

Question that is often asked

Question on tithing through out the scriptures of the old or the New Testament of which to follow. Christ never forgot the Old Testament on tithing, but brought it into the new fold of the scriptures and of the under the New Covenant through Jesus Christ.

Tithing in The New Testament

The interesting thing about the concept of tithing under the New Testament is its almost virtual absence. There are four different passages which mention the "tithe" in the New Testament.

Matthew 23:23: "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others."

This passage in Matthew is also repeated in similar fashion in Luke 11:42. In both cases it is important to notice that the tithe had to do with garden herbs (the product of the field) rather than with money. Additionally, Jesus spoke these words to very religious, law-keeping Pharisees while the Mosaic Law was still in force. To say that since Jesus told these Pharisees it was right for them to tithe, and thus it is right for us to tithe as well, misses the fact that these Pharisees lived under a different covenant with different laws than the New Testament believer does. By Christ's death He inaugurated the New Covenant, thereby bringing about a change in the law (Lk. 22:20; Heb. 7:12). Finally, notice that the tithe mentioned here was not voluntary in any sense of the word. Jesus tells them that they "ought" to have tithed. It was obligatory on all Jews, and thus binding.

Luke 18:12: "I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get."

Jesus, in this passage is telling the parable about the Pharisee and the tax-collector. Christ puts these words into the mouth of the self-righteous Pharisee, "I pay tithes of all that I get." Here Christ is emphasizing that the self-righteous man trusts in something he does to be acceptable before God, but nevertheless is not justified before God. Again, Christ is speaking about a Pharisee who tithes while living under the Mosaic Law, not of a Christian tithing under the New Covenant.

Hebrews 7:1-10: "For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham as he was returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, to whom also Abraham apportioned a tenth part of all the spoils, was first of all, by the translation of his name, king of righteousness, and then also king of Salem, which is king of peace. Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, he abides a priest perpetually. Now observe how great this man was to whom Abraham, the patriarch, gave a tenth of the choicest spoils. And those indeed of the sons of Levi who receive the priest's office have commandment in the Law to collect a tenth from the people, that is, from their brethren, although these are descended from Abraham. But the one whose genealogy is not traced from them collected a tenth from Abraham, and blessed the one who had the promises. But without any dispute the lesser is blessed by the greater. And in this case mortal men receive tithes, but in that case one receives them, of whom it is witnessed that he lives on. And, so to speak, through Abraham even Levi, who received tithes, paid tithes, for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him."

In this lengthy passage, the design of the author is to show the superiority of the priesthood of Christ over the Levitical priesthood, thereby exhorting his readers not to go back to their former Jewish form of worship, replete with its priesthood, temple, and sacrifices. The author mentions the account of Abraham paying tithes to Melchizedek to show that since Levi was in the loins of the patriarch Abraham, actually Levi paid tithes to Melchizedek and was blessed by him. Since it is obvious that the lesser is always blessed by the greater, Melchizedek and his priesthood are greater than the Levites and their priesthood. Here, the author of Hebrews is simply restating the fact that Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek; a fact that we have already noted. This passage is not exhorting believers to give like Abraham did. Rather, it is instructing believers to perceive the excellence of Christ, who ministers as a priest far superior to the Levites. Therefore, this passage can not be used to enforce the tithe on Christians. It is simply not written to address that issue. It has nothing to do with Christian giving, but rather everything to do with the superiority of Christ.

Well, there you have the totality of the New Testament teaching on tithing. There is not one word in all the New Testament to command or even suggest that New Covenant believers are supposed to tithe. While the New Testament is silent on the duty of Christians to tithe, it is not silent on the subject of giving, but rather quite vocal.

The New Testament never gives a certain percentage point as an obligatory and required standard for our giving. Instead, the Scriptures declare, "Let each one do just as he has purposed in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. 9:7).

