

## Paul, Corinthians and Tithing

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We want to start out by first of all establishing some very profound and important things in the New Testament.

The argument always comes—they do this with the Sabbath, the Holy Days, tithing and many, many other things—if the commandment is not specifically repeated identically in the New Testament then ‘we are not bound to do it.’ We will see that it is an absolute false assumption.

Let’s first of all establish the New Testament as the true Word of God, and the Scriptures of God, which Paul does in Rom. 16; these are his final comments with his last canonization just before he died.

Romans 16:25: “Now, to **Him Who** has the power to establish you, according to my Gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ... [He’s talking of God the Father] ...according to *the* revelation of *the* mystery... [that we’re going to be the sons of God at the resurrection] ...that in past ages has been kept secret; but now *is* made manifest, and **by the prophetic Scriptures...**” (vs 25-26). This is not the Old Testament prophets; these are the “...prophetic Scriptures...” that has to do with the New Testament, and I’ll prove that to you in just a minute.

“...according to *the* commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations unto *the* obedience of faith” (v 26). You can’t have obedience to the faith without the New Testament. That’s called *The Word of God* throughout.

Let’s see what the Apostle Paul wrote concerning what he wrote, 1-Corinthians 14:36: “WHAT? Did the Word of God originate with you? Or did it come only to you *and no one else*? If anyone thinks that he is a prophet or spiritual...” (vs 36-37). There’s a New Testament prophet—not those who prophesied foretelling of events necessarily—in some cases they did—who foretells the Truth of God or the telling forth of the Truth of God.

“...let him acknowledge that the things I write to you **are commandments of the Lord**” (v 37). What do we need to understand concerning this? *We need to understand that just as Moses received from God the things to write*, so likewise did the apostles receive from Christ the things to write. They are, brethren, in the same category as Moses as far as writing the Word of God.

This gives a whole lot more authority to the New Testament than people would like to accept.

Sidebar: from *The Story of the Christian Church* by Jesse Lyman Hurlbut. He has one little comment after introducing the Apostolic Church:

Fifty years after the death of Apostles we have no writing of Timothy or Apollos or anyone else, but when the curtain of history is raised ***we find a church that is totally different*** than the one that the apostles established. (paraphrased)

The reason is that once the New Testament was canonized, all the ministers/apostles had died—Timothy, Titus, Mark, later Polycarp, Polycrates and so forth—what did they do? *They all preached only the Word!* They all subordinated themselves to the writings of the apostles, because that was going to be the instruction book for all Christians until Christ returned.

When read 2-Timothy 3:14, let’s understand what it’s saying, “But *as for* you, continue in the things that you did learn... [The commandments of God; is that not what Paul said?] ...and were assured of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*; and that from a child you have known the Holy Writings... [this being the Old Testament] ...which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith, which *is* in Christ Jesus. **All Scripture...**” (vs 14-16). He’s including *all* New Testament Scripture; this includes everything that he has written. This is important in establishing the Word of God.

We’re going to read some Scriptures that are going to kind of needle some people. But nevertheless, **ALL** Scripture; does *all* leave out any? *No!* In the Greek—‘pasa’—this could also mean *every single* Scripture.

“...***is God-breathed and is profitable for doctrine...*** [We need doctrine—don’t we?] ...***for conviction...***” (v 16). We all need to be reprov’d; we all reprove even our own selves as we go along. How many times have you said to yourself, ‘That’s dumb!’ Why did you do that?’ Or reproof from the Word of God; help you to set right, go in the way that you need to go.

“...***for correction...*** [that’s a little stronger] ...***for instruction in righteousness...*** [that you may know how to live your life] ...so that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work” (vs 16-17). He’s talking directly to Timothy and his ministry. But this applies to everyone who has the Word of God, without a doubt.

Notice what he says in 2-Timothy 4, which substantiates what I said, that all of those who

succeeded the apostles did not succeed them as apostles, but subordinated themselves to the Word of God. Of course, the Catholics accuse us of making the Bible an idol, because we only go by the Bible. Well, that's what Paul said to do—didn't he?

- How are you going to know who is telling the Truth?
- How are you going to know who is lying?
- How are you going to know who is a true prophet or false prophet?

Unless you have some standard to go by, some standard that is above and beyond ordinary men. That's why we have the whole Bible and the New Testament in particular.

2-Timothy 4:1: "I charge you, therefore, in the sight of God, even the Lord Jesus Christ Who is ready to judge *the* living and *the* dead at His appearing and His kingdom: **Preach the Word!**...." (vs 1-2). There it is; it can't get any more clear than that. What is to be preached? *The Word!*

- What if some people don't like some of the words of Christ?
- Should we then not preach them?
- What if some people do not like some of the words of the Apostle Paul?
- Even one particular verse?
- Should we forebear preaching it?

We'll see in a minute, absolutely **no!**

"...Be urgent... [be right on top of it; don't let yourself be laggard in it] ...in season and out of season..." (v 2). That shows they were keeping the Holy Days, no doubt about it.

