien when spoken, it induces mental images of beggars in dirty streets, soiled bandages and poverty. And yet alms were seen as an expression of mercy, pity and love, given by the fortunate to the unfortunate as worship to God during the New Testament times.

Jesus himself taught us how to give alms before he taught us to pray. (Matthew 6:1) Jesus, in his rebuke of the hypocritical Pharisees, advised them to give alms 'as you are able' before deriding their practice of tithing (Luke 11: 41-42).

In the following chapter Jesus goes further, telling those who would seek the kingdom to "sell all that you have and give alms." This is not a ritualistic, law-bound tenet, but a dynamic form of worship wholly acceptable to a merciful God. The very nature of alms transcends Christian boundaries. It seems to be written on the heart of any man who earnestly seeks his creator's countenance that in providing for the destitute, he's serving his God. Yet, when was the last time you were exhorted to give alms?

### **GIVING GETS GOD'S ATTENTION**

Cornelius we're told was a devout man that feared God, giving much alms to the people and praying to God always. In response to his devotion the Lord appeared to him saying, "thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God". Cornelius was a Roman Centurion and thus a gentile, and as such was barred from the Jewish place of worship. Yet his devotion led him to pray and to give alms. Acts 10:2.

#### **ACTS 10:1-4.**

"There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band. A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always. He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius. And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God."

### **MEMORIAL GIVING.**

A memorial preserves the memory of a person or event. It keeps alive the acts related to them.

God keeps records

God is a great accountant. He never forgets or over looks our gifts and service of love to Him and to His people.

#### **HEBREWS 6:10-11.**

"For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed towards His name, in that ye have ministered to the saints and do minister. And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end."

In Acts 24: 17 Tabitha was described favourably as a women "full of good works and alms deeds". Paul himself confessed to giving alms—in fact the teaching of alms giving is one of the most concise and scripturally attested practices of the New Testament.

Cornelius' giving did not go unnoticed by God, nor did the widow's mite. Just because you have little is no excuse not to give. God does not despise it.

#### **2 CORINTHIANS 8:12.**

"If you are really eager to give, God wants you to give what you have, not what you have not."

Let's look at a scene after the Second Advent taken from Matthew 25:31-46. Christ is seen sitting on His throne beginning to judge the nations, and then separating them on the basis of, not what they believed, but what they had done. It was not a matter of doctrine, but rather stewardship. In the light of this event, we need to examine ourselves, and take stock of our lives.

You must give if you want to receive. It's a seed sown. You have to give first to be in a position to receive. Every time you ignore an opportunity to give, you lose a chance to receive. You literally tend towards poverty. Your gift is worth only as much as it costs you. If it didn't cost you much, then it's not worth much.

There are alms and sacrifices. The following example of sacrificial giving is found in the Word of God.

**I CORINTHIANS 8:1-4.**

“Now I want to tell you what God in His grace has done for the churches in Macedonia. Though they had been going through much trouble and hard times, they have mixed their wonderful joy with their deep poverty, and the result has been an overflowing of giving to others. They gave not only what they could afford, but far more; and I can testify they did it because they wanted to, and not because of nagging on my part. They begged us to take the money so they could share in the joy of helping the Christian in Jerusalem.”

Many times, I have had the personal experience of seeing God respond in a magnificent fashion to sacrificial giving.

**GIVING YOUR WAY OUT OF DEBT.**

You can give your way out of debt. I know that seems like a ridiculous statement to the carnal minded, but then to be carnally minded is death. But to be spiritually minded, (that is to have the mind of the Spirit) is life and peace.

**LUKE 6:38.**

“For with the same measure that you mete it shall be measured to you again.”

When you follow Bible principles you will succeed. If you want true success don't go about it the way the world does.

For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction. First the natural, then the spiritual:

If you smile.	If you are kind.
If you are merciful.	If you give.
If you care.	You will receive the same.
If you are harsh and critical.	
If you are stingy.	
If you are grumpy.	
You will reap the same.	

Let us provoke one another unto love and good works. To provoke is to act in such a way as to receive an involuntary response.

