

Giving

Biblical GIVING: The Biblical “law of first mention” on the subject of giving to God is found in Genesis 14 referring to the TITHE: meaning giving a tenth of one’s money - increase or produce.

Many people wrongly believe that tithing was instituted when the Law of Moses, the Old Covenant, was instituted. In fact, tithing was first mentioned in Genesis 430 years earlier than the Old Covenant. Tithing, as a part of the sacrificial act of worship and thanksgiving, was modeled by Abram to the High Priest, Melchizedek, whose name defined from Hebrew is King of Righteousness.

Melchizedek king of Salem (ancient Jerusalem) brought out bread and wine [for them]; he was the priest of [d] God Most High. And Melchizedek blessed Abram and said, Blessed (joyful, favored) be Abram of God Most High, Creator and Possessor of heaven and earth; And blessed, praised, and glorified be God Most High, Who has given your enemies into your hand.” And Abram gave him a tenth of all [the treasure he had taken in battle]”.
Genesis 14:18-20. AMPC

Abram’s tithing, from the spoils of his enemies as well as his personal wealth, modeled sacrificial giving as an act of worship and thanksgiving to God when he presented his gift to the High Priest, Melchizedek.

Learn more about the mysterious king and high priest, Melchizedek in: Psalm 110:4; Hebrews 5:6-11; Hebrews 6:20, and Hebrews 7:28.

The Prophet Malachi confirms the need for tithers to fund the house of God; and he challenges believers to prove the faithfulness of God when he describes the blessings that will come to those who do:

Bring all the tithes (the whole tenth of your income) into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and prove Me now by it, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.
Malachi 3:1 AMP

Did tithing end when the Levitical priesthood ended and the New and Everlasting Covenant was sealed by the blood of Christ? No. When Jesus rebuked the Pharisees in Matthew 23:23, He clearly addressed the ongoing practice of tithing that should not be neglected.

Woe to you, [self-righteous] scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you give a tenth (tithe) of your mint and dill and cumin [focusing on minor matters], and have neglected the weightier [more important moral and spiritual] provisions of the Law: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these are the [primary] things you ought to have done without neglecting the others.
Matthew 23:23 AMP

Four Types of Biblical Giving: Tithe, Offering, First Fruits, and Alms

The ultimate example of giving is found in God’s gift of Jesus, which is the basis for Christian understanding of love and generosity.

For God so [greatly] loved and dearly prized the world, that He even gave His One and only begotten Son, so that whoever believes and trusts in Him as Savior shall

not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:16 AMP

Our giving should never come from a feeling of compulsion or manipulation. It should be as a response of gratitude for God's goodness, provision, and mercy; and above all, the unspeakable gift of Salvation found in Jesus Christ alone.

Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

2 Corinthians 9:6-7

TITHE: Leviticus 27:30 defines the Tithe as 10% of one's income or increase. Its purpose is to fund the priests or pastors of God and sustain the house of God (church or meeting place) for the purpose of preaching the gospel and extending the kingdom of God through the five-fold ministries of Ephesians 4:11:

Apostle, Prophets, Evangelists, Preachers, and Teachers.

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.

Malachi 3:10 AMPC

This verse underscores the purpose of tithing and calls us to have faith in God's promise of abundant provision to those who faithfully tithe.

Tithing, then, is a tangible expression acknowledging God as our Creator, Lord, and Sovereign. It declares our dependence on the Lord's mercy and faithfulness and is an outward expression of gratitude for all His abundant provisions. Tithing is an act of worship and love for God that benefits His Church.

The earth belongs to God! Everything in all the world is his! Psalm 24:1 TLB

Each time we give our tithe, we acknowledge God's ownership of all resources and the believer's role as a steward. It serves as a reminder of the believer's responsibility to support the work of the Church and the Gospel message.

OFFERINGS: Biblical examples of giving voluntary offerings above the tithe (which supplies financial support for the meeting venue, local pastor, and local congregation's needs) are often directed to those who are a source of spiritual growth to the Body of Christ. The Apostle Paul, writing to the church in Corinth, points out the proper relationship the local church has with their overseer or spiritual leaders who invest their time to teach, guide, lead, administrate, and encourage them in the faith.

If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you? If others have this right of support from you, shouldn't we have it all the more?