Remember, when Polycrates went to Victor—Bishop of Rome at that time—it was over keeping the 14<sup>th</sup> Passover. What did Polycrates tell Victor? Victor was demanding that everyone keep Easter on the first Sunday after the full moon of Passover. If they didn't they would be excommunicated. Polycrates said to Victor, 'Do you want to excommunicate all the churches in Asia?' That's quite a statement. It shows that all the churches in Asia were following the Word of God in season and out of season.

Notice what has to happen, He tells them to "...convict, rebuke, encourage... [edify and uplift] ...with all patience and doctrine. For there shall come a time when they will not tolerate sound doctrine; but according to their own lusts they shall accumulate to themselves *a great number of* teachers, having ears itching to *hear what satisfies their cravings*; and they shall turn away their own ears from the Truth; and they shall be turned aside unto myths" (vs 2-4). Of course, that happened!

Why? What do we learn during the Feast of Unleavened Bread? What is the principle? *A little leaven leavens the whole lump!* When you have some Scriptures that kind of gouge you and dig you, and pricks your carnality, and you don't like it, then you being rejecting them, what are you doing? *You're allowing a little leaven to leaven the whole lump!* It can start with almost anything if you allow it.

Let's see what Jesus said so that we understand this. We will also see that God never intended—contrary to the claims of people who don't want to keep the commandments of God—to restate every commandment in the New Testament. Why do that when it's already stated in the Old Testament and that you have the Holy Writings—which Paul told Timothy were able to 'make you wise unto salvation through Jesus Christ'—so anything that was said in the Old Testament stands on its own and is part of the Word of God, and there is no need to repeat it all in the New Testament.

It's that simple! This is a Scripture that you've heard over and over again, but sometimes in getting into some of these things that get a little thorny and sticky, then what we need to do is go back and relay the foundation of understanding so that we don't get offended; so that if some correction does come, that you're not going to be all bent out of shape at a man—being me or someone else—who says the Truth!

Another standard is this: The Truth of God stands alone—does it not? If someone will speak the Truth of God, though they may be very deficient and very unrighteous in many other areas of their life, does this unrighteousness in their life change the Truth of God? **No!** But it exposes their own unrighteousness—doesn't it?

Jesus said, Matthew 5:17: "Do not think... [don't let it enter your mind—hello, all of those out in Protestant land] ...that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill." Those are two sweeping statements. What does that include? *It includes the whole Old Testament!* {Note Luke 24:44—He opened their eyes to the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms}

We need to understand that in reference to the Old Testament, if it is mentioned once in the New Testament it then becomes *all* applicable. That's why you have to understand how Jesus fulfilled the Law. He said, 'I have not come to destroy but to fulfill.'

Note: Appendix H from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version: How Did Jesus Fulfill the Law and the Prophets.* It's all in *A Harmony of the Gospels* in the commentary on the

Sermon on the Mount.

Verse 18: “For truly I say to you, **until the heaven and the earth shall pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no way pass from the Law** until everything has been fulfilled.” Jesus didn’t fulfill all; He fulfilled part. He fulfilled by:

- His life
- His sacrifice
- His death
- His resurrection

—all of the temple ritual, and He destroyed the temple.

- Today we have a greater temple that is in heaven above, and *with the Holy Spirit we are the temple of God!*
- Today we have a greater circumcision than in the flesh; *we have it in the mind!*
- Today we have a greater worship of God, *which is in Spirit and Truth*, not a ritual!

Whenever He fulfilled He set a higher standard of everything, which is another whole sermon. I’m just trying to cover as many bases as I can, so when we get to the nitty-gritty—which we will—I hope you will not be very offended.

Verse 19: “Therefore, whoever shall break one of these least commandments...” What commandment do you consider the least? If you consider it the least, then it is one that you’re going to neglect and sooner or later you will either have to repent and accept it, or you will have to reject it and go on and BAM! *the leaven has grown!*

“...and shall teach men so...” (v 19). Doesn’t that always happen? *Yes! They’ve got to go out and teach men—don’t they?*

“...shall be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven; but whoever **shall practice** and teach *them*, this one shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven” (v 19). I want you to understand ‘shall practice’ comes from the Greek word ‘poieo.’

What was Jesus’ answer when Satan told Him that He should command these stones be turned into bread? This would have been a misuse of the power that God had given Christ, though He could do it. Did He not turn loaves and fishes—just a few of each—to feed thousands and thousands? It wouldn’t have been anything. All He did is look up into heaven and thank God and told the disciples to go break and feed.

However, if he would have done it at the behest of Satan the devil, who would have been His god? *Satan!* So therefore, He answered Satan as a man. He didn’t meet him as god, He didn’t meet him

as an angel, He met him as a man to show that man can overcome and conquer Satan.

Matthew 4:4: “But He [Jesus] answered *and* said, ‘It is written, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by **every word** that proceeds out of *the* mouth of God.”’” I want you to look at those two words, “...every word...” It becomes important.

