

In the Old Testament: Prescribed in the Law

Leviticus 27:30

A tithe of everything from the land, whether grain from the soil or fruit from the trees, belongs to the Lord; it is holy to the Lord.



There were a total of three 10% tithes. One annual gift for the priests and Levites, one annual gift for an all-community festival. One tithe every three years to meet the needs of the poor, widows and orphans. (See *Deuteronomy 15*)

Malachi 3:10

10 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 throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.

In the New Testament: Affirmed by Jesus:

Matthew 23:23 (See also *Luke 11:42*)

23 "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former.

Mark 12:17 (See also *Matthew 22:21 & Luke 20:25*)

17 Then Jesus said to them, "Give back to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's."

The Requirement of the Tithe is Fulfilled by Jesus:

Matthew 5:17

17 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.

Romans 6:14

14 For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.

A New Motivation: Trust, Sacrifice, Thanksgiving & Joy

1 Corinthians 16:2

2 On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.

2 Corinthians 9:7

7 Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

Key Ideas:

Everything is God's. Everything we have is a gracious gift from God.

(See *Psalms 24, James 1:17*)

We are called to be wise stewards of the gifts we've received.

(See *Matthew 25*)

We are called to be generous, just as God has been generous to us.

(See *Matthew 10:8, Luke 12:15-21, 1 Timothy 6:17-19*)

Suggested Giving Guidelines:

Priority giving – We give to God as a financial priority, considered equally important to (for example) rent & groceries.

Percentage Giving – We give a predetermined percentage of our income. When we make more, we give more. When we make less, we give less. The relative personal commitment remains the same.

Progressive Giving – As we give, we look for opportunities to be progressively generous, as God provides and leads.

Important Questions to Ask – That Only You Can Answer:

Does my current pattern of giving indicate a fundamental trust in God? (*Is Jesus the Lord of my financial life?*)

Does my current standard of giving require any adjustment to my standard of living? (*Lord, is my giving sacrificial?*)

Am I giving thankfully and joyfully?

Am I giving out of legalistic or self-serving motives? (*Lord, have I given to manipulate, control others, or make myself look good?*)

What level and pattern of giving would best reflect my desire to be trusting, sacrificial, thankful and joyful towards God and His work in this world? (*Lord, what do you want me to do with your money?*)

