

Right Resources for Church Money – Tithing Part 1

“11 Then there shall be a place which the LORD your God shall choose to cause his name to dwell there; thither shall ye bring all that I command you; your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, your tithes, and the heave offering of your hand, and all your choice vows which ye vow unto the LORD: 12 And ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God, ye, and your sons, and your daughters, and your menservants, and your maidservants, and the Levite that is within your gates; forasmuch as he hath no part nor inheritance with you.” (Deuteronomy 12:11-12 KJV)

God provides the church with resources ordained by Him. Each congregation of the church has members and they are called by God to give to Him by bringing to the church that He has placed them in to receive spiritual food.

The church should teach their members, disciples and those whom the church is reaching out the importance and the purpose of giving to God and the rights of the church to collect from them. Apostle Paul taught his churches and explained well to them why they need to give to support the work of God: *“7 Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? 8 Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also? 9 For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? 10 Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope. 11 If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? 12 If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ. 13 Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? 14 Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.” (1 Corinthians 9:7-14 KJV)* Paul explained clearly that those who teach and labor in doctrine have the right to be supported by those whom they are discipling and caring, *“17 Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. 18 For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.” (1 Timothy 5:17-18 KJV)* Jesus spoke also the same to His apostles when He sent them to preach the gospel, *“3 Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves. 4 Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way. 5 And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house. 6 And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again. 7 And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house.” (Luke 10:3-7 KJV)*

There are various ways we are expected to give to the church.

I. Tithing: The tenth of all the income we receive belongs to God. Abram was the first one to bring his tithes to the Lord.

“18 And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. 19 And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: 20 And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all. 21 And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself.” (Genesis 14:18-20 KJV) When God blessed Abram with a victory and he was able to recover the people of Lot along with the goods, he offered the tithe of his spoils. Bringing the tithes to God was Abram’s acknowledgment of God bringing the plunder to him. **Giving our tithes is an act of expressing our faithfulness and trust in God that He is in our lives and is the one to help us through our struggles.**

Before *Melchizedek king of Salem* met Abraham, the king of Sodom went out to meet him. *“17 And the king of Sodom went out to meet him after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer, and of the kings that were with him, at the valley of Shaveh, which is the king's dale.” (Genesis 14:17 KJV)* I teach the people about tithing their income, salary, and also any other bonuses or allowances they receive. Satan always comes to tempt God’s people to spend the money on other things before giving the tithes. **Therefore, I instruct the people that once they receive their salary or their income, the first thing they should do is to take the tithes out and put it in an envelope, write their names and bring it to the church. Then they can spend on what they need. It is important that once we receive our earnings, we separate the tithes and bring it in whatever way to His storehouse, the church.**

“1 For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; 2 To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; 3 Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually. 4 Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils.” (Hebrews 7:1-4 KJV)

Giving the tithes is not giving to man but to God. Abram gave the tithes to Melchizedek, who was a type of Christ, and he was the priest of the Most High God, King of peace, and King of righteousness. *“3 Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually.” (Hebrews 7:3 KJV)* *“8 And here men that die receive tithes; but there he receiveth them, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth.” (Hebrews 7:8 KJV)*

When Abram gave his tithes to Melchizedek, Levi also paid his tithes, *“9 And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham. 10 For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchizedek met him.” (Hebrews 7:9-10 KJV)* Therefore when we give our tithes, our children who are still not yet born are giving their tithes to God. **Therefore we need to take the responsibility to teach and discipline our children, to be honest and to tithe their income correctly.** *“6 Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” (Proverbs 22:6 KJV)*

The tithes need to be collected by the pastors and the faithful workers of the church, and they need to be recorded and accounted. *“5 And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people*

according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham.” (Hebrews 7:5 KJV)

* Why the pastors and the faithful workers of the church should collect the tithes? It is not only about honest people who need to collect and keep the money, but as well as to deal with the individual lives of the people. * Before collecting the tithes, the church leaders should examine the individual lives of the people. We should not only collect the tithes, but we should examine the individual lives of the people, know their problems, the status of their finances, and other struggles that they are passing through. * People who live in sin, yet give their tithes will not be blessed by God unless they repent. The rule is that we should direct the people by expounding to them the truth, and counsel them to repent and come back to God. This will be the way to show that we love our brethren by facilitating their spiritual growth.

Collection of the tithes comes after reaching out to the people and educating them in the Word of God and serving them and meeting their spiritual needs. If we fail to do that, we are not helping the people, we are not doing the work of God well, and we are unworthy to receive the peoples’ tithes.

