

The Right Attitude to Tithe

By John Thiel, [mp3](#)

Scripture reading: Malachi 3:10 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.

In preaching this message I am not presenting it from a perspective of solicitation. This is not to solicit your tithes under any motivation of mine. I am preaching this message to a people who know what God's word says regarding tithes. We render this to Him, but it is our attitude and motives that we want to examine. We know what God's word says and we pay our tithes to the Lord, but what is the underlying attitude of paying tithe? What motivates us to return to God tithes and offerings? The following examples are what I have heard people say in reference to tithes, which have given me the indication that they have a false understanding of the right motive and the right attitude for tithe.

Attitudes and Motives

Many people return their tithes from a sense of obligation, because God says, Pay your tithes. So we do it from a sense of obli-

gation. He also says, If you will pay your tithes then I will open to you the windows of heaven, *and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.* Therefore you say, Goodie! I will pay tithe because I'm going to have more than what I expected. That motive is also not the correct motive. Then we pay tithes to a church, or to a company, because we want to have power over that company. Some people have said in my hearing, I pay the minister the tithes and therefore I expect something from him, and if they don't do as I say, then I am not going to return my tithes there anymore. This is all a very sad comprehension of the tithing that God speaks of.

What is tithing? It is meant to be an act of worship. Tithes and offerings are meant to be an act of worship. That is why, wherever I have ministered, we do not collect the offerings by bringing the bag in front of you. We have something at the entrance of the church where your devotion to God can be exercised without any solicitation. It is an act of worship, that's all.

What God Has Done

Consider the word of God displaying what He has done in sacrificing for us. What do we read in John 3:16?

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

I gave My life for thee, My precious blood I shed,

*That thou might'st ransomed be, and quickened from the dead...
 My Father's house of light, My glory-circled throne,
 I left for earthly night, for wanderings sad and lone;
 ... I left it all for thee ...
 I suffered much for thee, more than thy tongue can tell,
 Of bitterest agony, to rescue thee from hell,
 ... I've borne it all for thee ...*

It is our contemplation of these enormous meditations that is to have an effect upon us. I was going to perish, and the perishing that I was going to go through was to do with mind-bending anxiety and awful destruction from within. Jesus came here to take this upon Himself. Behold the great sacrifice that God made for us:

Philippians 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

Try and appreciate what is being said. Jesus had a mind that was in total unity with God. In fact, it says here very emphatically that He was *in the form of God*; in fact, He was *equal with God*. But what did He do? He did not regard it as *robbery*; he didn't regard it as something to cling on to, to be equal with God. But what did He do? He made Himself of no reputation. He turned away from His equality with God and surrendered Himself to something lower: No reputation. What was that? He *took upon Him the form*

of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. He became a human being. What happened as He was a human being? What else did He sacrifice?

Philippians 2:8 **And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.**

Not only did He give up His position as equal with God, but as a human being He continued to go down the scale of human worth, humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even unto the death of the cross, which was even worse than ordinary death. As we contemplate this sacrifice that He paid for our salvation, can you see what He did? People in the world do certain things to purchase you. Well, God did this to purchase us. Satan purchased us away from God, and God said, I am going to buy them back. This sacrifice was to captivate and purchase our minds. When we open our hearts to this great gift of Jesus Christ, then something happens.

1 Corinthians 6:20 **For ye are bought with a price:**

Now we have been bought. As we let this sink into our understanding, our hearts have been bought by this wonderful sacrifice of Jesus. What is now to follow?

Our Response to God's Love

1 Corinthians 6:20 **...therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.**

The person who believes in the precious sacrifice of Jesus, has been bought. All his ongoing responses are because he loves God so much for what He has done for him. His every act, his every issue of life, has to do with glorifying God. He wants to please God and make God big in the eyes of himself and of everybody else.

Proverbs 3:9 Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase:

Glorify God. Honour Him. Why? Because we have been bought with a price, because my heart has been purchased to devote myself unreservedly to God, and I want to honour Him. And to honour Him means to do so with every part of my being, and with my substance as well, *with the firstfruits of all mine increase*.

In the times when Paul was writing, people were bought as servants, they became servants like slaves, and here it says:

1 Corinthians 7:22 For he that is called in the Lord, [being] a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, [being] free, is Christ's servant.

When a person has been purchased to be a servant, through Jesus Christ he is now free. He is no longer serving man. He is now released from the servitude of man and is actually introduced to the servitude of Christ. Even the free man is purchased to become the servant of Christ.

1 Corinthians 7:23 Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men.

Now comes a very important element to come to the right appreciation of our attitude to tithe. Most people, when they return their tithes to a church, feel that they are in service to those systems, to those churches. But here it says, No; *be not ye the servants of men*. The right attitude to tithe is that we are servants *to God*, and only to Him.

