

What Does the Bible Say About Giving?

Over 2,300 Verses Address Money in The Bible

Intro: Much like each one of our topics in this little mini series, subject of Giving could last several weeks or months. However, this series is not intended to be exhaustive explorations into each of these subjects. Rather, a general overview of the principles and questions many of you shared.

OUTLINE:

- I. Old Testament Fabric
 - A. Voluntary Giving As Gratitude for God's Faithfulness
 - B. Compulsory Giving Commanded to Establish Order & Care for God's People
 - C. Hybrid of Commanded Giving & Freewill Offering to Point God's People to Holiness
- II. New Testament Fabric of Giving
 - A. Jesus' Fulfillment of the Mosaic Law
 - B. The Early Church's Voluntary Spirit-Led Giving - Revealing All Needs Were Met
 - C. The Instructions in the Epistles for Voluntary Spirit-Led Giving from the Heart to Accomplishing What the Law Did

I. Old Testament Principles of Giving:

A. Giving As An Act of Faith & Gratitude - VOLUNTARY

- **Cain & Abel Gen. 4:3-7.** Both Cain & Abel brought offerings to the Lord.
 - Hebrews 11:4 tells us that Abel offered a better sacrifice than Cain through faith.
 - In other words, it wasn't that it was animal sacrifice over fruit of the field.
 - It wasn't necessarily that Abel brought first fruits or the fat portions.
 - Those were just the manifestations of Abel's faith.
 - It was Abel's faith that moved him to offer his best to God.
- **Abraham & Melchizedek Gen. 14:19-24**
 - Melchizedek is a Priest of God Most High.
 - Abraham recognizes that his victory was authored by God.
 - Abraham's heart is moved to give Melchizedek a tenth of everything.
- **Abraham & Isaac Gen. 22** Abraham was willing to sacrifice Isaac.
 - Isaac was the first- fruits of Sarah's womb.
 - Isaac was the promised son, Isaac was the future of God's covenant with Abraham
 - Abraham was willing to offer Isaac out of faith & trust in God.
 - Abraham believed in his heart that God could and would provide a way.
- **Jacob's Vow Gen. 28:18-22** "SINCE God has promised to be with me...".
 - Jacob made a vow to God as a response to God's promise and faithfulness.
 - Since God promised to always be with Jacob, Jacob vowed a tenth to God.
- **Contributions for Tent of Meeting Exodus 35:20-21, 36:2-7**
 - Vs. 21-22 Says these offerings were the result of the peoples' hearts being moved.
 - Vs. 3 refers to these as "Freewill Offerings"
 - Vs. 7 says "there was more than enough supplies for the Tent of Meeting."

B. Compulsory Giving - The Tithe Is Commanded to Establish Order & Care

- **Sacrificial Offerings** - Designed to Establish A Standard of Holiness for God's People
 - Leviticus "*Law of Burnt Offerings*", "*Law of Grain Offerings*", "*Law of Peace Offerings*", "*Law of Sin Offerings*", "*Law of Guilt Offerings*", "*The Duties of the Priests In Making Offerings*"
 - These laws were all prescribed as standards for God's People.
 - To protect them in terms of sanitation, protect them civically, protect them morally,
 - These laws & offerings prescribed the manner they could approach a Holy God.
- **The Tithe** - Designed to Care for Levites, Care for Temple, Care for the Poor & Needy
 - The Tithe is First Introduced **Lev. 27:30-32**
 - A tenth of the land, the seed of the land, fruit of the tree, the herds, the flocks, and all else is to be given to God.
 - The Tithe Cared for the Levites **Numbers 18:21-32**
 - The Tithe Cared for the Temple **Deut. 14:22-23**,
 - The Tithe Cared for the Poor & Vulnerable **Deut. 14:28-29**