Let’s get to the nitty-gritty; this has to do with those who claim that in the New Testament that it does not teach tithing. I’ve said that if you don’t believe the New Testament teaches tithing, bring your cause, show it forth, I’ll be happy to look at it. Not one came! I also want you to please understand that ***I’m covering this to show the Truth of the Scriptures:***

- I’m not covering this because I want money.
- I’m not covering this to merchandize you.
- I’m not covering this to put fear into you.
- I’m not bringing this sermon to extract from you.
- I’m not bringing this because the Church needs money (we have quite a sufficient reserve).

I’m sure that God is going to use it especially when the economic collapse comes, which lo, *it’s going to come!* Rest assured! If you don’t think it’s going to come, you are living in a dream world! When it comes, it is going to be awesome, devastating, breathtaking, and if you happened to live during the depression in the 30s, everything shows very clearly that ‘you ain’t seen nothing yet!’ Let’s just all understand that living in this society the way we live, we are most vulnerable, far more than back then.

I will grant you, when we were in Worldwide (Church of God) every letter beat you over the head for more money. Every sermon beat you over the head for more tithes and offerings. Everyone was used in fear against you.

- Does that abuse do away with the laws and commandments of God? *Of course not!*
- Were you hurt by it? *Some were!*

Some were hurt by it so bad that 20-plus years later they still haven’t recovered! Well, maybe it’s time to recover. Paul says that you have to ‘forget those things that are behind and go forward.’

Let’s see what Jesus said, and this becomes important, Matthew 23:23: “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin, but you have abandoned the more important **matters** of the Law—**judgment, and mercy and faith....**” Let’s first of all understand

that tithing is not on the equivalent of the Ten Commandments. Offerings are not on the equivalent of the Ten Commandments.

“...These... [judgment, mercy and faith] ...you were obligated to do, and not to leave the others undone” (v 23). You should have done that, you’ve been omitting the weightier matters of the Law. I know that surely someone is going to say—which is true—that ‘under the New Covenant we live under the love of God.’ Oh, no doubt about that; that is true!

I want you to follow along with this because this is also something for our modern day Pharisees to understand: Luke 11:37: “Now while He was speaking, a certain Pharisee asked Him to dine with him; and He went in *and* sat down. But the Pharisee, seeing *this*, wondered why He had not first washed... [His hands] ...before dinner.” A great sin! (sarcastically said) This is to help us get the right perspective on things, and too many times we get on our ‘Pharisee high-horse’ and we go galloping down the street over some little thing.

Verse 39: “Then the Lord said to him, ‘Now, you Pharisees cleanse the outside of the cup and the dish...’” In other words, while you need to take care of the outside of you to be clean, presentable and all this sort of thing, what’s *inside* is more important.

“...but inside you are full of greediness and wickedness. Fools, *did* not He Who made the outside also make the inside? Rather, give alms *from* the things that are within; and behold, all things are clean to you” (vs 39-41). In other words, if you do it with the right motivation. Jesus said in Matt. 6 that when you give, ‘don’t let your right hand know what your left hand is doing.’ ***Do not do it for a calculated appearance or political purpose!***

Verse 42: “But woe to you, Pharisees! For you pay tithes of mint and rue and every herb, but you pass over the judgment and the love of God... [they were passing over the love of God] ...It is obligatory *for you* to do these things...”; that is judgment and love.

- Can you have love and obedience? *Of course!*
- Can you have love and tithing? *Of course!*
- Can you have love and give offerings? *Of course!*

“...and not to set aside those *lesser things*.”

Now let’s show the example of this in Luke 18, and then ask: Why did the Apostle Paul not take tithes from the Corinthians? *and also* in the beginning with the Thessalonians? There’s a reason! As we have seen, ***judgment, faith, mercy and love must be of paramount importance first!***

If you make the mistake of doing as the scribes and Pharisees in putting the monetary things first, and that becomes your whole focal point, then you have missed the whole point of what the Bible is teaching. Love, judgment, mercy and faith are *the weightier matters of the Law!* Remember, in the second commandment that God blesses those who love Him and keep His commandments.

Luke 18:9: “And to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others...” This is what happens when you begin comparing yourself among yourselves, which the Apostle Paul said that if you do, you’re not wise.’

“...He also spoke this parable: ‘Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one *was* a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed with himself in this manner: “God...”’” (vs 9-11).

This tells you when your prayers don’t reach up to God; they go no further than the self. We’ve all done this. Come on! Let’s not think that I’m picking on anybody in particular, we’ve all done this—haven’t we? *Yes!* Have we repented of it? *Of course!* If we do it today, should we continue to repent of it? *Of course!* We’re not to exalt ourselves over people. That’s why if there’s something that I’m doing that’s not correct and you see it, come and tell me. I don’t want to be doing things that are not right. I’m not an end unto myself. I do need your help in things, in a lot of things, so I depend on you for it.