Says the apostle: "Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price." When the poor, condemned sinner was lying under the curse of the Father's law, Jesus so loved him that He gave Himself for the transgressor. He redeemed him by the virtue of His blood. We cannot estimate the precious ransom paid to redeem fallen man. {4T 119.2}

What value was there in Jesus the ransom? All heaven; all the universe—that is the price that was paid.

The heart's best and holiest affections should be given in return for such wondrous love. {4T 119.2}

I have given all this to you, He says, what have you given for Me? *The heart's best and holiest affections should be given in return* for such a wonderful love.

The temporal gifts you enjoy are merely lent you to aid in the advancement of the kingdom of God. {4T 119.2}

What are we in existence for? We have been purchased. All that we are, all that we have in our temporal gifts, is to honour God, to advance the kingdom of God. Notice the beautiful meditation here:

Meager Pittance!

I speak of the tithing system, yet how meager it looks to my mind! How small the estimate! How vain the endeavor to measure with mathematical rules, time, money, and love against a love and sacrifice that is measureless and incomputable! {4T 119.3}

Have you ever sat down with your income and said, Now, a tenth of that, that's a lot of money. Have you ever thought to yourself, "I am going to give this there and I could use it for something else?" Can you appreciate the meditation here? *"How vain the endeavor to measure with mathematical rules, time, money, and love against a love and sacrifice that is measureless and incomputable!"*

Tithes for Christ! Oh, meager pittance, shameful recompense for that which cost so much! From the cross of Calvary, Christ calls for an unconditional surrender. He promised the young ruler that if he sold all that he had and gave it to the poor, and lifted His cross and followed Him, he should have treasure in heaven. All we have should be consecrated to God. The Majesty of heaven came to the world to die a sacrifice for the sins of man. And how cold and selfish is the human heart that can

turn away from such incomparable love and set itself upon the vain things of this world. {4T 119.3}

Here is the introduction to our mind of the right attitude to tithe. Our tithe is not to serve any human being. Our tithe is a natural heart-response that this tithe is God's. Not a church's, not a human system's; it is for God. It belongs to Him because I belong to Him. He has purchased me. Everything I have is His, and in regards to what He asks of me concerning tithe, that is natural; "You can have that, Lord! with all my heart, because everything else is Yours as well."

Solemn Stewardship

Christ is our Redeemer, our owner, and he is intensely interested that we shall have peace in this world. He seeks to present before us the attractions of heaven; for where the treasure is, there will the heart be also. To lay up treasure in heaven is to use our God-given capabilities in acquiring means and influence that may be used for the glory of God. {RH, April 7, 1896 par. 4}

Everything we do.

Every dollar we earn is the Lord's property, and should be used in reference to the time when we shall be called to give an account of our stewardship. {RH, April 7, 1896 par. 4}

We become stewards of God. He has given us all, he has given us health, strength to go to work, to earn money; He has given us food so that we can eat and have strength to do this, and now with all that He has given us, life itself, He says, You are My property, and you are My stewards. One day we must give an account of our stewardship.

No one of us will be able to evade the future reckoning. By choosing to lay up treasure in heaven, our characters will be molded after the likeness of Christ. The world will see that our hopes and plans are made in reference to the advancement of the truth and the salvation of perishing souls. They will see that Christ is all in all to those who love him. {RH, April 7, 1896 par. 4}

This is a witness, so that when people say to you, “What? You give tithe to the church?” You say, “No, sorry, we don’t give tithe to the church, we offer to God our tithes and offerings and our whole substance, to promote God, to honour Him.” That’s what the world will see in those who have a right attitude towards tithing. Christ is our Redeemer, our Owner. He has bought us with a price.

Whose Is the Tithe?

Therefore, whose is our tithe? Our tithe is the Lord’s. We give it to Him because it is *His*. It is not me telling you this; it is God’s own communication to us. All that comes from this pulpit, from

these lips, is not my own opinion, and there is no solicitation here at all. It is simply what saith the Lord.

Leviticus 27:30 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. ... **32** And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, [even] of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the Lord.

The tithe is the Lord's; and He bids us return to Him that which is His own. {Ed 138.4}

Do you get clearly what God is saying? “The tithe is Mine.” The Lord is saying through the Spirit of Prophecy, *The tithe is the Lord's*. What does that mean? What does Jesus say in reference to Himself? If the tithe is His, what is He?

