

TITHING? WHY NOT?

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Tithe = 10% of Income

To “tithe” means to give 10% of income to the Lord. Christians who tithe never quit. The practice is overwhelmingly too satisfying. I’ve never met a tither who complained about his giving. I have noticed that tithers are always trying to convince others to tithe.

Tithing Stumblingblocks

Many are missing out on the gratifying experience of tithing. A study by Empty Tomb, Inc., a Christian research organization, indicates that church-going Protestants in the U.S. give an annual average of about 2.5% of their annual income to their churches. (This happens to be the average in the SELC District). Another study revealed that 20% of members in a typical congregation do most of the giving! Some members do not tithe because they are afraid they will not have enough to support themselves. This betrays a lack of trust in God to provide. Others do not tithe because they selfishly want more of their income for themselves



THREE REASONS TO TITHE

1. God Blesses Tithers

In Malachi 3:10 we’re told: “Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse that there may be food in my house. Test me in this, says the Lord Almighty, and see if I will not open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessings that you will not have room enough for it.” An elderly pastor gave me some sound advice when I entered the pastoral ministry. “You’re not going to make much money as a pastor,” he said. “Nevertheless give away 10% in love to the Lord and He will stretch the remaining 90% into 110%.” God responds generously to generosity. He promises: “whoever sows generously will also reap generously.” (2 Cor. 9:6b) “You will be made

rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion.” (2 Cor. 9:11) Tithing, of course, should be a love action. Love does not selfishly bargain. It does not say, “I’ll give you this if you’ll give me that.” Actually, a Christian already possesses more than he could ever desire from God - salvation through Christ.

2. Tithing Is An Expression of Love

Jesus said: “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” Christians tenderly sing, “Jesus Priceless Treasure” (LSB #743). They love Him. He is their treasure. A reciprocal love relationship motivates a tithing Christian to be the “cheerful” giver God loves. The New Testament Greek word for “cheerful” in 2 Cor. 9:7 is “hilaron” from which the word “hilarious” is derived. Yes! A tither’s giving experience is joyous exuberance bursting from a fountain of love! True-blue tithers will tell you the reason why: “The love of Christ compels us!” (2 Cor. 15:14) It’s true that tithing is part of Old Testament ceremonial law and not binding for Christians today. However, since the New Testament Scriptures free Christians to lovingly determine what amount to give, some have exceeded the tithe by giving more than 10% of their income. Jesus approved the practice of tithing. (Mt. 23:23. Luke 11:42)

3. Tithing Enhances Personal Money Management

A tither is forced into a budgeting process. Projected income must be determined to budget 10% to the Lord. The tithe should be the first line item in a personal budget. Another 10% should be earmarked for savings and investments. 80% should be for the rest. Financial planners agree that those who cannot live on 80% of their income are living beyond their means. Unfortunately, statistics indicate 75% of Americans have a negative net worth using an exorbitant amount of income for debt elimination. This is monetary slavery. To be a person of means, one must live within one’s means.

BUDGETING RESOURCE

www.selc.lcms.org (Stewardship-Budget)