

TITHING AND STEWARDSHIP

What follows is Lecture 12 from “The Doctrine of the Church” series from “Landmarks of Baptist Doctrine Volume IV” by Pastor Robert Sargent. The full Baptist Doctrines course is available from Bible Baptist Publications of Oak Harbor, Washington. This version has been modified only to include all the Scriptures that he called out in his original document.

The Lord Jesus Christ taught His disciples the principles of stewardship in *Matthew 25:14-31*. The word ‘stewardship’ means the “management of the affairs or estates of another” — *Genesis 39:1-6*. Christian stewardship involves a great deal more than just money — it entails the whole of man’s relationship to God and man.

Matthew 25:14-31

14 For *the kingdom of heaven* is as a man travelling into a far country, *who* called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. 15 And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey. 16 Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made *them* other five talents. 17 And likewise he that *had received* two, he also gained other two. 18 But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord’s money. 19 After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. 20 And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. 21 His lord said unto him, Well done, *thou* good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. 22 He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them. 23 His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. 24 Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: 25 And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, *there* thou hast *that is* thine. 26 His lord answered and said unto him, *Thou* wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: 27 Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and *then* at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. 28 Take therefore the talent from him, and give *it* unto him which hath ten talents. 29 For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. 30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. 31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

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Genesis 39:1-6

And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmeelites, which had brought him down thither. 2 And the LORD was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. 3 And his master saw that the LORD *was* with him, and that the LORD made all that he did to prosper in his hand. 4 And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all *that* he had he put into his hand. 5 And it came to pass from the time *that* he had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the LORD was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field. 6 And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not ought he had, save the bread which he did eat. And Joseph was *a* goodly *person*, and well favoured.

“Imperative for our day is a stewardship that is not fractional, but which brings the whole life into proper relationship between God and man.

“Clinging to church membership by having one's name on the roll does not prove that one belongs to the church. Proof is a living, active participation in the worship and the service of the church.”¹

I. PRINCIPLES OF STEWARDSHIP

A. Everything Belongs To God.

Exodus 19:5; Psalm 24:1; Haggai 2:8.

Exodus 19:5

5 Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth *is* mine:

Psalm 24:1

1 The earth *is* the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

Haggai 2:8

8 The silver *is* mine, and the gold *is* mine, saith the LORD of hosts.

B. Every Christian Is A Steward.

Matthew 25:14-15

¹Melton, J. H. **What The Bible Teaches & Fundamental Baptists Believe.** Springfield, Missouri: Crescendo Publications: pp.54,55.

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Matthew 25:14-15

14 For *the kingdom of heaven* is as a man travelling into a far country, *who* called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. 15 And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.

C. It Is Required Of Stewards That They Be Found Faithful.

1 Corinthians 4:2

1 Corinthians 4:2

2 Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

There are several areas of stewardship:

II. STEWARDSHIP OF TIME

Time is a commodity God gives equally to every man —yet the use (stewardship) of it varies greatly. Time is to be used wisely — *Ephesians 5:16*.

Ephesians 5:16

16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

TOO BUSY? STOP A MINUTE

“No time to read, no time to pray,
No time to serve the Lord today,
No time to teach in Sunday School,
No time — for life is very full.
No time to give a gospel tract,
No time to do a kindly act,
No time to seek as Jesus sought,
No time — for life is very short.

No time to call upon a friend,
No time, e’en though he’s near the end,
No time to share another’s care,
No time — for life is such a tear.

No time? How much is spent on self?
How much time on gaining worldly wealth?
How much on seeking place and ease?

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Do you have time for only these?”²

*“Only one life, twill soon be past
Only what’s done for Christ will last.”*

III. STEWARDSHIP OF TALENTS.

God gives to each Christian certain talents. How often do we hear a Christian say, “I am not talented”? This cannot be, for even if we are not multi-talented, every believer has at least ONE talent—a testimony to share and a life to live for Christ! Christians will not be judged on the *amount* of talent they have, but for what they have **done** with what they have—*Matthew 25:14-30; 1 Corinthians 4:2*.