I tell you the one who watches over me more than anyone else, with great diligence, is my wife Delores. Will she let me know? *In a blink of an eye!* Do I listen to her when she is right? *Yes, I do!* Do I always listen cheerfully? *Not necessarily! But I do listen!* Do I then ask God to help me change? *But of course!* We’re all in this together, so please don’t think it’s me against you; or please don’t think it’s a putting down of you if something is pointed out that you’re not doing correctly; or misunderstanding things.

Here it shows how you think you’re praying to God and you’re not: “...I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners...” (v 11). God doesn’t want you to be an extortioner—does He? So, he’s doing right—*isn’t he? Yes!*

“...unrighteous, adulterers...” (v 11). Does God want you committing adultery? *No!*

“...—or even as this tax collector” (v 11). Now then, what is the sin of the Pharisee? Which is the sin of all of us in judging—*isn’t it? We’re judging the heart and we don’t have a clue what’s in the mind of that individual!*

- Have you done that? *Yes!*
- Have I done that? *Yes!*
- What is it? *It is carnal sin!*
- Can any of you read anyone's mind? *Of course not!*
- Can you wives and you husband by expressions on the face of your spouse—through practice over years of being married—discern the possibility of certain thought?

But you cannot read each other's mind—can you? Even though you may have a batting average of 850%.

Notice that he brags on what he does, v 12: "I fast twice in the week, *and* I give a tithe of everything that I gain." Not just the agricultural products. {See parts 1 & 2 of this series}

There are some people who have just insisted on the fact that the New Testament does not teach tithing. We'll see that it does.

Verse 13: "And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat himself on *the* chest, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner.'" It's more important to God that you repent of your sins and that you have a right attitude than to give of everything that you have. Paul said that if you 'give everything that you have and have not love, you're nothing!'

Verse 14—Jesus said, "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled; and the one who humbles himself shall be exalted." This is in Matt., Mark and Luke, and this becomes very important; not this particular instance as such, but there is a far more important principle involved here:

Matthew 22:15: "Then the Pharisees went and took counsel *as to* how they might entrap Him in *His* speech. And they sent their disciples *along* with the Herodians..." (vs 15-16). The Herodians were the officials of Herod the king, from his party.

"...to Him, saying, 'Master, we know that You are true, and *that* You teach the way of God in Truth, and *that* You are not concerned about *pleasing* anyone; for You do not respect *the* persons of men. Therefore, tell us, what do You think? Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not?' But Jesus, knowing their wickedness, said, 'Why do you tempt Me, *you* hypocrites? Show Me the tribute coin.' And they brought to Him a silver coin. And He said to them, 'Whose image and inscription *is on* this?' They said to Him, 'Caesar's.' And He said to them, 'Render then the things of Caesar to Caesar, and the things of God to God'" (vs 16-21).

- Is that not possessive?
- Does that not mean that there are things that belong to God, and are not yours?
- *Of course!*

God owns the world; He says He owns all the gold, silver and 'all souls are mine.' There are some things that belong to God.

Do you have some things that belong to you? *Of course you do!* What if you came home from Church this afternoon and found that your house was broken into and some of the things that belong to you were missing? How would you feel? *You'd be mad, upset, you'd call 911; the whole nine-yards—wouldn't you?*

God being merciful doesn't react that way necessarily all at once when we do not render to Him the things that are His. However, it can fall into that same category. If it is mentioned once in the New Testament, and the New Testament being the Word of God, is it binding upon us? *Of course!*

We will see that Paul did teach tithing. Though for the Corinthians, and we'll find out why, he did not exercise that authority upon them, though he had the authority to do so. There were reasons.

(go to the next track)

This gives us the basic reason why Paul did not come in and preach tithing first and Christ second:

1-Corinthians 8:11: "And will the weak brother, for whom Christ died, perish on *account of* your knowledge? Now when you sin against the brethren and wound their weak consciences in this way... [we can apply that to any matter] ...you are sinning against Christ. Therefore, if meat causes my brother to stumble, I will eat no flesh—not ever—so that I may not cause my brother to stumble" (vs 11-13).

Those that have a weak conscience or those who are carnal and weak in the faith Paul handled differently hoping they would be converted and understand what they needed to do.

Notice how he defends himself, 1-Corinthians 9:1: "Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are you not my work in *the* Lord? If I am not an apostle to others, without a doubt I am to you. For you are the certification of my apostleship in *the* Lord. My defense to those who are examining me is this" (vs 1-3). They were saying, 'How could Paul be an apostle, because he is not teaching tithing?'

So, he gives his defense, v 4: "Do we not have a right to eat and to drink? Do we not have a right to take with us a sister, a wife, as also the other

apostles, and the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas? Or I only and Barnabas, do we not have a right to refrain from working? Does anyone at any time serve as a soldier at his own expense? Does anyone plant a vineyard and not eat the fruit of it? Or does anyone shepherd a flock and not eat *the meat* and milk from the flock? Am I saying these things *merely* from a human point of view? Or does not the law say the same things? For it is written in the Law of Moses, ‘You shall not muzzle the ox that is treading out corn’....” (vs 4-9). What he’s dealing with here is a progression of things.

