

**The Azusa Street Papers Overview – Holy Money Bags**  
**Message 24 – September 18, 2022**

The Early Church disciples new that their lives were not their own, but they and all they owned belonged to Christ, and they clearly understood what Jesus said, *“that it was more blessed to give than to receive”*, Acts 20:25. This is why they had such a strong bond of unity, for they gave their finances to those in need expecting nothing in return and as a result, they gave up their lives for the cause of maintaining the Early Church body of believers thru their tithes and offerings. It costs money to maintain the Church, the body of Christ.

**Acts 2:40-47** says; *“40 And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, “Be saved from this [a]perverse generation.” 41 Then those who [b]gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. 42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ [c]doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. 43 Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. 44 Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, 45 and [d]sold their possessions and goods, and divided[e] them among all, as anyone had need. 46 So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added [f]to the Church daily those who were being saved.”*

Whether a Christian is rich or poor, yes, there are poor Christians who are in unfortunate situations right now, the principle of giving without expecting anything in return is at the heart of the matter, for it’s easier to give tithes and offerings to Churches that can provide a tax return than it is to the Church that is not able to. It’s easy, no problem as long as they know they’ll get the tax exemptions on it at tax time. But it’s all too clear that if there are no tax return benefits, the cheques are not cut. Some would say that it is poor stewardship for a Church not to provide tax exemption statements to their givers...but is it? Remember, there are countries around the world who can’t even fathom the idea that if they give to their underground Church, or any Church in other nations, that they would get monies back from their government at the end of the year. It’s true.

I have wealthy friends and family members that have not so much as given a dime to our Church, and I honestly believe the reason being is that because we are not able to provide a tax deduction in return for their giving. But when it all comes back to what Jesus taught about giving, is it really giving at all when you expect a tax right-off in return? I know that it’s thought to be good stewardship of God’s money when you give for tax deductible purposes, but how many Christians actually give their tax return back to the Church which enabled them to receive it in the first place? Show me someone who does that.

In **1 Timothy 6:17-19**, the Apostle Paul tells Timothy that this is what he’s to teach the rich people; *“17 Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. 18 Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, 19 storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.”*

**Malachi 3:10** says; *“10 Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, That there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this,” says the Lord of hosts, “If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it.”*

That is what your return of giving is to be, that there will not be room enough to receive it. It far exceeds the small kick-back you’ll get from your government at tax time after they’ve calculated your return down to the nickel. Plus, God’s return is continual, it’s not a one-time rebate. The Saints at Azusa Street Mission gave

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expecting their return to come from God, it was His blessing of provision that established them as a Church and was a direct result of obeying God's scriptures about giving.

AZUSA PAPERS says;

*“One tenth of all we own belongs to the Lord, besides an offering, as much as He says. If He says a half, we will have to give a half. Giving to the Lord is just as much a part of worship as the testimony and prayer. If there are people who do not believe in giving an offering, they do not believe in the Scriptures. When we consecrate, we consecrate our pocket-books.”*

**1 Timothy 6:6-10** in the Amplified Bible says; “*6 But godliness actually is a source of great gain when accompanied by contentment [that contentment which comes from a sense of inner confidence based on the sufficiency of God]. 7 For we have brought nothing into the world, so [it is clear that] we cannot take anything out of it, either. 8 But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. 9 But those who [are not financially ethical and] crave to get rich [with a compulsive, greedy longing for wealth] fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction [leading to personal misery]. 10 For the love of money [that is, the greedy desire for it and the willingness to gain it unethically] is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves [through and through] with many sorrows.”*

Is money evil? No. It's the love of money or coveting it, that is evil, where you're willing to do something unethical or to break God's law to obtain it. Christians that do not obey God by paying their tithes and offerings to Church, are gaining money unethically and robbing from God and as a result come under a curse by God Himself. To be totally blunt, they love money and are into self-preservation.