If some people in the congregation are not able to give their tithes, the church should make every effort to reach them, and search their lives, find out why they are not able to give and help them to get back on their feet. I usually recommend the tithe to be put in an envelope mentioning the tithe giver’s name and the amount with the date of giving. There is a frequent question that I am asked by those who cannot understand why they need to write their names on the envelope, and they will use what Jesus said, “1 Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. 2 Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. 3 But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: 4 That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.” (Matthew 6:1-4 KJV) Jesus said that about giving alms and not about giving tithes. Putting the tithes in an envelope and writing their names on it is a good policy so that those who are not yet giving their tithes can be approached for spiritual counseling. The Levites who are called to the office of the priesthood are required to mention each person’s name and the amount that person gave, “5 And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham.” (Hebrews 7:5 KJV)

There are reasons for not giving the tithes and as the following:

- Unfaithfulness
- Ungratefulness
- Rebelliousness
- Bad stewardship
- Lack of faith and not trusting God
- Greed
- Worldliness and leisure activities
- Lack of knowledge

- Lack of trust in the church

Going through the Scriptures will open our understanding of these points and will teach us lessons.

When Jacob was on his journey to Haran to get a wife from there, in obedience to his father’s instructions, the Lord God of Abraham and Isaac appeared to him in a dream and confirmed God’s promise to his ancestors. “10 And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran. 11 And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. 12 And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. 13 And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I am the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; 14 And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. 15 And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of. 16 And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew it not. 17 And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven. 18 And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. 19 And he called the name of that place Bethel: but the name of that city was called Luz at the first. 20 And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, 21 So that I come again to my father’s house in peace; then shall the LORD be my God: 22 And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God’s house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.” (Genesis 28:10-22 KJV)

When Jacob had woken up from his dream, he committed his life to the Lord and made a vow to God. The lordship of God over Jacob’s life was evident by what he did in that place. Jacob saw and heard the Lord speak to him. Jacob was alone in that place but he expressed his worship to God. He called the place “Bethel” meaning ‘the house of God’. Jacob promised to give a tithe of everything that God would give him as long as he would be provided for and kept safe. Parallel to what Jacob experienced and vowed, the Church of God in the New Testament is the Bethel where true worshippers must meet God, experience Him, and fulfill their promises to Him.

A. “shall the LORD be my God.” (Genesis 28:21 KJV) These words express the Lordship of God over the worshipper’s life. The word “**LORD**” should mean master to the believer. Hence, God should be followed and honored in every arena of the worshipper’s life: education, marriage, family, work, and service. The Lord God should lead the worshipper through life, and be enthroned in his heart and everyday living.

B. “And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God’s house:” (Genesis 28:22 KJV) These words express the commitment of the worshipper to be part of God’s Church. The church is the family of God and the members are of God’s household. A worshipper commits

his life to God and to the church where he serves God and helps build up God's people. "19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; 20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." (Ephesians 2:19-20 KJV)
C. "and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee." (Genesis 28:22 KJV) All the provision that a worshipper receives has to be tithed because God is the source of everything. Jacob promised a tithe of everything to acknowledge that God alone can protect him, God alone can provide for him, and God alone can prosper him. Jacob committed himself to the principle of tithing when he had nothing, and God hearkened to his vow and commitment and blessed him. In my teaching, I always say to those who lack and are in need, and to those who are looking for job opportunities to commit themselves to give their tithe to God and so experience the abundant blessing of God. I have seen many people who have made a commitment to bring their tithes even in their jobless state being blessed with opportunities for a job, employment, and income. Our God is faithful to what He has promised in His Word.