The Old Testament tithe was required by law. The Jews were under compulsion to give it. The New Testament teaching on giving focuses on its

voluntary character. "For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability they gave of their own accord" (2 Cor. 8:3). This voluntary giving is exactly what Abraham and Jacob were doing before the institution of the Law, and is what all Christians are to be doing today. Believers today are free to give the amount they choose to give. If they want to give ten per cent as Abraham and Jacob did, they are perfectly free to do so. However, if they decide to give 9 per cent or 11 per cent, or 20 per cent or 50 per cent, then they may do that as well. Their standard of giving is not a fixed percentage point, but the example of their wonderful Savior -- "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich" (2 Cor. 8:9). Our standard of giving is Christ Himself, who did not give 10 per cent or 20 per cent or even 50 per cent, but 100 per cent! He gave everything He had, including His very life in order to redeem sinful men and women like you and me!

Sometimes those who are wealthy feel that if they just pay their ten per cent, God is pleased. However, for a wealthy man to give ten per cent of his income may actually be displeasing to God if he is living a life of extravagant luxury, while giving a mere pittance to the work of God and the needs of others. The will of God for this man may be for him to be giving 50-80 per cent of his income instead of ten per cent. Each individual must seek God as to how He would have him to give.

Moreover, those who are poor should not feel guilty if they are not able to give ten per cent of their income. It is true that God will honor and bless the man who gives sacrificially, but if an individual decides that he can't give ten per cent of his income and still meet his basic needs, we ought to allow

him that liberty without judging him. After all, God has nowhere told Christians that it is their duty to give any fixed percentage point. May the effect of this study be to free us from the shackles of the traditions of men which can not be substantiated by the Word of God (Mk. 7:1-13). Look to Christ as the standard and example for your giving. Seek God diligently, and be generous and ready to share that you might store up for yourselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that you may take hold of that which is life indeed! (1 Tim. 6:18-19).

New Testament Giving

If it is true that tithing was part of the Old Covenant worship of Israel, and has no practical bearing upon New Covenant Christians, the question naturally surfaces, "what does the New Testament actually teach about giving?" Surely the place for New Covenant believers to begin in their quest to understand God's revealed will regarding giving is in the New Testament Scriptures. That is exactly where I would like to take you as together we examine God's will for Christian giving.

The Amount Of Our Giving

Since we have determined that the tithe is not the standard for New Covenant believers, then how do we determine how much Christians should give? Let's examine three different texts to glean some insight on this important issue.

1 Corinthians 16:1-2: "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so do you also. On the first day of every week let each one of you put aside and save, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come." In our text the Apostle Paul directs the

church of Corinth in their collection for the poor saints in Jerusalem to give proportionately to how they have prospered. Though there is no mention of the saints in Corinth giving a tithe, they are instructed to give proportionate to their prosperity. The point is simple -- those who have more to give should give more.

Acts 11:27-39: "Now at this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. And one of them named Agabus stood up and began to indicate by the Spirit that there would certainly be a great famine all over the world. And this took place in the reign of Claudius. And in the proportion that any of the disciples had means, each of them determined to send a contribution for the relief of the brethren living in Judea." Notice in the narrative that the brethren in Antioch gave to the suffering brethren in Judea proportionate to their means. In other words, they gave according to their ability. Those with more money, gave more. Those with less money, gave less. It was that simple.

2 Corinthians 9:7: "Let each one do just as he has purposed in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver." Here Paul directs the church to give what they have purposed in their heart. Notice that the Apostle does not tell them how much to give, or give them a fixed percentage as a standard. He simply tells them that whatever they have decided to give they should go ahead and give. Many times when we see a need we determine to give a certain amount, but are tempted to go back on it later when the time to give rolls around. Paul teaches us that we should be faithful to make good on what we have purposed in our heart. But notice as well that the apostle Paul leaves the amount up to the Corinthians. We are not to allow others to manipulate or intimidate us so that we give out of guilt

or pressure. There is to be no compulsion in our giving; the amount must be our own decision.