**Malachi 3:8-10** says this; “*8 “Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, ‘In what way have we robbed You?’ In tithes and offerings. 9 You are cursed with a curse, for you have robbed Me, even this whole nation. 10 Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this,” Says the Lord of hosts, “If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing That there will not be room enough to receive it. 11 “And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, so that he will not destroy the fruit of your ground, nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit for you in the field,” Says the Lord of hosts; 12 “And all nations will call you blessed, for you will be a delightful land,” Says the Lord of hosts.”*

If this teaching is rubbing you the wrong way, Christian, could it be that the love of money has you bound to it, and all your tithes and offerings that you have robbed from God have put a curse on you? You have to ask yourself seriously.

If you don't believe that God brings the curse, then read **Haggai 1:1-11** where it says that they were more interested in building their own homes than God's house; “*1 In the second year of King Darius, in the sixth month, on the first day of the month, the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, saying, 2 “Thus speaks the Lord of hosts, saying: ‘This people says, “The time has not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built.” ’ 3 Then the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet, saying, 4 “Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, and this [a]temple to lie in ruins?” 5 Now therefore, thus says the Lord of hosts: “Consider your ways! 6 “You have sown much, and bring in little; You eat, but do not have enough; You drink, but you are not filled with drink; You clothe yourselves, but no one is warm; And he who earns wages, Earns wages to put into a bag with holes.” 7 Thus says the Lord of hosts: “Consider your ways! 8 Go up to the mountains and bring wood and build the [b]temple, that I may take pleasure in it and be glorified,” says the Lord. 9 “You looked for much, but indeed it came to little; and when you brought it home, **I blew it away.***

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*Why?” says the Lord of hosts. “Because of My house that is in ruins, while every one of you runs to his own house. 10 Therefore the heavens above you withhold the dew, and the earth withholds its fruit. 11 **For I called for a drought on the land and the mountains, on the grain and the new wine and the oil, on whatever the ground brings forth, on men and livestock, and on all the labor of your hands.**”*

It sounds familiar as to where the body of Christ is right now. It sits in spiritual ruins because Christians are withholding their tithes and offerings and giving the money that belongs to God, to their own homes and needs. This scripture is a clear picture of the curses that come on a Christian’s life as a result of neglecting to obey God and build His Church with their tithes and offerings, and it is clear that the curse is from God.

We’re living in a wicked generation, not only of the ungodly, but of Christians who have withheld from God what belongs to Him of their finances. He calls it robbery. This isn’t God’s will. His will is to restore the Church, the body of Christ, whether they’re meeting from house to house or in a Church building, it’s about Church restoration. It’s not just about restoring the physical building, but restoring the Church back to its origins found in the Book of Acts, of Holy Ghost power. God doesn’t dwell in temple buildings anymore, but in the hearts of man, those who make up the body of Christ. As I said earlier, the Early Church had all things in common, they had no needs, they were a community of believers who operated in the power of the Holy Spirit. They didn’t live in communal living, but had all things in common, a common bond that no one else had. They sold their possessions and gave those who had need. They set their minds on things above and not on things below and God looked after them.

The same thing took place at the Azusa Mission. They were renting the building where they met and decided to buy it before someone else bought it for other motives. Even though it needed physical restoration, there was spiritual restoration taking place as they had Holy Ghost power, signs, wonders, miracles, speaking in tongues, but they didn’t have the glorious exterior of a beautiful building in the rich area of Los Angeles. The restoration was a spiritual restoration where they were being baptized in the Holy Spirit, they were tithing and giving of all they had, the Church was being restored to like the Book of Acts Church. You must remember that this building they were in was formerly a Church, which had become a tenant house, but as it was initially built as a Church, it was being consecrated again as a Church, this time with greater power and glory.

Like Haggai and Malachi prophesied to the children of Israel about temple restoration, that curses were upon them because they were withholding tithes, offerings, building their own homes and looking after only themselves, so the Azusa Street Mission needed to purchase a place to build God’s house for the revival that was taking place.

