

# Understanding the covenant of Blessing

By Pastor Don Nicely



Even though receiving free salvation is a life changing event in our life (*the most important*) it also carries with it a responsibility to become of good steward for God. The scriptures advise us a great deal about our stewardship and financial responsibilities. It cautions us many times against the love of money, greed, and allowing our lives to worship the false god known as Mammon. In this teaching we will start on the ground floor of stewardship and show bible principles on how to become the good steward that God expects each of his children to become.

This teaching will center on the concept of biblical tithing which is the basis for all faithful stewardship. I hope to explain the practice, and show why it is one of our covenant responsibilities to be blessed by God through the paying of our tithes. God wishes for none of us to limit his work in our life, so he created the tithe to be the basis for which he will be allowed to work. Now let's define what the tithe is as in the concept of stewardship as outlined in the scriptures.

Christian stewardship is best defined as *“an individual's responsibility to properly manage everything that God has entrusted to his or her care.”*

God demands no less than complete faithfulness in this area of our lives.

*1 Corinthians 4:2 (NKJV)* <sup>2</sup>Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.

Proper stewardship involves the right use of our time, talents, possessions, the resources that we've been entrusted with, and our finances. Biblical tithing is a principle of financial giving included within the concept of stewardship. When you understand stewardship you will understand that everything belongs to God and you are just the manager of a small portion of it. *“The earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness.”* Psalms 24:1 To properly understand biblical tithing you must get a grasp that it is a major testing ground for your faith. Scriptures instruct us that God's sole purpose for tithing is to test us, and teach us to always fear the Lord. Deut.14:23b...*the purpose of tithing is to teach you always to fear the Lord.* NLT. Now let's discuss some facts about tithing in a question and answer format.

## What is the tithe?

It is a divine principle of giving ordained by God before God even gave the law to Moses. Abraham tithed, Jacob tithed, and both of these people were long before the law was given to Israel. Simply defined the tithe means *“one tenth.”* It is God's spiritual system of proportional giving unto the Lord to support the work of the kingdom. In the Old Testament it was a mandatory practice equally applied to the whole nation as a type of spiritual tax. *Proverbs 3:9 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup>Honor the LORD with your possessions, And with the first fruits of all your increase; It belonged to God and was considered the holy portion.

*Leviticus 27:30 (NKJV)* <sup>30</sup>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 to the LORD.

As I've already stated contrary to what many think tithing didn't come with the Law of Moses. Its principle goes all the way back to the Garden of Eden. All the fruit of the garden is yours, but the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil- **leave it alone.** The sacrifice of Abel was accepted by God because it was the first fruits (tithe) and Cain's was not accepted because he hadn't given the first fruits first. Abraham *“gave tithes of all.”* To God's priest of the day and Jacob his grandson vowed a vow... *“all that you give me I will give you a tenth.”* Gen. 28:22 all before the Law of Moses came around. This proves that it was required and practiced way before the legal requirement of the law came around.

## What is the purpose of tithing?

There are several practical purposes;

**1—First it is a form of worship**...when we tithe we are placing God as top priority in our life.

**2—It builds our faith**... we put our dependence on God when we faithfully give him his portion and test him at his word.

**3—It provides support for those who are called to fulltime ministry**...Numbers 18:24;... but the tithe.....I have given to the Levites.

**4—It supports the operation of the church**... In order to keep the house of God in operation the tithes are of the utmost importance.

Now you may be wondering; just what if I withhold my tithe? According to Malachi 3:8&9; “ you’re a robber.”

<sup>8</sup> “Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, ‘In what way have we robbed You?’ In tithes and offerings. <sup>9</sup> You are cursed with a curse, For you have robbed Me, Even this whole nation.

As covenant people it’s our responsibility to honor our covenant with God. We demonstrate our love, trust, and faithfulness to him by paying him his tithe. Many call it their tithes, but it really isn’t theirs, they are just returning what rightfully belongs to him. Otherwise we commit spiritual thievery. Through tithing God purges selfish attitudes that keep us focusing on our own desires. If you refuse to tithe you will never become a strong victorious Christian. People who have an impoverished spirit in giving inevitably suffer from spiritual poverty.

*Proverbs 11:24 (NKJV) <sup>24</sup> There is one who scatters, yet increases more; And there is one who withholds more than is right, But it leads to poverty.*

Your faith walk will be stunted by your disobedience and lack of trust in God. Even the possessions that you have won’t satisfy you, because you acquired some of them by stealing from God, and he has placed a curse on your life.

### Let’s now look at a few promises to the faithful tither

Although our motive should not be to give to get, but instead we get because we give, that doesn’t stop God from being gracious toward us.

**1—He gives us spiritual and material blessings**....God has guaranteed to repay us with overwhelming blessings.

*Malachi 3:10 (NKJV) <sup>10</sup> Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, That there may be food in My house, And try Me now in this,” Says the LORD of hosts, “If I will not open for you the windows of heaven And pour out for you such blessing That there will not be room enough to receive it.*

*Proverbs 3:9 - 10 (NKJV) <sup>9</sup> Honor the LORD with your possessions, And with the firstfruits of all your increase; <sup>10</sup> So your barns will be filled with plenty, And your vats will overflow with new wine.*

**2—Also we have been promised divine protection from him**. He says he will rebuke the devourer (*seed eater*) from attacking the remaining 90%

*Malachi 3:11 (NKJV) <sup>11</sup> “And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, So that he will not destroy the fruit of your ground....*

**3—You will always be in God’s timing of things**...

*Malachi 3:11b (NKJV) “Nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit for you in the field,” Says the LORD of hosts;*

**4—Eternal rewards await you**...

In a very real sense, our faithful tithing represents making a practical investment in the kingdom of God and probably will have a direct impact on which rewards we receive in our eternity. Our heavenly reward will probably be much better.

**Matthew 6:19 - 21 (NKJV)** <sup>19</sup>“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; <sup>20</sup>but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup>For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

If you are currently not tithing I invite you now to repent and forsake the spirit of greed and unbelief and join us that have learned to enjoy the covenant blessings of obeying God’s commands, and being found a faithful steward of the resources that he has entrusted us with. Our goal is to hear from the master; “*well done good and faithful servant.*”