What if you don’t have anything but an ox and corn? *You’re starting with the very least*—aren’t you? Even in India, the pagan Indians found—by applying this principle to their starving cattle when they were treading out the corn—the cattle that were their beasts of burdens—actually worked better and lived longer if you fed them while they were working. An astounding discovery!

“...Is it because God is concerned for oxen?” (v 9). In this particular interpretation of Scripture, if I would have come up with this interpretation I am sure that many people would write to me to correct me. But since I didn’t, and Paul did, and it’s part of the commandments of God, so be it.

Verse 10: “Or does He not certainly say *this* for our sakes? For our sakes it was written, so that the one who plows might plow in hope, and the one who threshes the corn in hope might be partaker of his hope. If we have sown to you spiritual things, *is it* a great thing if we shall reap your physical things? **If others participate in this authority over you...**” (vs 10-12). That just the way it is in the Greek. Who are the *others* participating in this authority over them? We’ll see later *false apostles*!

“...much more surely *should* not we? Nevertheless, **we have not used this authority**; but we have endured all things, so that we might not hinder the Gospel of Christ” (v 12). Why?

Let’s get a little background to understand how the Church at Corinth began. Paul came to Corinth and met Aquila and Pricilla and he participated with them in tent-making.

Acts 18:4: “And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded *both* Jews and Greeks. Now, when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul was stirred in his spirit *and* was earnestly testifying to the Jews *that* Jesus was the Christ. But when they set themselves in opposition and were blaspheming, *Paul* shook *his* garments *and* said to them, ‘Your blood *be* upon your own heads. I am pure *of it*. From this time forward I will go to the Gentiles.’ And after

departing from there, he went into *the* house of a certain one named Justus, who worshiped God, whose house adjoined the synagogue” (vs 4-7). Right next door!

Verse 8: “But Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with his whole house; and many of the Corinthians who heard believed and were baptized.” What a state of affairs! What did this do to the income of the local synagogue? *Killed it!* That’s one of the reasons why Paul didn’t say, ‘Okay, now that we’re over here, you start tithing.’ He had a greater goal in mind that when they were converted then they would provide for him because they would understand.

Verse 9: “And the Lord said to Paul in a vision in *the* night, ‘Do not be afraid; but speak, and do not be silent, for I am with you; and no one shall set upon you to mistreat you because I have many people in this city.’ And he remained *there* for a year and six months, teaching the Word of God among them” (vs 9-11). Then Paul was hauled up before the authorities.

Let’s see the primary reason why Paul did not exercise the authority of tithing. When they were converted he was hoping that they would also understand about tithing.

1-Corinthians 3:1: “And, I, brethren, was not able to speak to you as to those who are spiritual, but as to those who are carnal—*even* as to babes in Christ. I gave you milk to drink, and not meat; for you were not yet able *to receive spiritual meat*; and neither are you able now, **for you are still carnal**. For since envy and contention and divisions *are* among you, are you not carnal? And *are you not* walking according to human *ways*?” (vs 1-3). That’s why he didn’t do it. Can you imagine the furor of what people would say, being carnal and accuse him of that? He clarifies things:

1-Corinthians 9:12: “If others participate in this authority over you, much more surely *should* not **we**?... [including Timothy, Silas and so forth] ...Nevertheless, we have not used this authority; but we have endured all things, so that we might not hinder the Gospel of Christ.”

Now, here’s the New Testament teaching concerning tithing and offerings—very clear. If it’s mentioned once in the New Testament, being the commandments of God, then it’s binding. This talks about the whole system.

Verse 13: “Don’t you know that those who are laboring *in* the sacred things of the temple live *of the things* of the temple, *and* those who are ministering at the altar are partakers with the altar? **In the same way also, the Lord did command that those who preach the Gospel are to live of the**

**Gospel**” (vs 13-14). “In the same way also...” is a very important phrase. It means that he doesn’t have to go back and take the whole block of Scriptures that talk about the things in the Old Testament concerning tithing and put it into the New Testament. It is sufficient that it is done right here with this, v 14.

Let’s also notice “...the Lord did command...” The Greek there is ‘*dietaxen*,’ which means *to command, order, to ordain*. Who commanded that it be done in the same way? Paul? Peter? *No! The Lord!* Paul said, ‘I’ve seen Christ; He taught me “...that those who preach the Gospel are to live of the Gospel.”’

Let’s understand that Peter preaches against corruption—doesn’t he? Those who receive tithes and offerings from the brethren are accountable to them for how it is done. That’s why every year we send out a full financial statement with the receipts. We try to get it down to every last little penny.

1-Peter 5:1: “*The elders who are among you I exhort, even as a fellow elder, and an eyewitness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker of the glory that is about to be revealed: Feed the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight not by compulsion, but willingly; not in fondness of dishonest gain, but with an eager attitude*” (vs 1-2).

You’re not to be motivated by money. Money is not the thing to motivate those who are serving Christ. If it is, then they better well do what Paul says.

Verse 3: “Not as exercising lordship over *your* possessions; but *by* being examples to the flock of God.” Of course, we’ve suffered from both of those—didn’t we?

