

January 28, 2023

Having received the pamphlet “More Than Enough”, instead of debating each question (*16 in total*), I would first like to deal specifically with the Old Testament system of tithing, and then with the pertinent questions and scriptures used by the writer that warrant a response.

More Than Enough: Lesson 24

1-4. (*Ps 24:1; 50:10-12; Hag 2:8; Deu 8:18*) It seems the writer of this pamphlet must need to make it known that God owns everything his reader has in order to establish a foundation upon which to base his doctrine of tithing, even if it means overturning each of those Old Testament passages he lists from their original context in order to substantiate his own claims.

5. What was the purpose of the tithing system?

Using the predicate “was the purpose of” the writer should have left the tithe ordinance to the Old Testament but mistakenly brings what was nailed to the cross, i.e., “the handwriting of ordinances” (*Col 2:14*), into the New. You can’t pick and choose which laws to keep and which to reject (*Jas 2:10*). It **was** a system that supported the Levitical tribe “for their service which they [served], *even* the service of the tabernacle of the congregation” (*Num 18:21*). If the tithe system was still valid today; what about the law of circumcision (*1 Cor 7:18*), or of animal sacrifices (*Heb 10:4*)? Of the Ten Commandments, where is tithing listed if this group believes they are still as valid as they were from the day they were “written with the finger of God” (*Ex 31:18; Deu 9:10*)?

6. Does God intend for ministers to be supported by the tithe?

Using as **an illustration only**, Paul in *1 Cor 9:11-14* does intend for ministers to be supported by the church but mentions nothing of it being by the Old Testament system of the tithe. This is another passage the writer reads into for the sake of his argument. Paul did not even hint of this but was showing that even though both Old and New Testaments speak of supporting their ministers, the Hebrews writer stated how “the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also in the Law” (*Heb 7:12*). And who is the priesthood of the New Covenant (*1 Pet 2:9; Rev 1:6*) and are we to support such with a tithe system today? To state that “Paul was very specific in his commentary about the tithing system, making it clear that tithing is still God’s means of supporting the preaching of the Gospel”, when tithing isn’t even remotely referred to in this passage, is once again reading into the inspired text. How blasphemous! God does **not** intend “for all His people to return the tithe to Him”. Please give specific book, chapter and verse and not one’s own baseless conjectures. This practice has become the denominational means by which to intimidate their congregants in a way of insuring their mostly overindulgent budgets.

7. Did Jesus comment on the system of tithing?

Jesus lived under the Mosaic system which included tithing of all that the Jews owned. (*See notes on #5 above.*) His comment to the scribes and Pharisees (*who “failed to demonstrate Christian grace”, whatever that means since they didn’t live under the current Christian dispensation*) had more to do with their hearts than it did with keeping the Old Testament Laws. And what “heart change” was “offered through the work of the Holy Spirit” (*whatever that means*) to them? Yes, under **that** system they

were to give a tenth of everything. But again, how does that system equate with how we are to give today according to what Paul wrote to the Corinthians where he made no point as to percentage when it came to their contributions?

1Co 16:2 Upon the first *day* of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, **as God hath prospered** (*Gk.2137- succeed*) **him**, that there be no gatherings when I come. (*emp, added*)

2Co 9:7 Every man according **as he purposeth** (*Gk.4255- to choose for oneself before another thing*) **in his heart** (*Gk.2588- mind*), so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. (*emp, added*)

Two words, prospered and purpose, define the amount expected of the New Testament faithful saint's contribution. As stated above, nowhere in these or other N.T. passages contextually can we find evidence of a tithe system, period! To expect one tenth of a person's income might generate cause for giving "grudgingly, or of necessity".

If two men work for the same company, making the same wages but the one is single and the other has a wife and four kids, the single guy can definitely afford to give one tenth of his net salary. Should the married man give equal to what the single man can afford? Wouldn't having a family then be considered a punishment that a tithe system would inflict? If both give ten percent of their wages, how can the married man take good care of his family accordingly? God **does not** expect a "tithe" under the New Testament! How can the writer be justified taking necessities from family, giving it "to God" (*here actually to the denominations that promote this*) but then having him to rely on someone to, in turn, help meet his family's needs? Is it true Christianity if we are unable to meet the needs of our own families over the needs of the church? Doesn't giving "to God" actually mean giving to meeting the church budget?

