

## Christian Giving

Christian giving goes to the heart of one's faith in God and appreciation for what He does. The early Jewish Church described in Acts 2:36-47 and Acts 4:32-35, demonstrates this as they went from the people responsible for Christ's death to a people who were forgiven and free by the blood of Christ. The things of this world no longer compared in value to the Lord of glory and no one considered that which he had to be his own, but rather had "all things common" and no one lacked for anything. This is a much higher standard than anything set forth in the law. Other New Testament Scriptures that drive this point home include:

Where your treasure is there will your heart be also. Matthew 6:19-21 & Luke 12:33-34.

Godliness with contentment vs. the love of money. I Timothy 6:6-10 and Matthew 6:19-34.

God does not compel anyone to give. Rather, he loves a "cheerful giver" and blesses people according to the law of sowing and reaping. II Corinthians 9, particularly verses 6-7 and Galatians 6:6-8. See also I Corinthians 9:1-18.

Now, many Christians believe that tithes, in particular, are a Law of Moses requirement, but the above Scriptures make abundantly clear that God has not changed, but rather Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever as Hebrews 13:8.

With that understanding a couple of important Old Testament passages that strike at the heart of giving are Proverbs 3:9-10 (honour the Lord with all thy substance and the first fruits of all thine increase) and Malachi 3:8-12 concerning the children of Israel robbing God in their tithes and offerings. Proverbs 30:7-9 lays out a prayer of faith relating to finances that Christians would do well to consider.

### 1. Tithing

a. 10<sup>th</sup> Part – established in the Old Testament before the Law of Moses

- I. Abraham Gen. 14:17-20 and confirmed in Hebrews 7:1-10
- ii. Jacob, Gen. 28:22

b. Tithe is God's provision for His ministers since they have no inheritance, but rather He is their inheritance

Numbers 18:20-32 (Levites get 10%, Priests receive the Levite's "heave offering" which is 10% of that which the Levites received). See also Neh. 12:44-47.

Without it, Levites can't do their job. Nehemiah 13:10-14.

II Chronicles 31 (lays out how during the time of Hezekiah, the portion of the Levites and the priests was restored and how the people were blessed)

I Corinthians 9:1-14, makes clear that nothing has changed in that regard in the New Testament Church, Paul pointing out that:

no man goeth to warfare at his own charge

Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn

Men of God sow unto you spiritual things, reap of your carnal things

God hath appointed that those that minister the Gospel shall live of the Gospel

See also II Corinthians 9:1-15

- c. In the New Testament the Greek Words variously translated "communicate" often refer to giving to a minister.

I Timothy 6:17-19 (discussed how a believer should be "willing to communicate" meaning "inclined to make others sharers in one's possessions, inclined to impart and free in giving according to Strong's (#2843, koinonikos).

Two other variations of a related Greek word are also translated "communicate"

Heb. 13:16 translates the Greek Word *loinonia* (Strong's #2842) communicate, referring (in this instance) to a gift, contribution or collection.

Galatians 6:6 translates the Greek Word *koinoneo* (Strong's #2841) communicate in these of making one's self a partner or sharer in a matter.

Similarly, the Greek word *sugkoinoneo* (Strong's #4790), translated communicate in Philippians 4:14, comes from Strong's 2841 and 4862 (the latter Greek Word *sun* meaning "intimately connected" with another) and means to become a partaker together with or to have fellowship with a thing in the sense of financial giving. Philippians 4:10-19.