These New Testament texts teach us that God leaves the amount of our giving up to us. We should give proportionate to our means and how God has prospered us, but in the end we are free to give whatever we want to give. How freeing this is when we consider the manipulative money-making tactics that the Church uses all too often today. I have been in churches where the leaders were exhorted to take out a loan for one or two thousand dollars. We were told that if we didn't give, the work of God would fail. The members of the congregation were directed to write and call relatives to ask for their monetary help. There were pledge drives and building fund drives with colored charts. As time went on, we were pressured to give more and more. May I submit to you that all of this runs contrary to the Apostle's teaching in 2 Corinthians 9:7 "let each one do just as he has purposed in his heart; not grudgingly, or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." God's will is that when we see a need, we earnestly pray for guidance on how we can meet that need. Then, based on our financial situation, we give out of a cheerful heart.

The Purpose Of Our Giving

What kinds of needs should we use our money to meet? Does the New Testament give us any light on this important subject? I believe the Scriptures are very clear in this area. The New Testament teaches that there are three purposes for our giving.

- 1. To Meet The Needs Of The Saints:** This theme runs like a thread through the Scriptures. Let's consider several texts.

Acts 2:44-45 "And all those who had believed were together, and had all things in common; and they began selling their property and possessions, and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need." The spirit of love and generosity was so great in the early church that the believers willingly and joyfully surrendered their own property and possessions in order to minister to the needs of other saints. They went so far as to sell land and houses to take care of one another (Acts 4:34).

1 John 3:17 "But whoever has the world's goods, and beholds his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth."

Galatians 6:9-10 "And let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we shall reap if we do not grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith." Though the "doing good" is not clearly defined, it would surely include giving to meet the needs of the household of faith.

In addition to these clear texts, we also read in Matthew 25:31-40 that when Christ comes He will separate the sheep from the goats. The sheep are described as those that fed Christ when He was hungry, gave Him drink when He was thirsty, and clothed Him when He was naked. When the sheep reply, "Lord, when did we see You hungry, thirsty, and naked?" Christ responds, "Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me." Here Jesus tells us very clearly that when we use our money to clothe and feed the brothers of Christ (believers according to Mt. 12:50), we are ministering to Him. Furthermore 1 Timothy 5:16 gives directions on how the Church is to support dependent widows. Additionally, we have seen in the texts quoted

already, the many exhortations of the Apostle Paul to give to the poor saints in Jerusalem. Therefore, it is quite clear that one of the priorities of giving in the New Testament is to meet the needs of the saints.

2. To Meet The Needs Of Christian Workers: In addition to using our money to meet the needs of our brothers and sisters in Christ, the Scriptures direct us to use our money to support Christian workers. Consider the following passages:

1 Timothy 5:17-18: "Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, 'You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing' and 'The laborer is worthy of his wages.'" In this text, "honor" must mean more than esteem and respect, for in verse 3 of the same chapter, Paul tells Timothy to "honor widows who are widows indeed." To honor these widows is to provide for them (vs. 8) and to assist them (vs. 16). Therefore, when Paul mentions "honoring" the elders who work hard at preaching and teaching directly after he has mentioned honoring the widows, he must have the same thing in mind -- providing for and assisting the elders financially so that they can give themselves to the work of laboring in the Word. A teaching elder is like an ox who should be able to eat while he is threshing. In other words he should be supported and taken care of while he is working. He is also like a laborer who is worthy of his wages. The uniform New Testament apostolic practice was to appoint elders to oversee the churches which the apostles planted. Paul is simply directing the churches to financially provide and assist these elders so that they can give their time to the task of ministering to the flock.

1 Corinthians 9:6-14 "Or do only Barnabas and I not have a right to refrain from working? Who at any time serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who

plants a vineyard, and does not eat the fruit of it? Or who tends a flock and does not use the milk of the flock? I am not speaking these things according to human judgment, am I? Or does not the Law also say these things? For it is written in the Law of Moses, 'You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing.' God is not concerned about oxen, is He? Or is He speaking altogether for our sake? Yes, for our sake it was written, because the plowman ought to plow in hope, and the thresher to thresh in hope of sharing the crops. If we sowed spiritual things in you, is it too much if we should reap material things from you? If others share the right over you, do we not more? Nevertheless, we did not use this right, but we endure all things, that we may cause no hindrance to the gospel of Christ. Do you not know that those who perform sacred services eat the food of the temple, and those who attend regularly to the altar have their share with the altar? So also the Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living from the gospel." In this passage Paul is claiming that the apostles had every right to refrain from secular work and receive the material support of those they served. In fact he asserts that the Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living from the gospel.

