

THE PATHFINDER

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Is the Tithe Legal?

Buy the Truth and Sell it Not

King Solomon, the richest man in the world at that time, understood the value of that which came from God rather than man. Among the countless words of wisdom attributed to him, he said: "**Buy** the truth, and **sell it not**; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding." ***Proverbs 23:23***. It was this way with him from the beginning of his reign. After David died and Solomon took his father's place as the king of Israel, the LORD appeared to him in a dream and asked what He should give him. He asked for understanding and discernment so that he could rightly judge the people. In doing so, he was not only given that for which he had asked, but more.

"And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked

for thyself understanding to discern judgment; Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and honour: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days." *1 Kings 3:11-13.*

There is a great undergirding of truth with Solomon choosing on behalf of the people rather than for himself. A man with such a heart can not only be trusted with the spiritual treasures of God, but the treasures of the earth as well. It is no wonder that he said to "***buy the truth, and sell it not.***" However, there is more to it than refraining from merchandising the word of God. For instance, the Hebrew word for ***buy*** is *qanah*, and according to Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, it means "...to ***erect***, that is, ***create***; by extension to *procure*, especially *by purchase*; by implication *to own*." And to ***sell it not*** is *makar* and means,...to *sell*, literally (***as merchandise, a daughter in marriage, into slavery***), or figuratively (***to surrender***)."

So with this, what can we see in the kings charge *to buy the truth and sell it not?*

We will first notice the phrase, ***sell it not***. As the word states, the truth is not to be sold. We are not to merchandise those spiritual things that we have so freely received, that which is a part of our Lord Jesus, He who is the Truth. Sons of God are not money mongers that sell the gems of the Kingdom. There are no schemes up our sleeves, and God has no wares for us to peddle.

Selling is generally an exchange of money for a product or service. However, there are other ways to *sell the truth* that do not involve money. We will consider the words of Ray Prinzing:

"How precious, we are to be BUYERS, but not SELLERS: We have often sold a word of truth—sold it (exchanged it) for a fear, for a worry, to satisfy the flesh, to gain a little prestige, or whatever. Sometimes we do learn by our experience—and I recall once that in a corporate share time, people were sharing their ‘portions of revelation,’ and it almost seemed to be a ‘can you top that?’ type of sharing. Yet I went ahead and shared a very special thought which God had quickened to me, and realized **the moment I shared it that I had sold it**. Not because I wanted it sold, but responding to the moment, I had given it away for a moment of pride—‘that I have a revelation that surpasses yours.’ The sorrow was that **in that moment of pride, the life had gone out of the Word** that was shared.

"So we learn to keep God's secrets. You buy the truth, but you do not sell it. It is not given to us to sell, but to DWELL—to dwell within us, that it might work in us, that it might change us. As was said of Joseph, 'Until the time that his word (of deliverance, release from prison) came: the Word of the Lord tried him.' (Psalm 105:19)."

Haven't we all done the same? A word of revelation came so clear and living; but as soon as we spoke it, the life of it was gone. We felt it die in us, and it could not be revived. This does not mean that we can never share what has been given to us by the Spirit; but it does mean that the wrong motive can abort a living word.

We also know to "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you." Matthew 7:6.

Jesus said to the church at Laodicea which prided herself as being rich and increased with goods, and felt that she had need of nothing, but did not know the truth of the matter. She was wretched, poor, naked, and blind: "I counsel thee to ***buy** of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see." Revelation 3:18.

***buy**: Greek, *agorazo*; to go to market, that is, (by implication) to purchase; specifically to *redeem*. From Strong's #58, *agora*; **to gather**.

This tried gold, of course, is not *pavement* that overlays *heaven's streets* that carnal imaginations have assumed; rather, this is the gold that speaks of the pure, refined nature of God in earthen vessels. It is priceless, and Jesus said that we are to acquire it, gather it, to melt it into the very fiber of our being. Although the word *buy* in this verse can mean exactly that, to buy something by paying money for it, we know that the nature of God cannot be bought any more than I could buy my natural father and mother's nature. I was born with the two as one, and over the years it was refined in me by the fires suffered, and it has been the same with all of you. That's the way it works in the natural, and that's the way it works in the Spirit.

