

Rethinking Church | Tithing and Giving Are Different Things | GUIDE - 2 Corinthians 9:6-15

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Tithing and giving are different, but they do have one thing in common; they both reinforce trust in God as the ultimate Provider. By living an Ordinary Faith, we are set free from self-ambition and materialism and are taught to freely give of our time, skills, and resources.

*An Ordinary Faith is a **Giving** Faith.*

2 Corinthians 9:7 (NLT) You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. "For God loves a person who gives cheerfully."

As we reconsider the idea of Church, we have discussed the sermon and worship. Today we will talk about Giving. We don't pass the plate at Ordinary Faith because we don't want to distract from the message of Jesus, but we do give. GIVING is REALLY IMPORTANT, and not for the reasons you might think.

2 Corinthians 9:13 (NLT) As a result of **your ministry**, they will give glory to God. For your generosity to them and to all believers will prove that you are obedient to the Good News of Christ.

This Ministry of Giving IS **our Ministry**. When we give, we demonstrate the Gospel's impact upon us. As God GAVE His Son for us, why would He not give us all things? So, we give as our Father does. It's what Jesus does. It's what the Holy Spirit does. They Give. The Gospel is beautifully illustrated and demonstrated by Giving!

What Is Tithing and How Is Giving Different?

What is tithing? How Do You Do It? And Does it Work? "The Tithe" refers to the first 10% of what you produce. It is also meant to be the best of what you produce. In the law, it is required and used to finance temple worship.

Proverbs 3:9-10 (NLT) Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the best part of everything you produce. 10 Then He will fill your barns with grain, and your vats will overflow with good wine.

Anyone can use the principles of tithing and come out ahead. It is pretty simple; give the first and best 10% of what you produce and give it with joy. Give it because you trust God to provide. Give it because you believe God has provided. Give it to bless and not to get something in return. Our goal is to understand the Tithe and then to surpass it. Grace and giving are different from the Tithe.

The Law is often about what's required. Grace is always about what is possible.

So, transformed thinking from the New Testament regarding giving asks what is possible. What might God do if we asked, if we trusted Him? Where the Tithe might inconvenience you, annoy you, or delay a desire, grace might completely bankrupt you (1 Cor 8). Giving comes from a deeper, purer place. Giving is driven by powerful love.

2 Corinthians 8:3-4 (NLT) For I can testify that they gave **not only what they could afford, but far more**. And they did it of their own free will. 4 **They begged us again and again for the privilege of sharing in the gift for the believers in Jerusalem.**

What Kind Of Thinking Compels Someone To Give?

*Do You Live With **Scarcity** or Abundance?*

Matthew 6:31-33 (NLT) "So don't worry about these things, saying, 'What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?' 32 These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. 33 Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.

Without Christ, we live in constant dread of lack. But as Christ-followers, we live from God's Kingdom which is infinite. In God's Kingdom, there is enough. That doesn't necessarily mean there is enough for you to take the mission trip AND to buy the new truck. It does mean that He will provide. He may not provide for the new truck; He might actually allow your old one to break down. In the process, He may provide a carpool relationship that He knows you need more than a quiet drive to work.

Why Would I Give?

Genesis 14:18-20 (NLT) And Melchizedek, **the king of Salem and a priest of God Most High**, brought Abram some **bread and wine**. 19 Melchizedek blessed Abram with this blessing: "*Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth. 20 And blessed be God Most High, who has defeated your enemies for you.*" Then Abram gave Melchizedek a tenth of all the goods he had recovered.

*The Story of Abraham and **Melchizedek**.* Melchizedek (meaning "King of Justice") was the King of Salem (meaning "Peace"), thus he was the King of Justice and Peace. He was compared to Jesus because he was gracious and didn't operate within the rules of the Law. This King blessed Abraham by bringing him wine and bread after his battle. He did not "tax" Abraham as the Law did through the Tithe. Rather, Abraham gave willingly out of a place of blessing and freedom.

Conclusion: How do I Give?

Give in order to advance justice and peace. Make the giving of time and other resources an automatic part of your routine. Get your finances in order so that tithing isn't so overwhelming. Spend time teaching others about God. Invest in other people. Every time we contribute our resources to advancing God's Kingdom, we take from the stronghold of the enemy.

Talk About It...

- *What are your first thoughts regarding tithing and giving? Please share with the group.*
- *Read **2 Corinthians 9:6-15**. What are some things God has given to you that you could share with others? What are the results of a "ministry of giving"? (**vs 12**)*
- *What do you think about **Malachi 3:8-10** and **Proverbs 3:9-10**? Do those verses encourage or discourage you? How did Jesus affect the principles of the Tithe? Do you think people should give? If so, How much should they give? Why should they give?*
- *Review **Matthew 6:31-33**. Do you live with plenty or in scarcity? Why?*
- *Review **Genesis 14:17-23**. Have someone in the group summarize the story. Why do you think Abraham "tithed" before there was a "tithe"?*
- *Discuss some compelling reasons to give. Is there any reason to give more than you can actually afford?*