Matthew 25:14-31

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1 Corinthians 4:2

2 Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

²Author Unknown

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*“Christ has no hands but our hands to do His work today.
He has no feet but our feet to lead men in His way.
He has no help but our help to bring them to His side.
He has no lips but our lips to tell them how He died.*

*We’re the only Bible the careless world will read.
We’re the sinner’s gospel, we’re the scoffers’ creed.
We are our Lord’s last message, written in deed and word.
What if the type be crooked, what if the print be blurred?
What if our hands be busy with other work than His?
What if our feet be walking, where sin’s allurements is?
What if our lips be speaking words His lips would spurn?
How can we hope to help Him, or hasten our Lord’s return?”³*

IV. STEWARDSHIP OF TESTIMONY

Every Christian has an influence on others. We influence the lost either toward Christ, or toward hell. Christian parents influence their children.

The disciples were first called “Christians” because they reminded others of Christ.

In *1 Peter 3:1*, for example, the Lord promises a woman with an unsaved husband she can win him to the Lord through her exemplary Christian behavior at home — even though he will not attend church meetings.

1 Peter 3:1

Likewise, ye wives, *be* in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives;

It is the Christians’s duty to live a life that influences people for good. Hence the need to avoid all worldly and questionable practices, such as smoking, dancing, rock music, etc.

V. STEWARDSHIP OF TITHE.

The matter of tithing deals with eternal souls. It is a subject that truly reveals the heart of the Christian. The testimony of a tithing Christian is always one of joy and contentment.

Tithing needs to be taught in our churches today, because people have been conditioned into giving token “offerings”, and taught to raise God’s money through cake sales, raffles, bingo,

³Ibid.

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etc.!

There are four important principles to see in tithing:

A. Tithing Involves A Set Amount.

God does not operate like many politicians (who take more from the “haves” and give more to the “have-nots.”) The Bible teaches the tithe to be the same equal amount no matter what the income.

1. A Tithe Is A Tenth.

A comparison of *Hebrews 7:4* with *Genesis 14:20* shows this to be the case. A tithe is 10% of our gross income.

Hebrews 7:4

4 Now consider how great this man *was*, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils.

Genesis 14:20

20 And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.

2. A Tithe Is From The “First Fruits.”

The Bible teaches the principle that the *first* fruits belong to the Lord.
See: *Deuteronomy 26:2*; *Proverbs 3:9,10*; *Matthew 6:33*.

Deuteronomy 26:2

2 That thou shalt take of the first of all the fruit of the earth, which thou shalt bring of thy land that the LORD thy God giveth thee, and shalt put *it* in a basket, and shalt go unto the place which the LORD thy God shall choose to place his name there.

Proverbs 3:9-10

9 Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: 10 So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.

Matthew 6:33

33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

B. Tithing Is A Scriptural Principle.

If the command to tithe was first given from Mt. Sinai, there would be good reason for saying tithing is a Jewish law — thus not applicable to the Christian who is under

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grace.

However, a study of all the Scriptures dealing with the subject shows tithing transcends the Law — it is a ***Bible principle*** which does apply to Christians in this age.

1. Abraham Commenced It.
See: *Genesis 14:18-20.*

Genesis 14:18-20

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.

The question might well be asked, “How did Abraham know to tithe?”

“Was it something passed down from Abel — *Genesis 4:4?*”

Genesis 4:4

4 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering:

2. Jacob Continued It.
See: *Genesis 28:20-22.*

Genesis 28:20-22

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.

Note that the principle of God's blessings upon the tither applied to Jacob.

3. Moses Confirmed It.
See: *Leviticus 27:30.*

Leviticus 27:30

30 And all the tithe of the land, *whether* of the seed of the land, *or* of the fruit of the tree, *is* the LORD'S: *it is* holy unto the LORD.

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The Commandments made tithing a legal obligation for Israel.

4. Malachi Commanded It.
See: *Malachi 3:10*.

Malachi 3:8-12

8 Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. 9 Ye *are* cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, *even* this whole nation. 10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that *there shall not be room enough to receive it*. 11 And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts. 12 And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts.

Thus we see tithing in the first and last Books of the Old Testament.

5. Jesus Commended It.
See: *Matthew 23:23*.

Matthew 23:23

23 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier *matters* of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

In the midst of His rebuke of the legalistic Pharisees, the Son of God said of their tithing, "*these ought ye to have done.*"

6. God Commissioned It.
See: *1 Corinthians 9:7-14*.

1 Corinthians 9:7-14

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

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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.