1Ti 5:8 But if any provide not for his own, and (*e*)**specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith**, and is worse than an infidel. (*emp. added*)

8-9. At this point the writer employs Old Testament passages, once again, in order to back his premise of a current tithe doctrine as if enforced by inspiration today under the Christian dispensation. Using Hebrews 6:20 in linking the tithe ordinance through the relationship of Jesus to Melchizedek is taking quite the leap in order to promote it under the New Covenant. To say "Melchizedek's ministry was supported by the tithing system" according to Gen 14:20, is reading into the verse since nowhere in the chapter does it say it was! Although Melchizedek **did** receive a **one-time** contribution of one tenth of the spoils from Abraham, it was not perpetual!

Heb 7:4 Now consider how great this man *was*, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils. 5 And verily they that are of **the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the Law**, that is, **of their brethren** (*the Jews*), though they come out of the loins of Abraham: 6 But he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises. (*emp, added*)

If tithing is valid then only the tribe of Levi (*which cannot presently be found*) are to take it from fellow Jews. And equating the "storehouse" of Malachi 3:10 to the church is also manipulating the inspired text in order to substantiate a false narrative. The writer infers: "When God stated that the tithe should be brought into the storehouse- which today **we** (*emp.*

mine) would recognize as the church- God's clear intention was that the tithe would be used specifically for the work of ministry". (???) How does the writer know what "God's clear intention" is without listing any passage that states such? Where does he even get that such was "for the work of ministry"? Maybe the "**we**" here refers to the denominational world even though scripture nowhere equates the "storehouse" of Malachi 3 with the "church". This is just another money grab and has seriously done harm to those searching for truth in this and other matters. It "preaches" money!

10. Can I choose what I want my tithe to be used for?

It is making God out to be greedy to state the following: "The tithe is not to be used for charitable giving purposes. God has specifically claimed it as His own." So for what purpose does this group use the "tithe" its members give? Does it store it in a locked vault waiting for the "second" coming of Christ? Is paying the electric bill for the church building more important than taking care of the poor? What if a member is destitute? Who takes care of them? Who decides? Isn't part of ministry taking care of the poor (*Gal 2:10*)? Where's the love of Christ?

Jas 2:15 If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, 16 And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be *ye* warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what *doth it* profit? 17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

11. So how should a person support worthy causes if not by using the tithe?

Using Malachi 3:8, the writer here is using a common denominational tactic in order to extort the congregants via guilt for more of their hard earned income. Above and beyond the "tithe" **was** the "offering" under the Old Law. Now that they've intimidated (*as I was once when I belonged to a denomination*) the sincerity of the unsuspecting, they now go further, while forgetting to remind them (*purposefully unless they are truly ignorant of what the inspired text means*) that this contextually pertained to the Old Covenant. If it pertained to the New, where's the evidence without having to input Old Testament passages to prove such (*without going out of context*)? In other words, after you've given ten percent, pre-tax money from your paycheck to the church, you are free to give (*i.e., expected to give*) whatever you want extra for a cause you support, but only through the collection plate (*whether you can afford it or not*); interesting.

12. How important is it that a person faithfully returns tithes to God?

Using Malachi 3:8-9 the writer states: "To neglect to tithe is to commit robbery!" And since we are no longer under a tithe system, where's "the seriousness of refusing to tithe" even if "in Exodus 20:15 (*once again out of context*), God says, "You shall not steal"?" The Jews **did** rob God of the tithe system set in place under the Old Covenant but that system is no longer in affect today and it plainly exposes the writer of his ignorance concerning this doctrine; and to credit God with the writer's claim is to profane His requirement of obedience over sacrifice (*1 Sam 15:22*).