## **GETTING OUT OF DEBT**

For years, whenever I got into a tight spot financially, I would do some little extra thing when it came to giving, and God always honoured it. Yet I never realized that God didn't want me to wait until I was in financial difficulty, but to understand that giving is the way to a debt free life.

"Give and it shall be given unto you." Either God is a liar, or He's a supplier. When this revelation took hold of my spirit, I determined that I was going to get out of debt, and not only that, but to build a financial base from which I could begin to give as I had never given before. I started, and can testify to God's glory that He honours those that honour him. Yes it works.

### **SOW YOUR WAY TO PROSPERITY.**

Don't eat your seed. You can never get a harvest if you do. The widow of Zarephath could have made one more meal, eaten her seed and died. Or she could give it to the prophet and trust God to multiply it. She chose the latter, and both she and her household lived for many days.

### **YOU CAN'T GROW WHAT YOU DON'T SOW.**

When you eat your seed, you destroy your hope for the future. Some people are always going to give one fine day. They say, "When I get a lot of money then I will give a lot for the Gospel, but it's impossible right now because I have so many bills." Learn to look to God and not your circumstances, be bold, and do what you believe the Lord is telling you to do, that takes real faith. Give God a chance to bless you financially, start to give. The more you sow, the more you grow, and the greater the harvest.

### **ECCLESIASTES 11:4.**

"He that observes the wind shall not sow; and he that regards the Clouds shall not reap."

We cannot stand back and wait for life to come to us. We must stir ourselves and go forward to meet it head on. God never takes a defensive position. We overcome evil with good. We should initiate life, not just to react to it. Don't let your circumstances change you, change your circumstances. Don't procrastinate. Don't vegetate. But muster up the mental energy of your faith in God, and bring into captivity every lie of the enemy that attempts to put fear into your soul and GIVE.... GIVE your way out of debt.

### **FAITH IS 90% COURAGE 10% TENACITY.**

It's not a matter of luck. Every dog doesn't have his day. It's not a matter of talent. The bottom rung of the ladder is surrounded by talented people who don't have the courage to trust God's Word that says if you cast your bread upon the waters, it shall return unto you after many days. You will wait until doomsday for your ship to come in if you never sent one out.—if you didn't send one out, don't expect one to come back!

### **AFTER YOU HAVE DONE THE WILL OF GOD**

The commandments of God are seldom accompanied by reasons, but almost always by promises. Almost everything we have from God came in the form of a promise. To receive it, you must act upon it. First you have to apprehend it and then go on to contend for it. If it's only after we have done the will of God that we receive the promise, then the will of God is the most important thing in our lives. It's the same with giving. "Give and it shall be given unto you." Two things are necessary:

1. Do the will of God. (prayerfully)
2. Have patience.

**HEBREWS 10:35-36.**

"Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For you have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise."

Realize that in giving, you are investing. Engraved on a tombstone in an old cemetery are these words:

What I spent I had;  
What I saved I lost;  
What I gave I have.

**PHILIPPIANS 4:17.**

"Not because I desire a gift, but I desire fruit that may abound to your account."

**SUMMARY**

The New Testament church was a body of believers that came together regularly. The meetings occurred spontaneously within the homes of the believers therefore, no precedent was established to indicate how a latter-day, asset-orientated, church infrastructure was to support itself. Faith offerings are fine but somewhat unreliable, erratic and ungovernable.

Any institution that has consistent and regulated expenditure requires a constant reliable source of income

Therefore this teaching has been maintained down through the years because of the prospect of advantage towards a financially dependent institution. This is not a comment on the validity of the structure itself but the means by which it supports itself. The point is that any church that cannot stay afloat without demanding tithes and offerings of its members as a right for its support should go out of business.

We are stewards of our possessions and all that we acquire from our lawful employment. And it is essential that a steward should be faithful. *The Lord should always direct our giving*, with special consideration to the less fortunate. Not forgetting that the workman is worthy of his hire.

**MATTHEW 25:45, 41**

"In as much as ye did it not to one of the least of these brethren ye did it not to me. Depart from me ye cursed."