C. Freewill Offerings In Conjunction with the Commanded Offerings & Tithes

- **1 Chronicles 29** Contributions for the First Temple
 - *"With all my resources I have provided for the temple of my God—gold...silver...bronze...iron...wood...onyx...turquoise...all kinds of fine stone and marble-- all of these in large quantities. In my devotion to the temple of my God I now give my personal treasures of gold and silver for the temple of my God, over and above everything I have provided."*
 - *"Any who had precious stones gave them to the treasury of the temple of the LORD."*
 - *"The people rejoiced at the willing response of their leaders, for they had given freely and wholeheartedly to the LORD. David the king also rejoiced greatly."*
 - *"God, we give you thanks, and praise your glorious name. "But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand."*
 - *"LORD our God, as for all this abundance that we have provided for building you a temple for your Holy Name, it comes from your hand, and all of it belongs to you. "I know, my God, that you test the heart and are pleased with integrity. All these (offerings) I have given willingly and with honest intent. And now I have seen with joy how willingly your people who are here have given to you."*
- **Ezra 2:68-69** Families Gave Freewill Offerings Toward the Rebuilding of the Temple
 - Text tells us they gave according to their ability.

Old Testament Summary

- Giving to God Began As A Voluntary Practice Born Out of Hearts of Gratitude & Faith
- Mosaic Law was Given Which Commanded Certain Offerings, Tithes, & Still Expected Freewill Offerings Rooted in the Heart.
 - (Although the tithe was a command, the expectation was still a cheerful heart or gratitude)
- Not Unlike the Manna, Observing the Sabbath, Passover, & Other Prescribed Ordinances The Tithe in the Mosaic Law Was to Teach Israel About God.
- It was A Framework Designed to Reinforce The Holiness of God
 - Offerings taught them to Revere the Lord & not Come to Him Flippantly
 - Tithing Taught them How to Care for & Honor the Levites & the Temple
 - Tithing Showed them How to Care for the Marginalized Among Them.
 - Freewill Offerings exercised the personal role of the heart.

II. New Testament Principles of Giving:

A. Jesus' Fulfillment of the Mosaic Law

Jesus said *"I have not come to abolish the Law, but to fulfill the Law."*

- **Matthew 6:19-21 Jesus Condemns Storing Up Treasures on Earth**
 - Jesus reminded us that God will care for our needs
 - That we are not to worry
 - We are not to store up resources for selfish gain, but rather kingdom initiatives
 - Our treasure does not follow our heart, our heart follows our treasure.
 - This mirrors what the Old Testament Taught Israel
 - God will provide, rest on the Sabbath, use resources for the Kingdom
- **Matthew 23:23 Jesus Rebukes the Religious Leaders for Their Blindness**
 - They were clearly paying their tithes as commanded by The Law.
 - But Jesus is concerned with the fact that their hearts are all wrong.
 - They miss the point, and ignore God's heart and the needs all around them.
 - Clearly Jesus' Concern is Not the Tithe but Their Hearts
- **Mark 12:41-44 Jesus Observed the Crowds Putting Money into the Temple Treasury**
 - Jesus Very Clearly Explained to His Disciples The Contrast of the Hearts
 - The Wealthy Gave What Was Easy for Them to Give
 - They gave from their excess. It was not hard, painful, or sacrificial.
 - But the Widow Gave Out of What She Needed To Live On.
 - Jesus Calls Her Offering More Valuable Than All The Others
 - Even in the established framework of the Law, God is after the heart.

Reminder of Jesus' Statements Regarding The "Heart" of the Law

- The Law said do not murder. Grace says don't even harbor anger in your heart.
- The Law said do not commit adultery. Grace says don't even look lustfully.
- The Law prescribed 10%. Grace says give willingly with a generous cheerful heart, and not under compulsion.
- While Jesus Recognized & Honored the tithe of the Law, Jesus never commands the tithe.
- When the Law becomes completely fulfilled at the Cross, the tithe will no longer be needed
- He simply says give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and give to God what belongs to God.

B. Early Church Giving - Voluntary Spirit-Led and All the Needs Were Met

- **Acts 2:43-47** **Early Church Shared Resources With Those Who Were In Need**
 - Harmonious gathering that met the needs of all.
 - We see that they did not operating on a strict 10% but as there were needs.
 - This is clearly a relational economy.
 - They are motivated in their hearts to meet the needs of the Body of Christ first.
- **Acts 4:33-37** **Early Church Sold Possessions To Meet The Needs of the Body**
 - Barnabas sold some of his property.