13. What blessing is promised to those who faithfully return the tithe to God?

Citing out of context Malachi 3:10-12, the writer confuses this passage with Mat 6:25-34. The tithe system was a test for Israel. If they filled His house back then with their tithes,

God would “open... the windows of heaven, and pour [them] out a blessing, that there [should] not be room enough to receive it”. Under the New Covenant, Jesus stated that if we sought “first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness” all that we need would be “added unto” us. Where in the New Testament is the tithe system related to the kingdom of God (*the church*). As I have personally experienced, when a Christian gives faithfully from the heart, no matter the amount they can afford, they will never go without the basics necessary for survival.

14. How can a person be sure tithing is the right thing to do? Could this not be seen as a form of righteousness at work?

But what does Paul tell Titus (3:5)? It is “not by works of righteousness which we have done (*Isa 64:6*), but according to His mercy He saved us...”

For the last time in this pamphlet the writer seems to shame his readers into making monetary contributions to his denomination citing Jn 14:15. Where in the New Testament, though, is the tithe system equated with loving God or commanded for the work of ministry in the church without having to resort to Old Testament passages that concerned only Israel under the Levitical system? In this context, no, the Old Testament ordinance of tithing is not commanded today, nor should it be imposed, even if only as an example concerning the amount that faithful Christians are to contribute!

But What About...?

- But what about people who can't afford to tithe?

To state; “A person can't afford *not* to tithe” is being a bit presumptuous of the poor since all situations are not ‘cookie cutter’ situations as explained in point #7 above. According to Exo 30:12-16 both rich and poor were to give the same amount (“*half a shekel*”) as “atonement money of the children of Israel”, but again, context (*O.T. sacrificial system*) demands meaning! Giving as we have prospered (*1 Cor 16:2*) gives no indication as to amount, but what **is** stated is that it is to be done with purpose (*2 Cor 9:7*).

The phrase, “remember what Jesus said in Malachi 3:10” should convince even the novice Bible student of the author's lack of biblical knowledge or of his purposeful ignorance being imposed in order to establish his premise. Wow! Jesus didn't state that; God did! God was husband to Israel (*Isa 54:5*) in the Old Testament as Jesus is of His church in the New (*Eph 5:23*). Please find one Old Testament passage where “Jesus” personally stated anything.

- But what about people who tithe and still experience difficulty?

“Tithing is [**NOT**] a demonstration of faithfulness to and love for God” ([**NOT**] added). To explain away the obvious here the writer states, “the blessing that comes from tithing cannot be measured in purely financial terms”. Oh, so if I were to give more than I can presently afford, the return blessing won't help alleviate my present financial hardships; really? Is the writer stating that, like man, God is that selfish? Isn't that bringing God down to man's level (*Isa 55:8*)? Am I to understand that all I have is God's to begin with and forget that the income I've been blessed with to sustain me in this life isn't a blessing after all? Once again, this is just preaching money. The obvious point of avarice in all this concerning the tithing issue comes next.

- Should a person tithe on their income before tax or after tax?

Whose business is that? Isn't that between God and the giver? This was a question I once asked in the denomination I came out of. Income tax is not "a bill we pay" and cannot be compared to "a mortgage payment or an electricity bill". It is money that the government confiscates from our pay, leaving us no choice in the matter since if we don't pay it we would get a knock on the door from Uncle Sam (*to say the least we are resisting "the ordinance of God"- Rom 13:6*). Bills we pay come from our **net** pay which is what's left over **after** the government takes its share. It should be true though for the faithful Christian to place his giving at the top of his budget as a "first fruits" *per se* no matter what he has purposed in his heart (*which only God knows*). So to promote a tithing system (*which, again, doesn't apply to the New Testament*) is a denominational scheme to rob people of their hard earned income to further promote and insure a false doctrine.

The whole question of tithing has been purely a denominational money grab, pure and simple, with not one New Testament passage (*contextually*) to back it up. If this statement sounds offensive, it is so to those who haven't studied this subject to its truthful conclusion.

Sincerely,
In Him,
Charli