Indeed God blessed Jacob's journey. God gave him a suitable wife Leah, but he was not happy with God's choice and took Rachel, the sister, as wife in addition to Leah. Jacob served his uncle Laban, who had cheated him ten times for twenty years. Later, Jacob returned home as God had instructed him together with his big family. In his journey back home God protected him from the hands of his uncle Laban, and when he arrived at his place, God protected him from his brother Esau who wanted revenge on him. "18 And Jacob came to Shalem, a city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padanaram; and pitched his tent before the city. 19 And he bought a parcel of a field, where he had spread his tent, at the hand of the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for an hundred pieces of money. 20 And he erected there an altar, and called it EleloheIsrael." (Genesis 33:18-20 KJV) Jacob set up an altar in Shechem and neglected what he had promised God that if the Lord would bless him he would return to Bethel and set up an altar there. This wavering of commitment by Jacob brought troubles in the life of his family: "1 And Dinah the daughter of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land. 2 And when Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country, saw her, he took her, and lay with her, and defiled her. 3 And his soul clave unto Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the damsel, and spake kindly unto the damsel. 4 And Shechem spake unto his father Hamor, saying, Get me this damsel to wife. 5 And Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter: now his sons were with his cattle in the field: and Jacob held his peace until they were come. 6 And Hamor the father of Shechem went out unto Jacob to commune with him. 7 And the sons of Jacob came out of the field when they heard it: and the men were grieved, and they were very wroth, because he had wrought folly in Israel in lying with Jacob's daughter: which thing ought not to be done. 8 And Hamor communed with them, saying, The soul of my son Shechem longeth for your daughter: I pray you give her him to wife. 9 And make ye marriages with us, and give your daughters unto us, and take our daughters unto you. 10 And ye shall dwell with us: and the land shall be before you; dwell and trade ye therein, and get you possessions therein. 11 And Shechem said unto her father and unto her brethren, Let me find grace in your eyes, and what ye shall say unto me I will give. 12 Ask me never so much dowry and gift, and I will give according as ye shall say unto me: but give me the damsel to wife. 13 And the sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor his father deceitfully, and said, because he had defiled Dinah their sister: 14 And they said unto them, We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one that is uncircumcised; for that were a reproach unto us: 15 But in this will we consent unto you: If ye will be as we be, that every

male of you be circumcised; 16 Then will we give our daughters unto you, and we will take your daughters to us, and we will dwell with you, and we will become one people. 17 But if ye will not hearken unto us, to be circumcised; then will we take our daughter, and we will be gone. 18 And their words pleased Hamor, and Shechem Hamor's son. 19 And the young man deferred not to do the thing, because he had delight in Jacob's daughter: and he was more honourable than all the house of his father. 20 And Hamor and Shechem his son came unto the gate of their city, and communed with the men of their city, saying, 21 These men are peaceable with us; therefore let them dwell in the land, and trade therein; for the land, behold, it is large enough for them; let us take their daughters to us for wives, and let us give them our daughters. 22 Only herein will the men consent unto us for to dwell with us, to be one people, if every male among us be circumcised, as they are circumcised. 23 Shall not their cattle and their substance and every beast of their's be our's? only let us consent unto them, and they will dwell with us. 24 And unto Hamor and unto Shechem his son hearkened all that went out of the gate of his city; and every male was circumcised, all that went out of the gate of his city. 25 And it came to pass on the third day, when they were sore, that two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brethren, took each man his sword, and came upon the city boldly, and slew all the males. 26 And they slew Hamor and Shechem his son with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah out of Shechem's house, and went out. 27 The sons of Jacob came upon the slain, and spoiled the city, because they had defiled their sister. 28 They took their sheep, and their oxen, and their asses, and that which was in the city, and that which was in the field, 29 And all their wealth, and all their little ones, and their wives took they captive, and spoiled even all that was in the house. 30 And Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, Ye have troubled me to make me to stink among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites: and I being few in number, they shall gather themselves together against me, and slay me; and I shall be destroyed, I and my house. 31 And they said, Should he deal with our sister as with an harlot?" (Genesis 34:1-31 KJV) Jacob's family faced the consequence when he wavered in his commitment toward God. Dinah, his daughter went out with the women of the land. She was introduced to a man, who finally raped her, and her two brothers Simeon and Levi avenged against the whole city of Shechem because they had treated their sister as a harlot. "30 And Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, Ye have troubled me to make me to stink among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites: and I being few in number, they shall gather themselves together against me, and slay me; and I shall be destroyed, I and my house." (Genesis 34:30 KJV) Typically, Jacob's family was the church now, but in the midst of danger. And the reason was Jacob, who had neglected his vow to God and did not go back to Bethel, the house of God to worship and pay his tithes, but he built up an altar in Shechem. Someone might say that Jacob had made his vow to God twenty years ago and so must have forgotten and that the Lord should have reminded him. The Lord did remind him about Bethel when He appeared to him and commanded him to go back from Padan Aram to his father's land. We can read that in the following Scripture:

