

Is it Tithing or Generous Giving?

Rev. Michael Stewart

This morning we're going to talk about money and possessions.

Did you know: there are _____ verses in the Bible about money and possessions? _____ of everything Jesus said was about money and possessions. He spoke more about money and possessions than any other single topic.

If teaching about money and possessions was a major topic of Jesus ministry, then why are we so put off by it today?

Scripture:

Matthew 6:19-21; Luke 6:38; 2 Cor. 9:6-8; Genesis 14:17-20; 28:10-11; Luke 21:1-4; 1 Cor. 16:1-4;

Let's talk about _____.

According to the Empty Tomb and others, for the past 25 years, the average professing Christian in America has given 2% of their income to their place of worship. The number of professing Christians who give a true tithe is somewhere between 5-10%.

The _____ understanding of tithing most often addressed in Scripture is "tithing as covenant." It was part of the Mosaic Law (Lev. 27:30-33; Num. 18:21-32; Deut. 14:22-29). Under that Covenant, God promised to materially bless Israel or judge them for their disobedience (Deut. 28 and Malachi 3:8-12).

The Bible describes a _____ approach to tithing that Jesus condemned and I believe happens far too often in churches today. It is tithing as legalism or out of religious duty. Christ's condemnation of that tithing was absolute.

The _____ approach to tithing and the one that fits NT believers the best is giving as an act of worship.

Abraham ... Genesis 14:17-20

Jacob 28:10-11

Effective ministry requires money — money that comes from God's people. Is tithing all there is? If the answer is no ... what's the alternative?

Generous – Proportionate Giving

For believers under the New Covenant, the standard taught by Jesus and Paul was not the percentage one gives but the motive with which one gives.

Jesus:

- The Treasure Principle ... Matthew 6:19-21
- Proportionate Giving/Receiving ... Luke 6:38
- Faithful Giving ... Luke 21:1-4 the widow and 2 mites

Paul:

- Confident Giving – Philippians 4:6-7, 19
- Proportionate Giving/Receiving – 2 Cor 9:6
- Cheerful/Thankful Giving – 2 Cor 9:7

Ultimately, "generous giving" isn't about a percentage of income. It's about the overflow of one's heart.

2 Corinthians 8:5-12

For those believers who have smaller incomes, tithing may be considered generous giving. For those believers with considerable income, tithing may not be generous giving because their means to give is greater.

Can we preach Tithing? The answer is _____ if one gives a tithe to the Lord as an act of worship, from a heart of thankfulness and gratitude.

So, do we teach tithing or generous giving? We

_____ because the primary focus of giving is not the percentage of one's income. For Jesus, giving is always about the **attitude** or **the condition of one's heart**.

What do you think about giving? Are you giving as an act of gratitude and worship?