If you have a wound, and you constantly check it and peel the scab every day, will it ever heal? *No!* Those who are still smarting from the things and the abuses of Worldwide Church of God, quit picking the scab! Let it be healed! Their corruption does not do away with the Truth of God—we need to understand that.

Let’s look at some other things that Paul said concerning this. Remember, when Paul went to Thessalonica it was an uproar in the synagogue again. This is why Paul did not make tithing—because it’s not one of the *weightier matters of the Law*; but it’s still part of the Law—he did not go in and preach tithing. He went in and preached Christ so that they would be converted and therefore, they would know that they would have to obey and keep the laws of God.

1-Thessalonians 2:4: “But even as we were approved by God to be entrusted with the Gospel,

we speak in this manner: as *those* who please not men, but God, Who proves our hearts. For neither at any time did we use flattering words *with you*, even as you know, nor a cover for covetousness—God is *our witness*” (vs 4-5).

2-Thessalonians 3:7: “For you yourselves understand that *you* should do exactly as we have done because we have not behaved irresponsibly among you, nor did we eat food at someone else’s expense, but *we were* working day and night with labor and toil so that we would not be burdensome to anyone among you. ***We were not obligated to work because we did not have authority to receive from you; rather, we chose to work in order that we might personally give you a pattern to imitate***” (vs 7-9).

We have the power, being not one of the weightier matters of the Law, because they were new; they were just barely converted when he wrote these two epistles. That’s why Paul did not do it.

2-Corinthians 11:7: “Now, did I commit sin by humbling myself so that you might be exalted, because I preached the Gospel of God to you freely? I robbed other churches...” (vs 7-8). Who were the ones who tithed faithfully, above and beyond? *The Philippians!*

“...receiving wages *from them* for ministering to you. And when I was present with you and in need, I was not a burden to anyone (for the brethren who came from Macedonia fully supplied my needs)... [that’s where Philippi is] ...for I kept myself, and will *continue to keep myself...*” (vs 8-9)—*until you become converted*. If you are so carnal then you might consider being converted.

Paul said that ‘other’s were partakers of this authority over them’ (1-Cor.9). Who was it that was doing it? *It was the false apostles!* They were willing to put up with them, listen to them, pay them; but not Paul!

2-Corinthians 12:9 “But He [Christ] said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you; for My power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore, most gladly will I boast in my weaknesses that the power of Christ may dwell in me. For this reason, I take pleasure in weaknesses, in insults, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ; for when I am weak, then I am strong. I have become a fool *in this* boasting. You have forced me *to do so*, when I ought to have been commended by you. For in no way was I inferior to those highly exalted *so-called* apostles—even if I am nothing” (vs 9-11). To be commended has some implication toward they should have been supporting him instead of the false apostles.

Verse 12: “Indeed, the signs of an apostle were demonstrated *by me* in all patience, in signs and wonders and miracles among you. For in what *way* was it that you were inferior to the other churches, except that I myself did not burden you? **Forgive me this wrong.** Behold, a third time I am ready to come to you, and I will not burden you...” (vs 12-14).

At this point Paul realized that he perhaps had made a mistake. This is in here for all of us to know, that even though Paul did it to give allowance because of their carnality, for them to become converted and give support and help Paul, to give tithes and offerings, he saw that he was wrong. He said, “...Forgive me this wrong.”

Verse 14: “Behold, a third time I am ready to come to you, and I will not burden you; for I do not seek what is yours, but you...” That’s why he didn’t do it. Because he didn’t do it does not mean that it’s not a requirement of God.

Remember that we read the things concerning ‘render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and render to God the things that are God’s.’ God is no respecter of persons—is He? There are people in the world who tithe to their churches and synagogues that God blesses, because God made a covenant with anyone who would do so.

I’m going to read to from a book: *How to Win over Worry* by John Edmund Haggai. I would say this a fairly good book. Part of the worry that people go through is the worry of finances, so he covers it. Let’s understand that God said in Jer. 23 that if ‘even the false prophets would speak the Word of God, God would back them up.’

*How to Win over Worry* by John Edmund Haggai; Chapter 19:

He bring this out, which is true:

God is the Owner of all things and we are stewards of God.

Absolutely true! God created us! God has redeemed us! He sustains us!

There are three principles of God’s ownership...

Though on the first one, being a Sunday-keeper, he misses the mark.

1) One day out of seven belongs to God

When I first read that, I wondered if he was a Sabbath-keeper, because I was perusing through the book and I found out that no he’s not. The promises that God gave in Mal. 3 does not apply just to converted people. Since God is no respecter of persons, those who follow what God teaches will be

blessed; blessed in many ways that they may not be able to count in their bank account.

- 2) You need a substitutionary sacrifice  
That is you need the sacrifice of Jesus Christ!
- 3) We are called to the stewardship of material possessions.

Why do we tithe and give offerings? If you’re retired and on a pension you’re not required to tithe because that is not an increase from your labor. We have many on our mailing list—who are with us—who are on Social Security, and I dare say that a lot of them fit into the category of the widow who threw the two mites into the treasury (Luke 21).