In this passage, the Word of God teaches it is proper for New Testament preachers of the Gospel to be paid by those who receive the benefits of their ministry — *verses 7-11* — by carrying forward into church practice the Old Testament principle (of paying the priests and Levites from the tithes which were brought into the temple.)

7. Paul Conformed It.
See: *1 Corinthians 16:2.*

1 Corinthians 16:2-3

2 Upon the first *day* of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as *God* hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come. 3 And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by *your* letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem.

Although tithing is not mentioned in this verse, the unqualified mention of the word “*store*” indicates this is what the apostle had in mind — *Malachi 3:10.*

Malachi 3:10

10 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that *there shall not be room enough to receive it.*

C. Tithing Is To Be “Storehouse Tithing.”

Storehouse tithing means the giving of the tithes into God’s appointed place. In Old Testament days, the storehouse was the Jewish Temple. In New Testament days, the storehouse is the treasury of one’s church.

See: *Acts 4:35,37; 5:2.*

Acts 4:35,37

35 And laid *them* down at the apostles’ feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. 37 Having land, sold *it*, and brought the money, and laid *it* at the apostles’ feet.

Acts 5:2

2 And kept back *part* of the price, his wife also being privy *to it*, and brought a certain part, and laid *it* at the apostles’ feet.

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Both Malachi (O.T.) and Paul (N.T.) mention the “store.” *1 Corinthians 16:3* indicates not only that the storehouse is the church treasury (since it was from the *church* and not individuals that Paul would take the gift to Jerusalem), but that the church body collectively (not individuals) has the responsibility to designate where God’s money is to be spent.

Many radio and T.V. ‘pastors,’ evangelists, editors, and para-church organizations openly solicit the tithes of God’s people. Understandably these people are strongly in favor of tithing — but (*often vehemently*) oppose storehouse tithing.

D. Tithing Is Not Giving.

Under the law, tithing was obligatory. Under grace, it is expected — 2 *Corinthians 8:14*.

2 *Corinthians 8:6-14*

6 Insomuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also. 7 Therefore, as ye abound in every *thing, in* faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and *in* all diligence, and *in* your love to us, *see* that ye abound in this grace also. 8 I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love. 9 For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich. 10 And herein I give *my* advice: for this is expedient for you, who have begun before, not only to do, but also to be forward a year ago. 11 Now therefore perform the doing *of it*; that as *there was* a readiness to will, so *there may be* a performance also out of that which ye have. 12 For if there be first a willing mind, *it is* accepted according to that a man hath, *and* not according to that he hath not. 13 For *I mean* not that other men be eased, and ye burdened: 14 But by an equality, *that* now at this time your abundance *may be a supply* for their want, that their abundance also may be *a supply* for your want: that there may be equality:

But the Bible speaks of tithes ***and*** offerings.

Tithing is not giving, because the tithe is the Lord’s — it belongs to Him; it always has and always will. That’s why failing to tithe is robbing God — *Malachi 3:8*.

Giving involves returning to the Lord from that which is ours—that the Lord gives to us from His abundance. 2 *Corinthians 8* and *9* teach three levels of financial commitment to the work of the Lord:

TITHE	8:12	That which is God’s	Act of OBEDIENCE
OFFERING	9:7,8	That which is ours	Act of LOVE
FAITH PROMISE	8:3	That which we do not have	Act of FAITH

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2 Corinthians 8:12

12 For if there be first a willing mind, *it is* accepted according to that a man hath, *and* not according to that he hath not.

2 Corinthians 9:7-8

7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, *so let him give*; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. 8 And God *is* able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all *things*, may abound to every good work:

2 Corinthians 8:3

3 For to *their* power, I bear record, yea, and beyond *their* power *they were* willing of themselves;

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STUDY QUESTIONS

NAME _____ DATE _____

1. Define the word “stewardship.”
2. What passage of Scripture gives the principles of stewardship.
3. Give three areas where a Christian is required to show stewardship.
 - A.
 - B.
 - C.
4. Complete the saying: “*Only one life...*”
5. What is meant by the word ‘tithe?’
.
6. From what should a Christian tithe?

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7. Demonstrate that tithing is a Scriptural principle.
 - A.
 - B.
 - C.
 - D.
 - E.
 - F.
 - G.
8. What is meant by “storehouse tithing?”
9. What is the storehouse for the Christian?
10. Contrast a ‘tithe’ and an ‘offering.’