

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.

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.

“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.”
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I. PRINCIPLES OF STEWARDSHIP

- A. Everything Belongs To God.**
Exodus 19:5; Psalm 24:1; Haggai 2:8.
- B. Every Christian Is A Steward.**
Matthew 25:14-15
- C. It Is Required Of Stewards That They Be Found Faithful.**
1 Corinthians 4:2

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*.

TOO BUSY? STOP A MINUTE

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

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“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?
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.

*“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.*

²Author Unknown

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*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.

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, 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.

³Ibid.

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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.*

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 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.*

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

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

2. Jacob Continued It.

See: *Genesis 28:20-22.*

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

3. Moses Confirmed It.

See: *Leviticus 27:30.*

The Commandments made tithing a legal obligation for Israel.

4. Malachi Commanded It.

See: *Malachi 3:10.*

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

5. Jesus Commended It.

See: *Matthew 23:23.*

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

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

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*.

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*.

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*.

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*.

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*.

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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 <i>OBEDIENCE</i>
OFFERING	9:7,8	That which is ours	Act of <i>LOVE</i>
FAITH PROMISE	8:3	That which we do not have	Act of <i>FAITH</i>

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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?’
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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.’