

## Tithing: Is it still Relevant Today?

Our subject matter for the entire year involves “Equipping the people of GOD for the progression of the Kingdom”. If you believe as I do, then you hold that the Bible is indeed the inspired Word of GOD. You also believe that Tithing, (a vital Kingdom principle) is critical to our Biblical walk. So, when considering the question of the relevancy of Tithing in **today’s church**, some are conflicted, because the question is framed in an incomplete context. The proper context or the complete context for the question is not **[if]**, Tithing is relevant. **NO**, the full context is rather or not we think it is important to have a sincere relationship with GOD.

Not only this, but we should ask ourselves, how important is it to operate in GOD’s Kingdom principles here on earth? Consequently, from a biblical perspective and a theological perspective, the question regarding relevancy suggests that GOD’s will regarding Tithing was appropriate in days of the OLD TESTAMENT but is not so, in and since the NEW TESTAMENT. It suggests that GOD, who from the time of Abraham to Malachi about 3,000 years, honored Tithing; then for some unknown reason, changes His mind and perspective regarding Tithing and enacts a new principle. Well, I don’t think so, and in a moment you will see why.

When the disciples asked JESUS to teach them how to pray, it was not that they hadn’t been exposed to prayer. We know that they understood Judaic orthodoxy regarding prayer when they saw the miraculous effect of JESUS praying. JESUS, however, taught them to reject traditional Judaic orthodoxy and to consider a more personal formula for prayer not focused on the law of Moses. And since JESUS came to fulfill the law not to abolish it, He was careful not to introduce entirely new concepts that would be foreign to His followers. Nor did He want to introduce anything that would violate the law of Moses. This would have been against His own principles.

**Instead, JESUS introduces the same concepts of prayer - in a different light.** Therefore, when it came time for teaching the disciples how to pray, He referred to the OLD COVENANT where we find a prayer of the great King David in **1st Chronicles 29:10-13**. Here David refers to **GOD as father**, he extols **GOD’s greatness, power, glory, and majesty**; then David prays that GOD would **commit those things in heaven-on earth; forever and ever**. This prayer sounds very much like what we find in **Matt. 6:9-13** and Luke 11<sup>th</sup> chapter. And in those gospel writings, you find that the LORD’s lesson was all about building the kingdom. In fact, He goes on to speak several parables about the **KINGDOM OF GOD**. What this teaches us is that **Christ was not a ‘disconnection from the law’, He was a ‘new connection to the law’.**

The point is to truly understand Tithing, we must not explore the concept from the viewpoint of it being a law, duty, tax, or commandment as some do. ***Tithing involves having a KEY Covenant Relationship with GOD so that His Kingdom might be in effect, here on earth as it is in heaven.*** To make it clearer, we must examine why TITHING exists and who it impacts. Further we must know that the purpose for Tithing includes and goes beyond the obligation of Malachai 3:8-10.

I would submit to you that Tithing is a Covenant and Covenants are expressions of our love, our obedience, passion, and willingness to trust in GOD.

And because all Covenants are bi-relational (two or more parties), ***Tithing also involves GOD's willingness to trust in us.*** Any relationship that is absent of mutual trust is an incomplete relationship. If we are unwilling to seal a relationship via a covenant, we are limiting that relationship. Now the question we are posed with is why would anyone want to limit their relationship with GOD, and thereby limiting their access to the promises of the KINGDOM of GOD?

In Deuteronomy 8:18, the Word says, ***"You shall remember the LORD your GOD, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your ancestors, as it is to this day."*** We see here that the benefit of GOD is based upon Covenant. Covenants are based on relationships with GOD and gives us access to the KINGDOM OF GOD. They are VOLUNTARY commitments (entered by choice) to be faithful to the responsibilities of the agreement so that all can enjoy the benefits of - and receive the promises of the Covenant. When you refuse or neglect the commitment of the Covenant, you are in breach of the agreement and are no longer a beneficiary of the promises the Covenant provides.

The word "tithe" is derived from a Middle English word meaning "a tenth" and refers to a tenth of the produce of one's field or of one's income. The meaning is the same for the Hebrew words masur/maasrah and the Greek word dekate (from which the word "tithe" or "tithes" in the Bible were translated). In each instance, these words always carry the idea of a percentage (i.e., 10%). More specifically, "tithe", and its Hebrew and Greek counterparts, always signify the first or top 10% of the income given to the Lord by those who are in covenant with Him.

Remember (for example,) Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden and GOD tells them they may eat freely of every tree except the one, the "Tree of Life" which GOD reserved for Himself? This was an example of the Tithe, established as a principle of GOD. And like all godly PRINCIPLES, they endure forever.

As we love and honor the Lord with the Tithes of all our increase - our finances, material resources, our time, and our life; we understand that in return, ***"GOD shall supply your need according to His riches in glory, by JESUS CHRIST" the Covenant keeper, (Philippians 4.15-19).*** We also know that ***"The blessing of the Lord makes rich, and He adds no sorrow with it," (Proverbs 10.22).***

***Tithing is necessary for the work of the ministry and for the edifying of the Body of Christ, (Eph. 4:11-12).*** It is part of the mutual trust and relational interchange we have with the only wise GOD, to allow His Kingdom to flourish. In other words, Tithing is one of the ways we finance the Kingdom here on earth. ...***Bind on earth...Bound in heaven...loosed on earth...loosed in heaven***

**Tithing is not a principle made by man; it is a principle established and given to us by GOD for man.** It is essential to the operation of GOD's Kingdom here on earth. And because GOD, intends for His KINGDOM Principles to be consistent with His heavenly principles, He has formed covenants with the people of GOD, and GOD cannot go back on His Covenant...Why? ***Because "I am LORD, and I change not, (Mal. 3:6).***

**His Covenant is His Word, and His Word is His truth, and His truth does not end because generations change, His truth does not end because dispensations change, His truth endures for all generations.**