I’m sure we also have a lot of people who give above and beyond in their abundance, so that others can share and partake of what we do. I know that for a fact.

I also know that there are a lot of people, for whatever reason, do not give anything. I’m not trying to get those who give nothing to give something. I’m trying to tell you, before God, that you need to understand the Truth of God and *you* then have to go to God and face the truth and make whatever decision you have to make. Here is why we tithe and give offerings:

1. In the recognition of God’s sovereign ownership of everything that there is.

If we work and get an increase out of what God has created, then he desires back a tenth and with offerings.

2. In the appreciative acknowledgment of God’s redeeming grace.
3. In order to surrender your life and talents to God.

Then He has a section here on pg. 168 saying, The Truth about Tithing:

The basis of our monetary responsibility is to tithe. Tithing is paying back to God ten percent of the increase. God doesn’t mince His words concerning those who fail to obey. The Bible says that if we fail to pay that ten percent back into the storehouse with faithful regularity, we are a thief and a robber because the things that belong to God is possessive and it means *it’s His*.

Therefore, those who try to brainwash people into believing that the responsibility of the tithe was only enforced during the days of the Law—from the time of Moses to the time of Christ—they will tell you that Malachi 3:10 has no relevance for today because it’s in the Old Testament.

Well then, forget about the Sabbath.



pg 169—Just as Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedec so are we to pay tithes to Christ. In Heb. 7 this truth is made clear.

I'm reading this lest anyone think that I'm the only one who understands that.

The Son of God Who lives and abides as a Priest continually after the order of Melchizedec received tithes... [from Abraham] ...now because He is an Ever-living Priest.

When paying tithes, Abraham acknowledged Melchizedec's sovereign as a king/priest. Likewise, today when paying the tithe we acknowledge Christ as Sovereign and Lord. Refusal to pay the tithe is a refusal to own Christ as Savior and High Priest. Thus, one makes Christ not only inferior to Melchizedec but also inferior to the Levites.

That is if you don't believe that tithing is in the New Testament, then you are making the priesthood of less value than the Levites, when it never perfected anything.

Then he's got a section: Tithing Didn't Disappear in the New Testament and The Money Belongs to God.

Let's understand something very, very important. The Proverbs say that 'there is a way that seems right unto a man, but the ends thereof are the ways of death.'

Malachi 3:6—here is a special covenant: "For I *am* the LORD, I change not. Therefore, you sons of Jacob are not consumed. From the days of your fathers, you have gone away from My statutes, and have not kept *them*...." (vs 6-7). What's one of the first ways that people begin going away from God?

- Sabbath
- tithes and offerings
- Holy Days

Everywhere along the line—because you cannot live with yourself unless you justify your own actions; lest you have a guilty conscience and you repent—you have to convince yourself that you are right. In convincing yourself that you are right, you always end up with more proof that you are right. If you steal from God—which God calls it stealing, and if that upsets you then your problem is not with me it's with God—you will always have to use that money on things that become burdensome for you. In doing so, you have proof in your own mind, that 'yes, I don't have to tithe, because I need every cent to exist. We have this problem. We have

that expense. We have this other thing. Guaranteed, it will always come! God has a first priority on you, in your life and in the things that you have.

"...Return to Me, and I will return to you,' says the LORD of hosts" (v 7).

Deuteronomy 8:10: "When you have eaten and are full... [Is that not us today?] ...then you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land, which He has given you." How do you bless the Lord God?

Verse 11: "Beware that you do not forget the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments, and His judgments, a lest *when* you have eaten and are full and have built goodly houses and lived in *them*, and *when* your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and your gold is multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied, then you become haughty of heart, and you forget the LORD your God Who brought you forth out of the land of Egypt..." (vs 11-14) and you do not render to Him His tithes and offerings.

That is what it is talking about because it says, v 17: "Beware lest you say in your heart, "My power and the might of *my* hand has gotten me this wealth." *Therefore, I did it myself and I owe God nothing!*

When you've forgotten God like the children of Jacob did and God says, 'Return unto me and I will return unto you,' how did He want them to begin? *He wanted them to show some proof of their sincerity!*

Malachi 3:6: "...Therefore, you sons of Jacob are not consumed. From the days of your fathers, you have gone away from My statutes, and have not kept *them*. **Return to Me, and I will return to you,**' says the LORD of hosts. 'But you say. "In what way shall we return?"... [God answers]: ...Will a man rob God? Yet, you are robbing Me. But you say, "How have we robbed You?"... [Did we go up to heaven and steal from Your throne?] ...**In tithes and offerings!**" (vs 6-8).

- What happens when you rob God?
- Is that not a greater crime than robbing a man?
- What happens?

Verse 9: "You are cursed with a curse..."

- How does that curse come?
  - ✓ Many different ways!
  - ✓ Many different manners!
  - ✓ Many different things!

"...for you are robbing Me, *even* this whole nation" (v 9). That's why this whole nation is going to go down totally!