C. Epistle Instructions for Voluntary Spirit-Led Giving from the Heart (Accomplishing What Giving Did In the Law)

Instructions for Collection for the Saints

- **Romans 12:13** *"Contribute to the needs of the saints...."*
- **I Corinthians 16:1-2** Set Aside A Collection for the Saints
 - Paul instructed the collection to be set aside weekly.
 - It was not to be taken up while he was there.
 - The purpose was for the persecuted believers in Jerusalem.
- **II Corinthians 8-9 (Explain)**

Instructions for Collection for Widows

- **I Timothy 5:3-16** *"Honor & Care for Widows Devoted to the Church"*
 - Not the younger widows who could remarry
 - Not the widows who are still burning with passion.
 - Not the widows whose families have stepped in for care.
 - The women who don't have others means of care.

Instructions Regarding Collection for Those Who Minister

- **I Timothy 5:18** *"The Laborer Is Worthy of His Wages"*
 - Those who minister in the Gospel are worthy of compensation
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- **Corinthians 11:6-9** **"Paul deserved compensation for his work in the Gospel..."**
 - The Church in Corinth did not provide for him, but the churches in Macedonia did.
 - He was fully supplied in every need so that he could devote himself completely to the Gospel.

Consistent Principles of Giving Throughout God's Word

1. Giving Has Always Been Intended As An Act of Worship & Response to God's Faithfulness.
 - Abraham blessed God's priest in response to God's faithfulness in battle.
 - David offered of his precious resources to build God a house.
 - The people gave of their time, talents, and resources to build the Tabernacle & Temple.
 - The New Testament reveals the early church did the same.
2. Giving Has Always Been Intended to Reveal Our Dependence on God
 - The tithe was required by God.
 - It was taken from the first fruits of the land, the flock, and the herds.
 - The offerings were to be unblemished, and the best.
 - These were often given before the rest of the harvest came in.
 - These were offered in faith that God would ultimately provide the remainder of the crop or future offspring from others in the herd.
 - The New Testament also describes our dependence on God.
 - The widow gave out of what she needed to live on.
 - Jesus commanded us not to worry for God will care for us.
 - The churches in Macedonia gave despite their own needs, and were exceedingly generous.
3. Giving Has Always Been A Means By Which God Cares for the Poor & Needy
 - Deuteronomy 14 the alien and poor persons
 - Care for widows & orphans
 - The Early Church gave as there was need.
 - The Missionary Churches gave to support the persecuted in Jerusalem.
 - Epistles instruct us to care for widows and orphans.
4. Giving Has Always Been A Means By Which God Cares for Priests, Temple, Pastors & Churches
 - The tithe was required to care for the Levites for their work in the temple.
 - Offerings today care for clergy.
 - Tithe was required to care for the Temple and Tabernacle
 - Parsonages & Housing Allowances provide shelter for clergy.
 - Freewill offerings provide "double honor" to ministers of the Gospel.
5. God Has Always Desired Cheerful Giving, Giving From the Heart, & Giving Of Our Best.
 - Malachi rob God, sub-par offerings
 - Paul instructs that we should not give under compulsion, but with a grateful and generous heart.

Application For The Church Today:

Where & How Are We To Give Today?

1. The New Testament Church Is To First Meet the Needs of the Body of Christ
 - We have cared for several of our own members in various ways
 - (Share examples)
2. The New Testament Church is to Meet the Needs Required for Coming Together to Meet
 - We use our resources to meet the expenses associated with meeting here.
 - We pay for the electricity, the gas, the water, and other expenses related to gathering.
 - Similarly, our resources bless Grace by offsetting their costs.
 - We have also blessed Grace by replacing the carpet and tile.
3. The New Testament Church is to Show Honor to Those Who Minister in the Gospel
 - We use our resources to show honor toward our teachers (Mykel)
 - Guest teacher honorarium
 - (myself)
4. The New Testament Church is to Meet External Needs As the Spirit Leads
 - The early church gave to support the persecuted believers back in Jerusalem.
 - We have helped the Diedrichs with their ministries in South America reaching the lost.
 - Each one of you are called to give where you see a need and the Holy Spirit leads
 - There are many ministries that are doing the Lord's work.
 - There are many arms and para-church ministries that are advancing the Kingdom of God.