Philippians 4:15-18 "And you yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first preaching of the gospel, after I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone; for even in Thessalonica you sent a gift more than once for my needs. Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the profit which increases to your account. But I have received everything in full, and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God." In this text the apostle expressly states that the gift that the Philippians sent him was a fragrant

aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, and was well-pleasing to God. God Himself has given us His approval of using our money to support faithful Christian workers. Therefore, it is important that God's people utilize their financial resources to support other Christian workers, whether they be elders of a local church, or itinerant evangelists, or missionaries.

3. To Meet The Needs Of The Poor: In addition to using our money to meet the needs of the saints and Christian workers, the Scriptures direct us to use our money in meeting the needs of the poor. Consider the following texts: Luke 12:33-34 "Sell your possessions and give to charity; make yourselves purses which do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near, nor moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Ephesians 4:28 "Let him who steals steal no longer; but rather let him labor, performing with his own hands what is good, in order that he may have something to share with him who has need." Here the individual who has need is not identified as a believer, but presumably could be anyone in need.

James 1:27 "This is pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father, to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world." To visit orphans and widows in their distress, must mean more than paying them a social call. Implicit in this statement is the idea of helping these orphans and widows, which would no doubt require sacrificial giving.

As we have seen, we can summarize the New Testament teaching on the purpose of giving this way -- to meet the needs of the saints, to meet the needs of Christian workers, and to meet the needs of the poor. Notice that New Testament giving is always to meet the needs of people. It is interesting that the one thing which the church in America spends the majority of its

money on, after staff salaries, is not mentioned at all -- church buildings! The Bible simply doesn't speak about churches going into debt to buy expensive buildings, for the simple reason that the early church did not meet in special buildings. They met in homes. Thus, there was no overhead expense to drain the energy and finances of the church. In this way, all of the giving of God's people could go directly to meeting the needs of people. Incidentally, there is nothing I know of in Scripture that would require that all of our giving to the Lord's work must be given first to the church leaders, and then disbursed by them. In fact, I believe that some of our giving is intended to be done directly from person to person in order to preserve anonymity (Matt. 6:1-4). It is reasonable, therefore, to set aside part of your total giving at home or in some special bank account so that when a special need or emergency arises, you have some financial resources to draw upon to meet that need.

The Manner Of Our Giving

In addition to giving us light on the amount and purpose of our giving, the Scriptures teach us several things about how we should give.

1. We Should Give Anonymously: In Matthew 6:1-4 Jesus teaches us that we should give in secret in order that He who sees in secret will repay us. This kind of giving is preferable as it protects the giver from spiritual pride. When giving directly to someone, look for ways to meet a need without the beneficiary ever knowing who gave the money.

2. We Should Give Voluntarily: 2 Corinthians 8:3-4 says, "For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability they gave of their own accord, begging us with much entreaty for the favor of participation in the support of the saints..." Here we are told that the churches of Macedonia

gave of their own accord. Nobody was manipulating them or twisting their arm. In 2 Corinthians 9:7 Paul says, "Let each one do just as he has purposed in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver." If we are not to give grudgingly or under compulsion, then we are to give voluntarily. God wants our giving to come from our heart. He wants us to give because we want to.

3. We Should Give Expectantly: As we give, we should expect God to bless us now in this present life. Consider the teaching of the apostle Paul.

2 Corinthians 9:6 "Now this I say, he who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly; and he who sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully." When someone sows by scattering seed with an open hand, it looks like he is just throwing away good grain. If he were to grip the seed in his fist, or only cast a seed or two, there would be a very small harvest. So it is with Christian giving. If we give either nothing or very little, we can expect very little blessing. But if we give with an open, generous hand, we can expect to reap bountifully. John Bunyan once said, "There was a saint, some called him mad, the more he gave the more he had." Many have twisted this passage to teach that God wants us to give in order to get. This kind of teaching appeals to the flesh, and fosters a spirit of greed and covetousness in believers.