Verse 10: "Bring all the tithes into the

treasure house, so that there may be food in My house. And prove Me now with this,' says the LORD of hosts... [God challenges you to prove Him]: ...'to see if I will not surely open the windows of heaven for you, and pour out a blessing for you, until *there is not enough room to receive it.*' You will always have sufficiency in all things. {Note: 2-Cor. 9—God loves a cheerful giver.}

Then notice the promise if you prove God. Claim His promise, v 11: "'And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes...'" What do we have for devourers today, besides just the insects on crops? *Everything!*

Someone said they just bought a parcel of land up in the mountains where there's a lot of rock and stone, and all the neighbors around with their wells only get 2-1/2 gallons a minute from their wells pumping full blast. God blessed him—and he's been a faithful tithe payer—and the drilling company that put down the well—his well comes in 30 gallons a minute—the man who drilled it said that 'God must have blessed you.'

"...and it shall not destroy the fruit of your ground; nor shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field,' says the LORD of hosts. 'And all nations shall call you blessed; for you shall be a delightful land,' says the LORD of hosts" (vs 11-12).

Now then, the rest of Mal. 3 talks about all the complainers against God with this. God throws out a challenge to you. He says, 'All right, you prove Me.' This is anyone!

Example: At the Feast we ate at this particular restaurant several times because they had hamburgers that weren't too expensive and they were really good. This same waitress would wait on us and she found out that we were there for the Feast of Tabernacles and she says, 'Oh, I go to church, too.' Of course, it was a Protestant church, and without even asking, she said, 'You know, I've learned that as soon as I get home, I take all of my tips, as well as my check, and I set aside 10% to give to my church. And God has always blessed me in it.'

I thought: that's like the heathen condemning Israel, if you want a parallel. Where those in the Church of God do not have enough faith and trust in God to say that 'there's no tithing in the New Testament' and don't do so, and cannot even look around see that they're beset with so many problems that consumes all of their money because they have that attitude.

Then I know of another instance of people who are Sunday-keepers. Doesn't that kind of remind you of the problem of the uncircumcision and the circumcision with the Jews. You who are in

the Church of God who don't believe in tithing, and condemn all of these Protestants out here—which for the things that they do that are not right they need to be condemned—yet, if they tithe and God blesses them, does not their obedience make your disobedience a stench in the nose of God and you claim to belong to Him? *Think on it! Yes, indeed, it does!*

Here are the economic circumstances that have happened. There have been people who have lost their businesses. I even heard of an account of one man who was told to declare bankruptcy and because he wanted to be honest he didn't. He worked out a payment thing. They didn't have enough money to tithe so they decided 'we'll start giving offerings.' Lo and behold, miraculously their business started recovering, when no one else's in the same field was. They came to the point where they could again tithe.

So, if your circumstances are that, that's where you need to begin, to begin in faith and trust, do so. But I thought when I heard those things, what a shame that here we have to fight those people in the Church of God who make the outlandish claim that in the New Testament tithing is not required.

**Prove God!** It's a special covenant. You go to God and claim that promise. He said, 'Prove Me now herewith.' God is the One Who has laid out the challenge!

I'm bringing this so that you—wherever you are; whoever you are—might recover yourself from the curses that you have brought upon yourself because of this. Not because we're trying to extort money from you, or to put fear upon you, or to take from you. But so that you may have that blessing—which also comes from God—that many brethren, and even many Protestants share, because God will backup His Word!

In the final analysis, if you're mad at me, go ahead and be mad at me, I don't care. But what you need to do is **prove God and have faith in Him! Trust God and let Him work it out!**

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) Romans 16:25-26
- 2) 1 Corinthians 14:36-37
- 3) 2 Timothy 3:14-17
- 4) 2 Timothy 4:1-4
- 5) Matthew 5:17-19
- 6) Matthew 4:4
- 7) Matthew 23:23
- 8) Luke 11:37-42

- 9) Luke 18:9-14
- 10) Matthew 22:15-21
- 11) 1 Corinthians 8:11-13
- 12) 1 Corinthians 9:1-12
- 13) Acts 18:4-11
- 14) 1 Corinthians 3:1-3
- 15) 1 Corinthians 9:12-14
- 16) 1 Peter 5:1-3
- 17) 1 Thessalonians 2:4-5
- 18) 1 Thessalonians 3:7-9
- 19) 2 Corinthians 11:7-9
- 20) 2 Corinthians 12:19
- 21) Malachi 3:6-7
- 22) Deuteronomy 8:10-14, 17
- 23) Malachi 3:6-12

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Luke 24:44
- Matthew 6
- Jeremiah 23
- Luke 21
- 2 Corinthians 9

Also referenced:

Books:

- *The Story of the Christian Church* by Jesse Lyman Hurlbut
- *A Harmony of the Gospels* by Fred R. Coulter
- *How to Win over Worry* by John Edmund Haggai

Appendix H from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version: How Did Jesus Fulfill the Law and the Prophets.*

FRC:bo  
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