I do believe, however, that Jesus was saying that whatever it might cost a person, whatever he had to sacrifice, whether it was

his reputation, his fame, his fortune, his earthly possessions, his all—that is what he must do. So the bottom line is this: When tribulation comes, suffer it. When fire comes, suffer it. When a flood comes, suffer it. The price will have been paid for what has been birthed in you. The nature of God will be that refined gold tried in the fire, and it cannot be sold!

By the time we have come to the end of this life's journey, it will most likely have cost us everything, but we will not have paid a dime for it. This is what happened with Jesus when He sold everything He had, His Life, to be exact, and bought the field that contained the Pearl of Great Price, which was the whole world.

But no money was exchanged, except for the thirty pieces of silver that Judas was paid. He sold *the manifested Word of God* for a pittance; but at the great loss of his own life after casting the silver pieces back to the chief priests who paid him for his services.

Again, "**Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.**" *Proverbs 23:23*. None of these priceless things, *truth, wisdom, instruction, and understanding*, are bought with money. One might think that *instruction* could be bought with it, such as by paying a college tuition and being taught by professors. But notice the meaning of **instruction**: The Hebrew word is, "*mûsâr*; from H3256, *chastisement; reproof, warning or instruction; also restraint*. H3256 is *yâsar*; to *chastise*, literally (with blows) or figuratively (with words)." Strong's Exhaustive Concordance. With this, we can see that the *instruction* here is more than sitting in a classroom and memorizing what the

professor is teaching, or learning a trade by having an instructor showing you how it is done.

A well disciplined son will not pay with money but with the pain and sorrows of chastisement; also by giving up his rebellion, envy, pride, arrogance, and selfishness of the old nature. The good virtues that are *paid for* does not come except by fire. First by the fiery revelation of enlightenment, such as, from the One whose eyes are as coals of fire, and then by the same One whose judgment feet are fine brass as if they are burning in a furnace. There are fiery revelations of Jesus Christ and His mysteries as He sets ablaze the truth in us. His eyes of fire tell us this. And ultimately that revelation is tried by the fire of His feet. What a two-fold revelation. The beginning and the end of perfection. It starts with the eyes in the head and finishes in His burning feet. What a process! We first see it by revelation, and after the refining, we walk it out as members of His corporate body.

Moreover, we can gain some understanding when we look more closely at the Hebrew word *qanah* for *buy*. According to Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, it means "...to *erect*, that is, *create*; by extension to *procure*, especially by purchase; by implication to *own*."

Qanah is often used in the sense of *buying* something with *money*. Such as: "The field which Abraham purchased (*qanah*) of the sons of Heth..." **Genesis 25:10**.

"And he bought (*qanah*) a parcel of a field, where he had spread his tent, at the hand of the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for an hundred pieces of money." **Genesis 33:19**

"But if the priest buy (*qanah*) any soul with his money..."
Leviticus 22:11.

Following are a couple of verses that use the same word, and we can see that the English word, *buy*, could not be used when translated.

And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten (*qanah*) a man from the LORD." **Genesis 4:1.** You see, Abraham *bought* a field; but Adam *created/erected* a son.

"And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor (*qanah*) of heaven and earth." **Genesis 14:19.** God is a ***Possessor, Creator, Maker, Erector***—but never a ***buyer***—He cannot buy that which is already His.

With a little understanding, especially by knowing that *qanah* means *to erect, create, to procure*, we can more easily see what has been hidden to many for so long. When that revelation comes, and it has been tried in the fire, regardless of what it might cost us, let us ***procure, lay hold of, and take possession of*** the very substance of God meant for us. It is then that the glorious expression of ***Truth*** in the world, who is ***Jesus Christ, will be erected.*** This is surely what Paul called ***the manifestation of the Sons of God.*** And please note, although we buy the truth, His gold tried in the fire—***we do not manifest ourselves!*** That which is to be ***manifested*** is contained in ***the Seed of Christ*** in us, and it will grow ***by Him*** and come forth ***in His time,*** at the time of harvest and not a day sooner.

There are many things of God that do not cost us. They are freely given, and often before maturity sets in: "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give." ***Matthew 10:8***. These are gifts and callings of God, but sadly, some use them as merchandise. They sell them. They prostitute them to the kings of the earth and the members of their congregations. But praise God, others use them in the spirit of love to the glory of God. With them, many souls are saved and boundlessly blessed. These possess the truth with thanksgiving and go on to raise the standard of our Lord Jesus in the world. They sow portions of God's Kingdom wherever they are; for they have truly *bought the truth and sold it not*.