John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

If I hear the words, *The tithe is the Lord's*, and the Lord says, *I am the truth*, then what is the tithe for? For the truth. To return our tithes to Him means we return the tithes where the truth is! Is that right? If we return the tithe to where error is taught, we do not return to Him, but to man. If Jesus is the truth and I am to return my tithe to Him, I return it to where the truth is. It is not a question of, “Where is the church?” as in, “Which church am I going to pay tithe to?” It is about returning my tithe to the truth. If I am going to look for the truth where I can return my tithes to, then I need to study. I need to know what truth is, so that I can put my

tithes where the truth is, because the truth is Jesus. It's a very simple cause to effect consideration. If I am returning my tithe to where I know that error is being taught, then I am returning my tithes to man.

It behooves us then to find pure teaching and then rest assured that we are actually His in the truth. I must get very clear on this subject of tithing.

God gives man nine tenths, while He claims one tenth for sacred purposes, as He has given man six days for his own work and has reserved and set apart the seventh day to Himself. For, like the Sabbath, a tenth of the increase is sacred; God has reserved it for Himself. He will carry forward His work upon the earth with the increase of the means that He has entrusted to man. {3T 395.2}

He will carry forward His work upon the earth with the increase of the means that He has entrusted to man—That is His choice of working to spread the message of truth. He has chosen that the people who are His should be stewards. Like the Sabbath, we worship the Lord on the Sabbath day in the truth, and all that is connected with the truth is connected with the tithe. When Adam and Eve were put into the Garden of Eden, everything they could use was there, the fruits and everything, it was all theirs; but there was one thing that wasn't theirs. Whose was it? It didn't belong to them. It's exactly the same as the Sabbath. That is what Sister White writes. The Sabbath is the same as the tree of the knowledge of

good and evil; it doesn't belong to them, and neither does the tithe.

Seeking Our Safety amid Confusion

Now comes a really serious problem for us living today. I am touched with God's wonderful love, I want to return my tithe, and now I have the right attitude. But where am I going to give the tithe? Where is it going to go? To the truth, which is Jesus, which is God. In today's disarray, many are confused by human teachings claiming tithe to sustain their system. Because people come to the tithing system and they say, Now, I've got my income. The others will teach what they teach, and they will also teach tithe so that now they've got the people's income. But they are teaching error mingled with truth. The confusion that many people are in today is this: How can I know and find where to return my tithe to? We have a secure guide to direct our deliberation in this matter, a safe place to return our tithes. Where is our safety? Sister White writes very emphatically that the problem we are facing in today's situation is a terrible confusion with the errors that are being taught.

To me the following statement gave me absolute safety and security, because I had already cleared my mind that the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy were God speaking to me, and I found this wonderful guide:

In the future, deception of every kind is to arise, and we want solid ground for our feet. {CW 53.2}

We want to be sure where the truth is, don't we? *We want solid ground for our feet.*

We want solid pillars for the building. Not one pin is to be removed from that which the Lord has established. {CW 53.2}

Over the history of the Christian church God has established a firm foundation with the Reformation, and all the teachings that came up, right up to the time of 1844, and the truths that have been given over the fifty years after that.

The enemy will bring in false theories, such as the doctrine that there is no sanctuary [in heaven]. This is one of the points on which there will be a departing from the faith. Where shall we find safety unless it be in the truths that the Lord has been giving for the last fifty years?-- Review and Herald, May 25, 1905 {CW 53.2}

I want to be secure that I am going to return my tithe to the Lord? I want to be secure and safe that it is going to go where the truth is? Here is the answer: There, where all the truths that the Lord has been giving over the last fifty years when they were being taught—this is where our safety lies; this is where the truth is that I can return my tithe to. Not to any man, but to the truth. That tithe belongs to God, and I have no more attitude in reference to it. All I am interested in is the truth. I have no argument to make because I am returning my tithe to where the truth is, and the Lord will take care of that. I am perfectly safe. I am the Lord's. The Lord has purchased me by His truth.

As we live today in such a dreadful condition, when deceptions of every kind are around us and we need solid ground for our feet, in a time when Satan the enemy is bringing false theories and we don't have the pure truth surrounding us anymore, but all sorts of error, we have a safety, a place where we know we can examine the truths that were given over the past fifty years. Where that truth is, that is where I can return my tithe.

Jesus Is With His Truth

Jesus made it very plain, He said, "Look, you are Mine, and your tithe is Mine, and you return it to Me," He says, "I am always going to be with you, so you will always find Me." These beautiful words of Jesus are for us to be comforted by:

Matthew 28:20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, [even] unto the end of the world. Amen.

He is speaking to all the true apostles of Christ and saying to them, You keep on teaching exactly the truth, and I am with you. All who receive the message of truth return their tithe to God, to Jesus, because He is right there where the truth is.

God grant us that in our worship of Him we may worship Him in spirit and in truth, and by the Spirit and the truth we will have the right attitude regarding tithe, as we have just contemplated it. May our hearts rejoice in the safety that is ours.

Amen.