



TITHING AND GIVING

THE LAW OF RECIPROCIDITY

Pat Robertson stated in his book, *The Secret Kingdom*, Christ's admonition to "give and it will be given to you" defines a remarkable spiritual principle. It can also be called the law of reciprocity, which is quite evident in the physical world: for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction. Smile at another person, and he'll probably smile back at you. Be critical of others, and they'll respond in kind. As you give, you will receive. Give generously, and you'll receive in like measure.

WHY SHOULD WE TITHE?

Since God owns everything — "the cattle on a thousand hills" and all there is — it might seem that He doesn't really need our tithes and offerings. He doesn't need them, true, but we need to give them. For, in instructing us to tithe, God is helping us to understand the law of reciprocity.

In addition, failure to tithe means we are actually robbing God of what is due Him. In **Malachi 3:8-9**, God spells out the results when the nation of Israel does not repay Him what they owe:

"Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. But you ask, 'How do we rob you?' *In tithes and offerings*. You are under a curse — the whole nation of you — because you are robbing me."

When we tithe, we receive many blessings from God.

"Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap" (**Luke 6:38**).

And what blessings were promised to the people of Israel, if they would once again tithe!

"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it. I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not cast their fruit," says the Lord Almighty (**Malachi 3:10-12**).

We are also told that when we give to others, we give to God:

"He who is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will reward him for what he has done" (**Proverbs 19:17**).

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST

Yet, we should give not only because God expects us to. Our sincerity in returning to God a portion of His bounty is equally important. We're told: "Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver" (**II Corinthians 9:7**).

The apostle Paul also tells us that we receive according to the way we give: "Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously."

Luke likewise admonishes: "For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

However, we're warned against making public our acts of giving: "Be careful not to do your 'acts of righteousness' before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven" (**Matthew 6:1**).

GOD'S OUTPOURING OF BLESSINGS

When we're generous to Him and to others, God rewards us in a very generous fashion.

"And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. As it is written, 'He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor; his righteousness endures forever.' Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be made rich 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 God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God" (**II Corinthians 9:8-12**).

WHAT SHOULD I DO NOW?

In the Old Testament, the Jews were instructed to take their tithes" to the storehouse," which was the temple — the center of religion for the entire country. Today, since the Body of Christ has so many manifestations (churches, colleges, television and overseas ministries, hospitals, relief agencies, etc.), people can choose where their tithes should go. It's important that you give your tithe to the place that feeds you *spiritually*. If you're a church member, you should honor your own church with consistent financial support, since membership entails responsibilities as well as privileges.

Done on a regular basis, giving serves as a constant reminder that God is our provider. You alone will decide how to account for your stewardship of the financial blessings God gives you — and how to honor Him with your tithes and offerings. May you be richly blessed as you are obedient in your stewardship to Him!

REFERENCES

Matthew 22:15-22 -- Render to Caesar his own

Luke 6:38 -- Give and receive good measure

I Corinthians 16:1,2 -- Giving to needy saints

http://www.cbn.com/spirituallife/cbnteachingsheets/giving_and_tithing.aspx