Unknown to quite a number, it seems that God does not need money to get His word sent into the world. There were no campaigns that the disciples of Jesus held to raise money so the truth could go to the next city. The Kingdom of God is not made by peddlers, hawkers, beggars, or merchandisers, all of which are the job descriptions and comprise the work ethics of religious prostitutes; namely, Mystery Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth! Each of these will rely heavily on Moses' law of the tithe. For without it using, or abusing it, many churches would go bankrupt.

In times past, we have been asked, "Is tithing required of us today? Is it even spiritually legal, since it is of the Old Testament Law?" Well, let's see *if the tithe legal or not*.

For the sake of brevity and accuracy of thought, we will quote from a couple of others who see beyond the veil of religious

dogma, tradition, and accepted theological arguments:

“The law is very insidious! I hear preachers, even preachers in this kingdom message, quoting Malachi 3:7-10 and laying the law of tithing upon God's people. Oh! How they love to use verse nine, ‘Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.’ But that is a lie! Someone says, ‘Now, wait just a minute, brother Eby, are you calling the word of God a lie?’ I do not hesitate to tell you that it is a lie to lay that curse of the law upon God's redeemed people because the Holy Spirit testifies that ‘As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. The law is not of faith: but, the man that doeth them shall live in them. CHRIST HATH REDEEMED US FROM THE CURSE OF THE LAW, BEING MADE A CURSE FOR US: for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree’ (Gal. 3:10,12-13).

“God's redeemed people are NOT under any CURSE of the law! The law of tithing was for the nation of Israel under the Old Covenant! Only certain commodities were tithed — not money! Only Levites could receive tithes. It was used for administering their office and to help the poor, widows, and orphans. There is no Levitical priesthood today! There was a first tithe that was required (Lev. 27:30). Then there was a second tithe for the feast days (Deut. 14:22). At the end of every three years there was a third tithe for the fatherless, widows, etc. But the requirements of the law, the Old Covenant, have been abolished! The laws of Moses are now — illegal! Paul and the other apostles NEVER taught the Gentiles to tithe! I do not live under some divine curse for not tithing!” J. Preston Eby (Kingdom Bible Studies).

Another friend shared this:

"The apostle Paul knew that only LEVITES could collect tithes. Paul introduced a new way of giving—OUT OF THE LOVE OF CHRIST IN YOUR HEART! When the writer of Hebrews used the word 'tithe' in chapter seven, he was not dealing with tithing, but a higher priesthood than the Levitical Priesthood, that is, the priesthood after the order of Melchizedek. When Jesus spoke of tithing in Matthew and Luke, remember this: The New Covenant is not the set of books from Matthew to Revelation. The New Covenant was not ratified until Jesus offered up His blood in heaven which was after His resurrection. Prior to that, the Old Covenant, and the Levitical Priesthood was still in effect. Here is the conclusion of the matter: We should give, not from the letter of the law which kills, but from the Spirit Who prepares works for us to walk in. One comes from bondage to a set of laws, and the other comes from LOVE, which is the nature of God. The first usually produces pride and self-righteousness, and the latter produces joy. The higher ways of God are much better than the lower ways of the Old Covenant." — Gary Amirault (The Tentmaker).

If tithing was such a mandate for believers of the early church, we might wonder why the apostles never taught them to do so. Of course, Paul encouraged them to give; but notice how the giving was to be done: "Every man according **as he purposeth in his heart**, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth **a cheerful giver**." *2 Corinthians 9:-7*. And in verse 6, he sited the universal law of sowing and reaping: "But this I say, He which sows sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which sows bountifully shall reap also bountifully." Moreover, whether they

gave sparingly or bountifully, they were to give cheerfully and not out of threat or coercion of the clergy or the Law of Moses.

Moses was the architect of tithing. This occurred at the beginning of the second year of the Exodus. He told the Israelites that they should give a tenth of their crops, fruit trees, and a tenth of their animals to the treasury in the Tabernacle (*Leviticus 27:30-33*); of course, it is unlikely that they had fruit trees until they left the wilderness, and probably not many gardens or field crops. Manna was their staple diet.

Something about this law that many overlook today is that Moses discouraged the Israelites from *giving tithe in money*, and although he allowed it, those who did pay in money were penalized. If anyone kept money from the crops for personal use, Moses had them to pay an extra five percent for that privilege. (*Leviticus 27:31*).