"1 And he heard the words of Laban's sons, saying, Jacob hath taken away all that was our father's; and of that which was our father's hath he gotten all this glory. 2 And Jacob beheld the countenance of Laban, and, behold, it was not toward him as before. 3 And the LORD said unto Jacob, Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee. 4 And Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field unto his flock, 5 And said unto them, I see your father's countenance, that it is not toward me as before; but the God of my father hath been with me. 6 And ye know that with all my power I have served

your father. 7 And your father hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times; but God suffered him not to hurt me. 8 If he said thus, The speckled shall be thy wages; then all the cattle bare speckled: and if he said thus, The ringstraked shall be thy hire; then bare all the cattle ringstraked. 9 Thus God hath taken away the cattle of your father, and given them to me. 10 And it came to pass at the time that the cattle conceived, that I lifted up mine eyes, and saw in a dream, and, behold, the rams which leaped upon the cattle were ringstraked, speckled, and grised. 11 And the angel of God spake unto me in a dream, saying, Jacob: And I said, Here am I. 12 And he said, Lift up now thine eyes, and see, all the rams which leap upon the cattle are ringstraked, speckled, and grised: for I have seen all that Laban doeth unto thee. 13 I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar, and where thou vowedst a vow unto me: now arise, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy kindred." (Genesis 31:1-13 KJV)

Now we need to notice that in whichever church God has placed us in, we need to be faithful to God and bring our tithes to the church that we are part of and where we are serving the Lord. I have seen many individuals and families destroyed and their lives unfruitful because they had failed to bring their tithes to the house of God. The portion they had failed to bring was destroyed and taken away from them by troubles, sickness, accidents, theft, and so on.

Now Jacob, who was brokenhearted and fearful of the people in Shechem, needed to be restored. And God reminded Jacob again of his commitment and covenant with God: *"1 And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother."* (Genesis 35:1 KJV) Then Jacob truly repented of what he had done and recognized how his family was harmed because of his neglect of God's Word and his vow to God. *"2 Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that were with him, Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments: 3 And let us arise, and go up to Bethel; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went. 4 And they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which were in their hand, and all their earrings which were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak which was by Shechem. 5 And they journeyed: and the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob. 6 So Jacob came to Luz, which is in the land of Canaan, that is, Bethel, he and all the people that were with him. 7 And he built there an altar, and called the place Elbethel: because there God appeared unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother."* (Genesis 35:2-7 KJV)

My dear and beloved: Some say that the amount Jacob had spent in Shechem in buying the land and in erecting the altar there is equivalent to his tithes, *"19 And he bought a parcel of a field, where he had spread his tent, at the hand of the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for an hundred pieces of money. 20 And he erected there an altar, and called it Elelohe-Israel."* (Genesis 33:19-20 KJV) It is not about money and how much he spent, but about his obedience to God and how much he needed to keep his commitment to God and to His Word. God is not after our money, but after us to keep abiding by His instructions. The pattern of the life and ministry of Jacob in Shechem as we noticed here is out of God's Word and the way that God wanted Jacob and his family to live. Let us pray ...

My Prayer: Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus, who died on the cross for my sins and rose from death on the third day to give me eternal life. Lord, thank you for your Word about tithing and thank you for all the teaching, the admonishments and the corrections I received in this message. Lord thank you for my income and all your blessings to me.

Repent and renounce all your sins. Repent of not giving your tithes to God. Repent of non fulfilling your vows and promises to God. Repent of not allowing God to be the Lord over your life. Repent of your non concern to build God's church and your non willingness to serve God and suffer for him. Repent of your pride, worldliness, and your idol worship and following worldly things. Repent of your non willingness to discipline your children and raise them in the fear of God. Repent of doing your own will and plan and not the will nor the plan of God in your life. Lord forgive me I repent of the following sins: _____.

Lord I commit my life to you, to live in the fear of you, to start to serve you, to do your will, to live according to your ways and the good plan that you have for me. Lord I commit myself to bring my tithes in full to you and to work diligently to build up your church. Lord I commit myself to teach my children and raise them in the fear of you. Lord lead me out from sin and guide me to do your will in full and accomplish the task that you ordained for me to do.

Lord, I pray for my Brothers and Sisters who had humbled themselves before your Word and committed themselves to do your command and to bring their tithes into your store house, Lord use them to serve you and do the ministries that you ordained for them to do. Lord help them and provide for them to raise their children in a Godly way and to be good testimonies to others to follow you. Lord help and stabilize their jobs and resources and provide all their needs.

Lord, I pray for us as a church to help us to go on in serving you and doing your work and your will. Lord, we commit ourselves to do what is right and just in your eyes and to use only the right money for our needs. Lord, fill us once again with the Holy Spirit and enable us to evangelize and reach new people with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and with the Word of God. Lord, we pray that you will enable us to plant new Bible studies and new congregations for the church. Lord Bless us, enlarge our territory, let your hand be with us and free us from harm so that we will not feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all in Jesus name, Amen.

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