



## No.2

### FINANCES IN THE BIBLE

#### The Holy Spirit's leading for giving

In the Old Testament, the Law dictated how much, what and how to give. Under the New Covenant, the Holy Spirit guides us into all truth, including finances and giving.

John 16:13

However, whenever that One comes, the Spirit of the truth, **He will lead you into all the truth, for He will not speak from himself as a source, but as many things as He hears He will speak, and the things that are coming He will make known to you.**

Galatians 5:18

**But if you are being led by the Spirit you are not under law.**

#### Greed steals the seed of God's Word

Matthew 13:22

And he who was sown as seed into the midst of the thorns, this is he who hears the Word, and the worries of this age **and the deceitfulness of its wealth** combine to utterly choke the Word and he become unfruitful.

#### Wrong doctrine leading to lack of perspective

Believing that giving 10% of our income we have fulfilled "our obligation" can bring Christians to being inattentive and uncaring towards the needs of others, putting the responsibility on the church. The problem with this is, the church may know nothing about our neighbours or the people around us who are in need. We Believers in Christ are the church, we are the temple of the Holy Spirit and **God the Holy Spirit gives us discernment, wisdom and the love to care for others.**

A Christian should not desire riches for themselves, but for God's Kingdom. Jesus taught where the real riches are to be found:

Matthew 6:19-21

**"Stop accumulating treasures upon the earth for yourselves, where the clothes-moth and corrosion destroy and where thieves break in and steal. But be accumulating treasures in heaven where neither a clothes-moth nor corrosion destroys and where thieves do not break in nor steal, for where your treasure is, there will also be your heart."**

Proverbs 28:20

**A faithful man will abound with blessings,  
But he who makes haste to be rich will not go unpunished.**

This Scripture does not teach that being rich is bad. It draws a contrast between a faithful man and a man who makes haste in being rich. Obviously this man is just focusing on money and is considered "unfaithful". **We cannot serve money and God at the same time, we cannot serve two masters.** Our riches are there to serve God, we are not there to serve riches.

Luke 16:13

**"Not one household slave is able to keep on rendering a slave's service to two masters, for either the one he will hate and the other he will love, or to one he will hold firmly, and the other he will despise. You are not able to keep on serving God and riches".**

## Is the Christian obligated to tithe?

Tithing is a levitical law in the Old Testament. We studied in our first lecture that the New Testament has legally replaced the Old. Christians are never told to tithe in any of the New Covenant Scriptures. Never! It is taught instead that Christians are meant to be generous and cheerful givers and that everything we have belongs to God, not just ten percent of what we have.

In fact, our new identity in the New Testament makes us generous beyond the ten percent and without obligation. IT'S LOVE!

The Pharisees were tithing their goods and yet Jesus rebuked them because they did not stand for justice and the love of God. God is not interested in ten percent according to the Law: He is interested in our hearts.

## Religion (the Pharisees)

The Pharisees boasted because they tithed of their goods religiously while failing to demonstrate justice and God's self-sacrificial love.

Luke 11:42

**"But woe to you, the Pharisees, because you pay a tenth of sweet-smelling garden-mint and that strong smelling plant with yellow flowers and bitter leaves, and every garden-herb, and you are neglecting the equitable administration of justice and the love of God"**

## Fear, an often used tool

Malachi 3:8-9

**"Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing Me! But you say, 'How have we robbed You?' In tithes and offerings. <sup>9</sup> You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing Me, the whole nation of you!**

In the book of Malachi, Israel was charged with the offense of robbing God. Once again, the people of God had been faithless, breaking their covenant with the Lord.

Many preachers, during a church service, will say something like, "Give out of generosity," when they are really pushing believers to give out of obligation or fear of "robbing God" (bringing the Scripture of Malachi). When preachers quote this scripture (whether aware or not) they are deceiving and manipulating the flock, bringing fear and confusion to the congregation in order to have more income. They are literally bringing people back to the Law and away from grace. Some will say, 'Give, so you can get back two/three fold, etc., appealing to greed,' which is a trap, as God's Word teaches us. This is linked to the "prosperity message" which we will address in the next lecture.

Some preachers might act in ignorance, having been taught incorrectly during training. I also had the experience many years ago of having been told incorrectly about tithing, without proper consideration to the New Testament teachings.

## The storehouse?

I have witnessed in many churches, leaders who teach the believer is to give a tenth to the "storehouse". The church today is not the storehouse. The storehouse in Malachi 3 is not today's church, but "God's house". The storehouse was to provide food for the Levite priests. In other Scriptures, the storehouse was also a place where food was distributed to the people. For instance, in the Old Testament, the Israelites brought the first fruits and tithes to the storehouse, so that it could be stored until it was later distributed.

Malachi 3:10

**"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this," says the Lord of hosts, "if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows."**