



Tithing and Offering paying in the Local Church

There are many Christians who don't believe that tithing is for today. Many expressed the belief that tithing was only done in the Old Testament and, thus, it shouldn't be a part of a believer's life.

What Is the Tithe?

The word "tithe" comes from an Old English root meaning "one-tenth." The tithe was an offering of one's agricultural income to the Lord as an expression of thanks and dedication. In the Old Testament agricultural economy, tithes were paid not in cash, gold, or goods but in crops or livestock, for only the agricultural fruit of the promised land was to be tithed.

There was also provision for freewill offerings and personal giving above and beyond the tithe so that the tithe never stood alone. Tithes were given by the patriarchs Abraham (Genesis 4:17-20) and Jacob (Genesis 28:22); a system of tithes was instituted in the law of God given through Moses (Deuteronomy 12; Deuteronomy 14 Deuteronomy 26; and the prophets rebuked the children of Israel for failing to give the tithe to God (Malachi 3:8).

Tithing in the New Testament

The idea of the tithe is still present in the New Testament (Matthew 23:23). Christians are also called to more extravagant freewill giving in response to the gospel of the Lord Jesus, based on faith in God as Provider (2 Corinthians 9:6-10). The main principle behind tithing and giving is the fact that what we do with our money shows where our heart is. Matthew 6:21 says, "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." When we are able to give 10% or more of our income instead of keeping that money for ourselves, it shows that our heart isn't tied to our money and that we love God more than our money. When we are able to release at least 10% of our income back to God, our money doesn't have as tight of a hold on us because we realize that God is in control of our finances.

Whether the tithe is only for Old Testament or if it is also included in the New Testament is probably the most debated issue. The scripture most frequently referenced regarding the tithe is indeed in the Old Testament (Malachi 3:10-12), but the tithe is also referenced in the New Testament. In Matthew 23:23.

Trusting the Church With Your Tithe

Whether or not you believe from a biblical standpoint that tithing is for today's church, the tithes and offerings of the believer is needed in the local church. The local church is where the believers gather together, united in Christ for worship, for teaching, for fellowship, for prayer, etc. And they must have a physical place to gather. This means that a building or room must be purchased or rented for the purpose of having a place to gather and worship. Electricity is definitely needed for lights, air conditioner and heating units, microphones and water is needed. There is also a need for wifi, and phone service in the local church. Communion items must be purchased, envelopes, fans, chairs, musical instruments, carpeting, etc. And just like our personal homes need many of these things in order to maintain your homes, the local church needs these things in order to maintain the church. It takes finances, it takes money to purchase these things and money to pay the church's bills. This entire burden cannot fall on the Pastor, but should be shared amongst all the members and potential members who attend. In other words, if the Pastor has the burden of wondering from month to month if the rent or mortgage is going to be paid, he or she cannot give themselves wholeheartedly to ministry, and this affects everyone involved. Members should give of their income to their local church in order to maintain their place of worship, where they continue to receive spiritual things.

Some say, "the lord will provide" and this is true, but the lord provides through you as members of the local church as you give of your finances, tithes and offerings, in support of your church that you say that you are a part of. And just as it takes more than \$1 to maintain your own house, it also takes more to maintain the church. Members should give enough to sustain their local church.

Church leaders are responsible for using church money in a responsible way - they have more accountability for that than we do. And as mentioned previously, most of them do a pretty good job of this. Still, it's worth bearing in mind that our accountability as believers is simply to give and trust that God will take care of the rest. Hopefully, you are in a church where you can trust your leaders to do what is right. If you are unable to find such a church, then it would be beneficial to work on your trust in God, asking Him to help you trust the leaders He has placed you under (or pray to help you find a solution if there is a genuine problem of corruption present). But just remember, you're responsible for what you give and for your heart, and the church leaders are responsible for how to use it.

If you desire prayer, contact us through our website and submit your prayer request. We would love to pray for you and believe God with you for whatever you are desiring spiritually for your life.

God Bless!