It has certainly changed today. For instance, what would the minister and the people think if we should attend their church, and when the collection plate was passed around, rather than money or a check, we tithed from our garden a couple of tomatoes, a head of lettuce, and a few onions? You don't think that would do? Probably not. Ministers prefer the money over the foodstuffs that Moses ordained. Even so, aren't the preachers so gracious today for not demanding the one-fifth premium for the privilege of tithing their money rather than foodstuff? Bless their gracious hearts.

Moses did not say how the tithe was to be spent or to whom it was to be given if the food and animals were exchange for money

except in one place. He did say that it could be spent on the person with the tithe, and this is unknown by most. To our knowledge, this verse has never been preached in any church of the world:

"If that place is too distant and you have been blessed by the LORD your God and cannot carry your tithe (because the place where the LORD will choose to put his Name is so far away), then exchange your tithe for silver, and take the silver with you and go to the place the LORD your God will choose. **Use the silver to buy whatever you like: cattle, sheep, wine or other fermented drink, or anything you wish.** Then you and your household shall eat there in the presence of the LORD your God and rejoice." *Deuteronomy 14.24-26* (NIV).

Some ministers will be hard pressed to tell "their" congregations that if they feel to do so: "***Take your tithes and go to Walmart, or wherever you feel in the Spirit is best. Do your grocery shopping, pick up a couples bottles of wine or a six pack of beer. Eat and drink with your family in the presence of the LORD your God. Be happy and rejoice with Him.***" (Although this is a paraphrase of a Bible verse, the advice should not be taken if one has a drinking problem—period! For that matter, there is no reason to take the advice at all; for this has to do with a law that does not apply to us. And do we not drink the true wine, the wine of the Spirit and rejoice with our Lord?)

Although tithing is often encouraged by most of the clergy, we've never heard that preached before, and most likely never will; but I guess it could happen; that is, if someone really wanted to be scriptural about the tithe. Even though many say they only preach what is in the Bible, and if it is in the Bible they will preach

it, it is strange that this passage has been *conveniently* missed in the millions of sermons preached on tithing.

So many know virtually nothing about the tithe, and what they do know is from what they've been lambasted with about robbing God. But we should know that since it was only the farmers and ranchers that were responsible for paying the tithe, a large portion of the people in Israel did not tithe! Therefore, if you want to abide by Moses' law of tithing—if you don't have a garden or don't own at least 10 goats, you don't have to tithe. The owner of a farm had to tithe on his barley, or on his livestock if he had 10 animals or more, but his hired hands were exempt. The workers were not required to pay a tithe on their salaries. There was no law that required a tenth of one's salary to be tithed. They kept all they earned from working on the farms or ranches or anywhere else. The tithe was for the Levitical priesthood. It was for food for their livelihood.

Since it was only the owners of farms and flocks that were required to tithe, the Israelite that had fewer than ten cattle did not have to tithe on nine of them because the requirement stated that only the tenth animal that passed under the rod was to be tithed as noted in *Leviticus 27:32*. Looking at this from our present monetary point of view, a rancher could have many thousands of dollars invested in nine animals, but unless he had ten he was not required to tithe. But if he had that tenth on, he would give that animal to the priesthood. Now, go and tell that to your preacher, and see how well it sets.

Quite a number of ministers teach that the tithe is God's and

that He must get His money first. However, the Bible says nothing about God getting the tithe which was designated for the priests, and they were to get the last, not the first, or the firstfruits. They got the tenth animal, the last one that passes under the rod, and then the last of the next ten animals.

It is true that "Abel brought of the **firstlings** of his flock....And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering." But, you see, this was not a tithe. Able ***was not tithing to priests***. For that matter, there were no priests at that time. His ***was a blood offering to the LORD God Himself***. It was a ***firstling***. The Hebrew word means ***firstborn*** in the way Jesus was a ***Firstborn***. We can see the parallel between Abel's ***lamb offering*** and Jesus being a ***Lamb offering***. Abel's lamb was a *type* and Jesus was the fulfillment, the *antitype*. You see, **Jesus was an offering**, the first, who gave 100%, **not a tithe** of 10%. We can now see why Able's offering was accepted as being a type of Jesus, while Cain's fruit of his labor out of the ground was not, which represented the religious works and sweat of man. And it is strange that according to Moses' law of tithing, it was the fruit of man's labor from the ground that was received as well as animals. Of course, the animals were not sacrifices but intended for food.