The AZUSA PAPERS says;

*“THE PURCHASE OF THE AZUSA MISSION. The lot and buildings at 312 Azusa Street have been purchased by the Apostolic Faith Mission, and five Holy Ghost men have been elected as trustees, who hold the property. We believe the Lord chose this spot for His work, for He has wonderfully poured out His Spirit in the mission, which started about a year ago from cottage prayer meetings where the Pentecost first fell. Now, through Spirit baptized ones who have gone out, and through papers published here, there has been raised up a mighty host. Praise God! The property was purchased for \$15,000, and \$4,000 has already been paid down on it. Any friends wishing to have a share in buying this Mission for the Lord may send offerings to Bro. Reuben Clark, who is secretary of the board of trustees. Address 312 Azusa St., Los Angeles. It was necessary to buy this mission as a headquarters for the work, in order to hold it, as it would soon have been sold for other purposes. The situation is favorable, being centrally located and in surroundings where no one will be disturbed by prayers or shouts going up sometimes all night. Praise God! The Mission building was formerly a place of*

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*worship where souls had been saved years ago, and the spot thus made sacred; and during the past year, hundreds have been saved, sanctified, healed, and baptized with the Holy Ghost.”*

These Holy Ghost men remind me of the men who were appointed in the Early Church to wait on tables, they had to be baptized with the Holy Spirit. Tithes and offerings were taking place to secure this building at Azusa Street, to facilitate the body of Christ and meet the needs of this flourishing group of Book of Acts Christians. This building was in ruins when they started using it and could have remained that way, but it didn't. The body of Christ was restored in the spirit realm in this building, not the physical building restoration. It was the restoration of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, tongues, signs, wonders and miracles that were restored to the Church.

God established the Apostolic Faith Mission on Azusa Street thru the tithes and offerings of Christians. They obeyed God and restored a Church building that was in ruins and used it to give birth to a revival that spread all over the world. These Christians were on a straight and narrow road, obeying God to give their tithes and offerings, they were not on a broad and wide rode, robbing God of His tithes and offerings but rather built their Church on a rock and not on the sand.

**Matthew 7:24-27** says; ““24 “*Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: 25 and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. 26 “But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: 27 and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.”*”

How many Churches have fallen across Canada, how many are in ruins, waiting for obedient, God-fearing, Spirit filled Christians to restore and bring them back to life by the power of the Holy Spirit? That's the true restoration of the New Testament Church. It wasn't about the restoration of the exterior, although basic fundamental elements may have taken place, but that wasn't it, nor was it for the early Church. The early Church met from house to house and as opportunity opened, they met in the temples, but they knew that God didn't dwell in temples any longer but in the hearts of men, they knew that the body of Christ was not about a big temple any more, it's about the body of Christ meeting together on a regular basis.

By obeying God and giving your tithes and offerings to build His Church, you are storing up for yourselves treasures in heaven, and where your treasure is your heart is also. Many would justify their not tithing by saying that tithing is an Old Testament principal and was under the Law of Moses, but in reality, tithing was done by Abraham before the Law when he tithed to King Melchizedek, and as Abraham is the father of our faith, Galatians 3:7, our tithing now as Christians is of faith.

**Matthew 6:19-21** says; ““19 “*Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”*

Where is your heart, Christian? Is it bound to the riches of this world to the point that you've robbed God of His tithes and offerings and have neglected to restore His Church on earth, and as a result are living under a curse like it says in **Haggai 1:6**; “6 *You have sown much, and bring in little; You eat, but do not have enough; You drink, but you are not filled with drink; You clothe yourselves, but no one is warm; And he who earns wages, Earns wages to put into a bag with holes.”*

Christian, you who bear the name of Christ, and swore your allegiance to make Him Lord of your life, is He Lord of your tithes and offerings, have you paid what you owe Him from your gross income before taxes are

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taken off? If Christians can't make Jesus Lord of 10% of their income, how are they even going to make Him Lord of their lives? They would have to remove, 'Lord', because He's not Lord of all. "*Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.*" **Luke 20:25.**

To read The Apostolic Faith Azusa Street Papers [Vol.1., No. 6, please click on this link.](#), to reference the quotes in this message.