"If this asset rich church continues to invest tithes and offerings in buildings, carpets, padded seats and parking lots, while our brothers and sisters in third world countries sit in the dirt under a tree worshipping Christ with empty stomachs, then we are the ones that will be cursed." The apostles never taught on tithing but giving, and never of necessity but with a willing heart and cheerful attitude.

**2 CORINTHIANS 8:8.**

This is *not* an order, or commandment but an exhortation. "And if the eagerness to give is present then it is according to *what anyone has*, not to what one doesn't have." Don't ever go into debt by borrowing to give to a church, it's a SIN.

It was never the apostles intention that people be burdened. Legalism has no place in the Christian Assembly. The apostles never threatened the people with the consequences for failing to tithe as many preachers do.

**PROVERBS 28:27.**

"He that gives to the poor shall not lack; but he that hides his eyes shall have many a curse."

## **2 CORINTHIANS 8:13-14.**

“For it is not intended that other people be eased and relieved of their responsibility, and you be burdened and suffer unfairly, but to have equality, share and share alike: ‘Your surplus over necessity’ at the present time going to meet their want. To equalize the difference created by it, so that at another time ‘their surplus’ in turn may be given to supply your want. Thus there may be equality.”

## **EXODUS 16:18.**

“As it is written he who gathered much had nothing over, and he who gathered little did not lack.”

## **2 CORINTHIANS 8:14-15.**

We are encouraged to give but ‘only’ over and above our necessity. It is sad to hear preachers tell people to tithe on their gross wages, and if they don’t have enough for their necessities to pay their tithes first and trust God. In the light of these scriptures there is a growing number who used to tithe but don’t any longer. They believe that if they did tithe; that is, if they gave money to aid and abet programs, they’d be robbing their children, as well as the needy. They are also of the opinion that revival will tarry as long as we continue to pay credence to error while truth suffers side by side with millions of starving people.

It is plain to see how the teaching on tithing in the majority of structured churches is purely for the benefit of the organization and the men that are supported by the structure. You may say to me, “do you really expect to see the church turn around and repent of this teaching”? It would be naïve of me to say yes, but perhaps in time some honest teachers, with a conscience, will start to emphasize giving according to grace, while allowing the tithe to die a well deserved death!

## **STEWARDSHIP**

There can be no real restoration in the House of God which is His body or in individual lives until there is a restoration of stewardship.

## **GENESIS 1:26-28.**

“And God said; Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.”

## **GENESIS 2:15.**

Man's duty was to ‘dress’ the garden and to ‘keep’ it, and to hedge it about.

## **GENESIS 3:24.**

The man was to dress, beautify, cultivate, guard, protect, and keep out all intruders. When you do that and do it well He will make you ruler over it.

Salvation makes us heirs, but faithful stewardship gives us our inheritance.

## **A DEFINITION OF STEWARDSHIP.**

The practice of systematic and proportionate giving of time, abilities, and material possessions, based on the conviction that these are a trust from God to be used in His service for the benefit of His Kingdom. All our abilities, time and possessions are given into our care. They are not our own. Nothing we have is ours. We are simply stewards. Paul said, “ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price.”

## **A LIST OF AVAILABLE BOOKS**

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An in-depth look at practices that have no scriptural foundation, but are nothing more than traditions and customs.

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### **DUMBING DOWN THE SAINTS**

A Birdseye view of the pulpit from the pew

### **THY KINGDOM COME**

Jesus came preaching the Kingdom and we gave Him institutions

### **WHERE OH WHERE CAN WE GO**

For all those that are looking for something better than what's on offer.

### **I LOVED CHURCH BUT LOOK WHAT THEY'VE DONE TO IT**

The pastors antics behind the pulpit is what holds most churches together.

### **LET US GO THE HOUSE OF THE LORD**

Things you should consider if you want to avoid getting bogged down in a religious ghetto.

### **THE REFORMATION 1600 YRS BEFORE MARTIN LUTHER'S**

The one that came 1600 years before Martin Luther's.

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