Even so, it should be clear now that God never got nor required the firstfruits of the tithe. He received the Firstfruit of the His Sons, while the priests got the last of the tithe.

These biblical teachings are clear and should pose some real problems for a lot of ministers today, especially for those who want to use the tithe for their church activities. Think about it: If

a minister wants the members of his church to abide by the tithing laws—why doesn't he or she teach them to do it the way the Bible has it? For example, if the members who live in a city want to tithe according to biblical law, they would pay a tenth of their garden produce; that is, if they have gardens, or a tenth of their chickens if they have chickens. But most city ordinances do not allow any livestock, including chickens, to be raised inside the city limits. So, with no chickens, no tithes on their part.

Even if they earned \$5,000 a month in other income, all they would be required to tithe would be a tenth of their carrots and every tenth chicken (*don't know about the eggs*). This, of course, would hardly be enough to support the average church today. Yet, this is the law of tithing which Moses instituted for Israel; but there are no ministers today that we know of who encourage tithing according to the scriptures. They want money, money, and more money. They will not settle for a mere tenth of what comes from gardens and chicken coops!

Therefore,, being *a cheerful giver* holds us to a much higher standard of giving than the Moses' law of tithing. God wants us to give by the spirit, from our hearts, as sons of God whose nature and desire is to bless others.

It is good, of course, for servants to give according to the law. It can help those who might be in dire need, but it also helps the obedient servant in learning good principles. It also blesses the giver in return from what he has sown. But with the New Ordinance in Jesus Christ, it is giving from that which we are, by His name, His nature of love, and no percentage of the giving is

ever mentioned.

Moreover, if the best we can give at any particular time is nothing—we give nothing. For that matter, it could be that *we* may be the ones in need, and others will be moved to give on our behalf. And if their cheerful hearts feel to give 5%, they give 5%. If it is anywhere between that figure and 100%, then they give that amount—and it is always with a cheerful heart.

Sometimes the overwhelming love in our hearts compels us to give it all, and we do it with no thought of loss. When we see their need is greater than ours, we want to cover that need. We want them to live in great abundance and the joy of life. That is when we give it all, or whatever meets the need. That is what giving is as cheerful sons of God. It is giving by love and the Spirit of Jesus, not by the law as a reluctant servant. The most important point in giving is not how much is given, but that we give according to our hearts. In this giving, we will never give begrudgingly, but always as cheerful givers knowing the receiver is lifted to a higher place of joy in life.

I remember a time when I was less than a year old in Christ and attending a small Baptist church in La Luz, NM. A prayer request was submitted by a concerned parishioner about a family in need after the husband had lost his job. They were in dire need of money for rent and groceries. I prayed and asked the Lord to **send someone** to help that poor family. I'll never forget the words I heard Him say, "What are you waiting for?" With His Spirit having not been worked and grown in me, I was very careful for a long time in how I prayed. By the way, to my youthful shame,

without real compassion, I didn't help the family. I left it in the hand of the Lord, while knowing I was His hand in this. Fortunately we learn as we mature, and in this new day, a day in Christ Jesus we have grown out of youthful immaturity; but especially out of the legalistic mind-set of the Moses' law of the tithe.

So what should we do about *Malachi 3:8*? “Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.” First, we do not do as it is commonly done. We do not pressure people to give. We will not make them feel guilty or threatened for not giving. Such threats put the spirit of fear in their hearts, which is so contrary to the Spirit and scriptures. For we know that *God does not give us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind*, as Paul wrote in *1 Timothy 1:7*.

It may not be the case with most, or at least some; but we can conclude that many ministers that subject people to this sort of fear and intimidation are not true shepherds, hirelings as Jesus said in John 10:12. They have been hired to do a job, and although some may be ignorant of the truth and think they are truly serving the Lord in collecting people's tithes, for others, not so. It appears that their heart is set more on *payday*—how much money in tithes and offering they can collect—rather *the Lord's Day*.

Regardless of the motive, in the strictest sense of the law, the passage of scripture in Malachi has to do with God's dealings with His people under the Old Covenant. It was about a tithe to the Levitical priesthood who had no other means of support. But that

priesthood was nullified with the sacrifice of Jesus, and forever ended in A.D. 70 with the destruction of the Temple by Titus. Surely, it is time to stop taking portions of the Old Testament and incorporating them into the New to suit their own doctrine and/or personal gain. Don't you think?