Rather, Paul in this passage is teaching that we should give, to get, to give. Look at how he puts it in verse 8-11: "And God is able to make all grace abound to you, that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed; as it is written, 'He scattered abroad, he gave to the poor, his righteousness abides forever.' Now He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food, will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness; you will be enriched in everything for all liberality, which through us is producing

thanksgiving to God." Notice in this passage that Paul is asserting that God will bless the generous giver by making all grace abound to him in order that he will have an abundance for every good deed. Furthermore God promises to multiply the giver's seed for sowing and increase the harvest of his righteousness. These passages point unmistakably to the fact that God blesses those who give so that they can give more. Because God is the greatest giver of all, we ought to strive to be like Him. The only way we will be able to be greater givers in the future is to begin giving generously now! Interestingly enough, this is exactly what the Proverbs of Solomon teach us, although they were penned hundreds of years earlier.

Proverbs 19:17 "He who is gracious to a poor man lends to the Lord, And He will repay him for his good deed."

Proverbs 11:24-25 "There is one who scatters, yet increases all the more, And there is one who withholds what is justly due, but it results only in want. The generous man will be prosperous, and he who waters will himself be watered"

Furthermore, we should also expect God to bless us in the life to come. If there is one thing that is made very clear in the Bible, it is that when we give, we are storing up for ourselves treasures in heaven. Notice the emphasis on future, heavenly treasure in the following passages:

Matthew 6:19-21 "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Matthew 19:21 "Jesus said to him, "If you wish to be complete, go and sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

Luke 12:33 "Sell your possessions and give to charity; make yourselves purses which do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near, nor moth destroys."

1 Timothy 6:18-19 "Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed."

In all of these passages, whether spoken to the disciples, the rich young ruler, or wealthy believers in Ephesus, the message is the same -- generous giving will be rewarded by heavenly treasure. Would you rather have your treasure on earth where it will perish or in heaven where you will enjoy it eternally? Your answer to that question will have much to do with how you view and use your wealth.

4. We Should Give Cheerfully: In 2 Corinthians 9:7 we learn the spirit in which we should give. "Let each one do just as he has purposed in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver." If every believer knew what a shower of blessing he would enjoy through giving, he would be like the Macedonian Christians who begged Paul for the opportunity of giving (2 Cor. 8:3-4)! Giving ought to be seen as a great privilege, not as a heavy burden or joyless duty. God doesn't want His people to give out of a sense of compulsion, but rather from an attitude of joy and cheerfulness. The one definitive passage in the New Testament which declares the attitude with which we are to give describes it as "cheerfulness." May God help us to give in a spirit which honors Him!

5. We Should Give Sacrificially: In the Scriptures we have several examples where God looks with approval on sacrificial giving:

2 Cor. 8:1-5 "Now, brethren, we wish to make known to you the grace of God which has been given in the churches of Macedonia, that in a great ordeal of affliction their abundance of joy and their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their liberality. For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability they gave of their own accord, begging us with much entreaty for the favor of participation in the support of the saints, and this, not as we had expected, but they first gave themselves to the Lord and to us by the will of God." Notice in this passage that the Macedonian believers had little to begin with. They are described as those enduring a great deal of affliction, and experiencing deep poverty. Yet, they are also said to have given beyond their ability! What a wonderful example of sacrificial giving! May God enable us to imitate them in our own lives!

Mark 12:41-44 "And He sat down opposite the treasury, and began observing how the multitude were putting money into the treasury; and many rich people were putting in large sums. And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which amount to a cent. And calling His disciples to Him, He said to them, 'Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the contributors to the treasury; for they all put in out of their surplus, but she, out of her poverty, put in all she owned, all she had to live on.'" In this example, Jesus singled out this woman as a wonderful example of giving for his disciples. When Christ saw her sacrificial spirit, He called His disciples over to learn a lesson from her life. May we also learn to go and do likewise!