1 Corinthians 9: 11-12NV

FIRST FRUITS: Offering the first fruits is a practice outlined in Deuteronomy 18:4 and Exodus 23:19. Rooted in their agricultural society, the gifts given were the first crops taken to the priest as an offering before harvesting a field or the first fleece from the sheep. This example of giving reveals an act, attitude, and lifestyle of gratitude for God's provision. It is a reflection of God's own character who offered up His only begotten Son as a perfect sacrifice for restoring mankind to God. Jesus was the first fruit - the first raised from the dead... the first-born of many brethren. When we give offerings of our first fruits, we are showing gratitude to the Source of our Salvation for

His unspeakable gift of grace and are emulating the character of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit alive in our lives. When we give to Him who first loved us and gave His life for us, we model His unselfish heart and are expressing God's agape (sacrificial) love.

Therefore, be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.
Ephesians 5:1-2 NASB1995

Differing from a general offering, a First Fruit offering in the 21st Century is given from the first increase from a new venture, an unexpected windfall, the first harvest of crops, the first pay raise in your job, the first offering from an inheritance, and so on. We are celebrating our joy at God's goodness, favor, and blessings!

All generous giving and every perfect gift[a] is from above, coming down[b] from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or the slightest hint of change.

James 1:17 NET

ALMS: At the core of Jesus' message is an ever-giving heart of charity. In His life, and in His sermons, Jesus elevates acts of compassion as one of the core foundations of the Christian faith. Luke 10:27 (NIV) has come to be called, "the golden rule". It's our basic instruction for living a life worthy of God's kingdom. ***Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind; and 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'***

When Jesus was questioned further as to "who is our neighbor?", He answers with the poignant parable of the Good Samaritan. Read this instructive teaching about giving alms in Jesus' own words in Luke 10:25-37. Other instructive passages follow.

When you give to the poor, it is like lending to the Lord, and the Lord will pay you back.

Proverbs 19:17 GNT

What God the Father considers to be pure and genuine religion is this: to take care of orphans and widows in their suffering and to keep oneself from being corrupted by the world.

James 1:27 GNT

For I tell you truly, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to and bear the name of Christ will by no means fail to get his reward.

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Mark 9:41 AMPC & Matthew 10:44

Jesus likens showing kindness to the poor - providing for those in need - as gifts given directly to Him; and He promises a reward to the giver. There are myriad ways places to give alms. Whether you make a financial donation to a Christian charity, volunteer at a soup kitchen, gift a single mother with diapers and formula, visit an elderly neighbor and volunteer to do a task they cannot do for themselves, donate to help hurricane, fire, or flood victims, give to a GoFundMe drive for a critically ill person, or even offer a cold bottle of water or a warm blanket to a homeless person in Jesus' name, you are revealing the Lord's heart of love to the world.

I can guarantee this truth: Whatever you did for one of my brothers or sisters, no matter how unimportant they seemed, you did for me.

Matthew 25: 40 GW

Your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. Read Matthew 6:1-4 (Amplified Bible) for God's instructions on giving: Be humble and sincere, without seeking recognition or praise.

And I was a constant example to you in helping the poor; for I remembered the words of the Lord Jesus, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" Acts 20:35 TLB
So, let's not allow ourselves to get fatigued doing good. At the right time we will harvest a good crop if we don't give up or quit. Right now, therefore, every time we get the chance, let us work for the benefit of all, starting with the people closest to us in the community of faith. Galatians 6:9 MSG

RECIPROCITY: Giving according to God's laws sets into motion what "shall be given unto you". The financial seeds you sow, loving acts of service you perform, and kindnesses and compassion you extend may return to you in material increase. It also may return in overall prosperity: peace, divine health, healing, favor, supernatural protection, household salvation, friendship, and so much more.

The generous man [is a source of blessing and] shall be prosperous and enriched, And he who waters will himself be watered [reaping the generosity he has sown].

Proverbs 11:25 AMP

And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:19 NASB1995

GIFTS of RENOWN: Jesus praised the poor widow who gave two small coins, noting that while others gave out of their wealth, she gave all she had. This teaches that God values the heart and the sacrifice behind the giving more than the amount.

The story of the woman who poured the costly perfume from an Alabaster jar to anoint Jesus is repeated in Matthew 26:7, Mark 14:3, and Luke 7:37. These records of her washing His feet with her tears and hair, and her sacrificial worship through the gift of the costly perfume, reveal how very touched the Lord is when we give our best - with no reserve - in expressing our love for Him. Giving should never be reduced to merely a moral duty. Each gift to the Lord should be thoughtfully and prayerfully given with reverence - and as an act of worship - to affirm our faith and love for our Savior who gave His very life for our redemption.

Now thanks be to God for His Gift, [precious] beyond telling [His indescribable, inexpressible, free Gift]!

2 Corinthians 9:15 AMPC

*A variety of Bible translations and paraphrases have been used in the **Quick Notes** for clarity.

We recommend www.biblegateway.com as a Bible resource and study aid.



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