Let us ask, who of the ministers today feel that they are of the Levitical priesthood? If they truly believe they are priests of that order, they can be justified in their own right to receive tithes. However, to be scriptural, they can only receive from people's vegetable gardens and every tenth animal.

To quote again from our longtime friend, J. Preston Eby, concerning *the tithe*:

"From the vast storehouse of truth contained within the holy scriptures there shines forth with dazzling brilliance two wonderful revelatory actions. In the brief passage 'For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and BLESSED HIM; to whom also Abraham GAVE A TENTH PART OF ALL; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is King of peace' (Heb. 7:1-2).

"There is the blessing first, and second, the tithe. How these two have been reversed in our thinking! It has been inscribed in endless volumes, preached on innumerable radio and television programs, and shouted from the pulpits everywhere that the tithing comes first and the blessing comes second. Of course, the scripture quoted most often in support of that teaching is Malachi 3:8-10 wherein God said to Old Testament Israel, 'Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed Me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed Thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed Me,

even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove Me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.'

"Bible does indeed teach that God blesses us as we give to Him. There are laws at work that God has built into the universe: that God will not be placed into the debt of any man; that no one can out-give God; that he that sows, reaps. Those laws in the spiritual world, as in the physical world, are based upon faith. It is an act of faith in the law of the harvest which a farmer exercises every spring when he takes perfectly good corn that could be made into perfectly good bread to feed his family, and throws it away into the dirt. He does that because he knows that he is not throwing it away; he is sowing it and he will reap a harvest. The Bible repeatedly makes reference to these laws, that in obedience to God we will be blessed.

"Our dear friend and precious brother, Elwin Roach, publisher of THE PATHFINDER paper, penned the following words of practical and godly admonition:

"'I have heard people say that since tithing is of the law, and they don't want to be bound by the law, they only give when the Lord tells them to give, and the spirit of love is not the root of it, not realizing that to give only because they are TOLD to do so is evidence that they are STILL UNDER THE LAW. It matters not who is telling us to give: the written word, pastors of the churches, or the Holy Spirit Himself, if we are compelled to give in any way other than LOVE, we are giving according to the law. Is there any difference between the Spirit that told Moses to have Israel to tithe unto the Levites, and the Holy Spirit that will tell us to give to a certain man or ministry? I can see no difference between them—it is the SAME SPIRIT; therefore, if it was a law to Israel of old to give, then it is also a law to those today if they have to be TOLD TO GIVE, even if it is by THE HOLY

SPIRIT. We can be told, of course, to give where there is a need, and where love has been grounded in our hearts, we can certainly be an obedient son, and this is not of the law, but of love.

“When we are truly BORN OF GOD, most unusually, no one has to prompt us, not even the Spirit, to minister to the saints in the area of finances or anything else, for IN LOVE we give according to the need. This is FULFILLING THE LAW, for in this it is our very NATURE TO SO DO. In my estimation, it is far better to do things because of our intense love for God, the saints, and His creation, than because we are TOLD TO DO SO. Sure, it is wonderful to hear our Lord and then obey Him, for we are called to be faithful servants; but without being truly BORN of His Spirit, growing up into Him, and being enraptured in the marital union of Christ, we soon fail at what we are told to do. Without KNOWING GOD personally, it is impossible to love Him, and when love is lacking we will do exactly what Israel did when the laws were imposed upon them - they rebelled when the laws offended the desires of the flesh. This is what we have when people today are not supplying the needs of the people and ministries by the Spirit of Christ and use the excuse that "tithing is of the law." In reality they have more love for themselves than for God or His creation, for when they tithe it is very often still for themselves. You see, they expect to please God, and in doing so, He will reward them with more than what they give.’ —End quote.

“As I have pointed out, we know that under the law Israel was obligated to pay their ten percent and their offerings. Is that now lifted off of us when we begin to walk in sonship? I will tell you what sonship will do to your tithes and offerings. It will lift off of you the law that requires you to pay ten percent and lay upon you the spirit of love whereby you have to give your all. Sonship will take all that you are and all that you have and bring it into the Kingdom of God. God does not care a snap about your money until He gets your

heart, and then if God gets your heart He will get your money, for if a man's sonship does not get down into his pant's pockets, he is a miserable sham. ALL now belongs to God, and as the spirit of love motivates you and directs you to give thus and so, you will automatically do that because it is a new law in the INWARD PARTS - the law of the Spirit. It is a new law of love that reigns within as a nature. Jesus gave everything, He didn't stop with ten percent. He gave everything that He had. He gave away to earth the greatest treasure that heaven ever had! And with it He has BLESSED US as Melchizedek blessed Abraham of old. And we now return unto HIM our all — not by compulsion or the manipulation of a crafty preacher, but by the inworking of His Spirit of grace.

“Another has written: ‘If we compare the ministry of Jesus with that of modern preachers, we will see that the preacher of today is truly of another spirit and not of the Spirit of Christ. Jesus told His disciples, 'The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head' (Mat. 8:20). Having made this statement, Jesus did not follow it with an appeal for the people's money. He simply trusted that all His material needs would be met. Basically, God's people are givers. Those who believe the Gospel and are in harmony with all its precepts, are givers. The Lord's precious people will give out of an overflowing heart, and the Lord knew this. Therefore, He did not need to ask for anything. All He needed in this life was supplied Him by those who believed His message. It is always encouraging to see the Lord's people give as unto the Lord, even if they do give to a man who is mix-using the funds. He will be severely judged of the Lord, while those who give out of an overflowing heart of love will be blessed abundantly’ - Paul Mueller in THE LIVING WORD. —End quote.”

Some have taught that you can't out-give God, and the more you give the more you will reap. They have said: “Give \$10.00 to

God (*that is, to me*) and you will get back \$100.00 or more.”

Frankly, this is not being a cheerful giver, but one that gives from what they hope to get out of it in return. It is more like giving money to a banker, for him to deposit into a savings account, and then expecting to draw, not one or two percent, but ten times or more than what they deposited. It’s a business deal to make more money rather than **giving out of love** to those in need, and with no strings attached.

The message that we hear from pulpits around the world goes something like this: “Come, ye dear lost people, and hear me; for I can show you the way to eternal life. I have the keys to the Kingdom of God. I can unlock and open the doors through which you can escape the fiery wrath of an angry God. Hear and heed my words, and you will escape everlasting damnation in the lake of fire. But to make sure you will get this pass to Paradise, give to me your tithes and offerings, let me put them into the storehouse (*of my holy coffers, my bank account*). So come unto me, you who are burdened and heavy laden, and I will help you enter into God’s eternal rest. Cheerfully give to me \$20, \$100, or more, and I will give you the words of eternal life.”

Some things are common between Christian and pagan offerings and sacrifices. John Alexander Dowie wrote this about it:

“The religions of the world are worldly, are sensual, and are devilish for the most part. No one will doubt that is true in China. No one will doubt the clever philosophies and moral axioms of the

Chinese, or the works of Mencius or Confucius or the commentators. And no one will doubt that the worship of the Chinese is essentially a Devil Worship. I remember once going into a very fine Chinese joss-house (temple), in Australia, where offerings of the costliest kind hung upon the walls, where many interesting things were to be found. I was talking with the chief priest, and said to him: 'Tell me how you worship' and he told me.

“‘Why,’ I said, after I had listened attentively, ‘My dear fellow, it seems to me that you are worshiping bad divinities.’ ‘Oh,’ he said, ‘Of course we do. The good ones we do not need to worship. They will do us no harm. To protect ourselves we have to get right with the bad ones, so we make it right with the devils.’ I thought to myself that there were some other people like that in America and Europe, who are not Chinese' " —End quote.

Isn't it obvious that Christians have done the same? In doctrine, they have made their god out to be a despot, a fiendish god who vindicates his anger upon those who will not bow to him and his son, even to the point of burning them in hell forever. Like the pagan's, they have created all sorts of religious practices with hopes of appeasing this god of harsh and exacting judgment that is more like an unforgiving devil than the loving God of His creation.

Sadly, the unauthorized tithe *to the church* has been much the same for so many. So much like the pagans, it has been as an appeasement to their god. They see him as a god that demands his share first, right off the top. Their idea of God is so much like the mafia: “*Give to us the first of your earnings, and you will be*

sparred. We will let you live. Refuse, and we will burn you out.”
In other words, “*Give to the church and you will be blessed a hundred fold. If you don’t, you might lose your home and wind up on welfare. So to be blessed by **the god of love**, be sure to always be a cheerful giver.*”

Come on folks! Step up to the plate, take a swing and connect with the Spirit of truth. Don’t you think it’s time? We do...

Elwin R. Roach

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