

# Practical Ways of Biblical Giving

## Introduction

In the past weeks, we have been taught about the generosity of our God and how everything we have comes from and belongs to God. Today, we shall consider practical ways to put into effect Biblical Giving. Many such ways include Tithing, giving offerings, giving to the poor, giving to one's biological and spiritual parents, giving to charity, giving to ministries and church organisations, giving to our family members – Giving for the expansion of the Kingdom of God!

## The Background of Biblical Giving

1. Christianity invites us to be like Christ, the exact image of God. What is God like? God is love. I John 4:7 & 8
2. How does God show His love? By giving. He gave us His best in Himself, in the person of Jesus Christ. John 3:16. Rom 8:32.
3. Our giving reflects how like God we are. 1 John 3:16-18. There are many things we can give to God: our heart, our worship, our time, our destiny, our future, our families, our children, our jobs, our relationships, our internal thoughts, our love, our skills, our talents, our endowments, our achievements. This is because everything we have comes from and belongs to God. James 1:17. Today, let's focus on giving finances/money to God.

## Biblical warnings regarding money

1. Money is one human invention that is a modern-day idol worshipped by millions of people. *Matt 6:24 - No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money. Everyone who is of age must choose who is in charge of their lives – God or money! Materialism and greed unconsciously make people slaves to carnal acquisitions.*
2. Serving mammon, money or materialism, makes room for evil to thrive. Wherever there is evil, the devil is in the details. 1 Timothy 6:10 - *For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.*
3. The Bible warns Christians not to put our trust or build our confidence in material wealth and acquisition. 1 Tim 6:17 - *Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Psalms 62:10 - Do not trust in extortion or put vain hope in stolen goods; though your riches increase, do not set your heart on them. Proverbs 23: 4&5 says - Do not wear yourself out to get rich; do not trust your own cleverness. Cast but a glance at riches, and they are gone, for they will surely sprout wings and fly off to the sky like an eagle.*

Tithing: This is the habit of giving at least a tenth of your income to God.

What are some of the arguments against tithing? It could be that it is not for Christians. That we do not have more information on it in the New Testament? And that it stifles Christian giving by making it prescriptive (focusing on legalism, works, dos and don'ts rather than on faith).

### My submission is as follows:

1. The Bible is the entire word of God and we do not discard the O.T., rather view it in line with the clarifications that Jesus brought. Matt 5:17. The moral tenets of the O.T. were all reinforced in the person of Jesus Christ.
2. Tithing began with the patriarchs, long before the law of Moses. Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek. The book of Hebrews clarified that Melchizedek was a typology of Christ in the O.T. Today, everyone who believes in Christ is called the seed of Abraham, and we are to learn from his example, which not only includes justification by faith but also tithing.
3. The principle of giving up one to preserve the rest. John 11:49-52. One day out of seven for rest after the creation, one animal to cover man's nakedness, one man Noah to preserve humanity in the flood, and Jesus for the whole of humanity.
4. What did Jesus say about tithing? Matt 23:23 - *Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. **You should have practised the latter, without neglecting the former.***
5. God promised prosperity to his children beyond whatever we can ever give to him – Mal 3:10-12. *Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not **throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.** <sup>11</sup> I will **prevent** pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not drop their fruit before it is ripe," says the LORD Almighty. <sup>12</sup> "Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land," says the LORD Almighty.*

Giving to the poor: Another major way of practising Biblical giving is by giving to the poor. The poor could be anyone in need – poor in the knowledge of God, poor in material things, poor in health, etc. 2 Cor 9:6-7 shows the expected attitude and outcome of biblical giving – cheerfulness and thanksgiving. When we give cheerfully, the receivers of our gift on all occasions burst out in thanksgiving to God. How can we do this today? Ask the Holy Spirit for the opportunity to give to someone in need. Support our youth and kids' ministries, support the food bags we send to schools, reach out to members in the church who may be struggling, invite others to lunch or tea with you, and just be generous in all you do.

Conclusion: 2 Cor 9:11-12 You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God.

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