Can you say that your own giving is characterized by a sacrificial spirit?

Does your giving really cost you anything? It's not really how much we give

that is so important, but how much we keep for ourselves after we've given. May our great and glorious God enable us to practice a joyful, sacrificial lifestyle of giving!

The Motivation For Our Giving

Now that we have seen what the Scriptures teach concerning the amount, purpose, and manner of our giving, let's turn to examine what the Bible teaches concerning what ought to motivate us in our giving.

1. The Example Of Christ: Right in the middle of the longest exposition of giving in the New Testament (2 Cor. 8-9), the Apostle Paul draws upon the example of Jesus Christ as our prime motivation. Consider his words in 2 Corinthians 8:9, "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich." Christ was infinitely rich in His pre-incarnate existence in heaven. He was worshipped ceaselessly by a great host of angelic beings. He exercised omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence as Deity. He ruled with the Father and Holy Spirit over all the universe that they had created. Yet, Christ willingly chose to become poor. He laid down his right to the independent exercise of His attributes. He was born in a stable, and reared by poor parents. He lived an obscure and simple life. He depended on His Father for all His livelihood. He never accumulated a store of possessions during His lifetime; indeed, it appears that the only possessions He could call His own were the clothes on His back. At the end of His life, He gave up the only thing left that He had left -- His life. By laying down His life, Jesus was giving up everything to save us from our sins. Though He

was rich, He became poor. And what was the purpose in this great act of sacrifice? It was that we through His poverty might become rich. As those who believe on Him, we have inherited great riches: forgiveness, adoption, justification, the indwelling Spirit, peace with God, access to God, sanctification, and eternal glory to come! Notice that Christ didn't give just ten percent of His resources to obtain these spiritual treasures for us! He didn't even give fifty percent! He gave 100%! A disciple naturally desires to be like his master. Therefore, strive to emulate your Lord. Don't be content with giving a small fraction of your income. Pray that God would enable you to give more and more to help hurting people and expand the kingdom of God around the world!

2. The Command Of Christ: Not only do we have the example of Christ to motivate us, but we also have His command. Jesus expressed Himself very clearly in John 15:12-13, "This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends." Jesus in this passage is commanding His followers to love each other in the same way that He loved them -- namely, by being totally committed to them. This kind of commitment must, by the very nature of the case, include the willingness to give of our resources to help one another. Jesus gave up all, including His very life for us. That is how we are commanded to love one another. We will know if we really love our brothers and sisters when we are willing to open our wallet or checkbook and give to meet their needs. May God enable us to follow His Son in obedience!

Conclusion

The Scriptures do not teach that the tithe is incumbent upon New Testament believers. However, they do teach that Christians are to be generous, sacrificial, expectant and cheerful givers! Does that describe you? It is my earnest prayer that the Holy Spirit would use this article to challenge you to rethink your giving patterns and see whether they are in line with God's will as expressed in the New Testament. If not, go to the Lord in prayer and ask Him for the power and grace to obey Him fully in all things.

When in need for answers always go the Lord in prayer and read the scriptures it will have the answers you seek.

Proverb:4:1: Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding. Proverb:4:2: For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law. Proverb:4:3: For I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother. Proverb:4:4: He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live.

Proverb:4:5: Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth. Proverb:4:6: Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee. Proverb:4:7: Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding. Proverb:4:8: Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her. Proverb:4:9: She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee. Proverb:4:10: Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and the years of thy life shall be many. Proverb:4:11: I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee in right paths. Proverb:4:12: When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble. Proverb:4:13: Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her;

for she is thy life. Proverb:4:14: Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Proverb:4:15: Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away. Proverb:4:16: For they sleep not, except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall. Proverb:4:17: For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence. Proverb:4:18: But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. Proverb:4:19: The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble. Proverb:4:20: My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings. Proverb:4:21: Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart. Proverb:4:22: For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh. Proverb:4:23: Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life. Proverb:4:24: Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee. Proverb:4:25: Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. Proverb:4:26: Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. Proverb:4:27: Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil.