

UNDERSTANDING BIBLICAL GIVING



WHAT DOES GIVING HAVE TO DO WITH DISCIPLESHIP?

- You may be wondering why this topic is in our conversation on a Discipleship Focus. The answer is very simple. An exaggerated focus on the generation of money has become one of the significant reasons that people are turned off about the church.
- It is very important to frame giving based on what the Bible says so that Disciples are not misinformed or exploited based on our love for God and our commitment to the kingdom mission.
- Some churches have made the offering the main reason for worship. Others center activities around the generation of money. Even if the money is to do God's will there is a biblical approach to giving that will remove the pressure and possible coercion.

HOW CAN I GIVE BASED ON SCRIPTURE?

- We have published a book on the topic of giving as an expression of worship. The book is titled “Cheerfully” by B. Gerard Fite.
- In order for giving to be an expression of worship it cannot be an obligation or based on persuasion. Everything that is giving as an expression of worship must be completely voluntary.
- Any plea or request can create an environment that makes the giver feel compelled to give. The request can remove the worship from the gift if the giver responds based on the request instead of out of love and thanksgiving to God.

TITHING?

- The tithe is a difficult topic in the Bible because there are different types of tithes in the Bible. These tithes were collected at different times for different reasons.
- The most popular tithing scripture is Malachi 3:10. But, if you read starting at v. 1 you will see that the question is not about tithing. The question in the text is v. 7 – “How shall we return?” God wants the people to return to Him but they do not know how to return. The tithe is an example of one thing they must address in order to return to God.
- The standard of tithing is part of the Law, and while we are under grace we are not exempt from the Law nor has the standard of the Law been removed. Yeshua elevated the standard for His Disciples.

BIBLICAL GIVING IN FOUR PHASES (PHASE 1 & 2)

- Phase 1 – Systematic Giving
 - Before you seek to give a tenth of all of your income sources. The first phase is to become a consistent and systematic giver. Determine the percentage you can afford and give it regularly. Increase your percentage until you are consistently giving a tenth.
- Phase 2 – A Tenth as my Minimum
 - Abraham and Jacob gave a tenth before the Law. God instituted a tenth as the legal requirement of giving because the people continued to ignore God and pursue their own desires.

BIBLICAL GIVING IN FOUR PHASES

(PHASE 3 & 4)

- Phase 3 – Giving led by the Holy Spirit
 - In the New Covenant the standard of giving was elevated to 100%. Yeshua gave his life to atone for our sin and the Disciples were led by the Holy Spirit to release everything as they committed to the community of Disciples. This does not mean that we are to release everything. This means that we need to seek the Holy Spirit for what we are to give above the tenth. Your giving needs to be prompted by the Holy Spirit so that your offering is a reflection of your love and thanksgiving to God. We call this worship giving.
- Phase 4 – Sacrificial Giving
 - The last phase is based on a prompting of the Holy Spirit or a need in the community of Disciples. Your spiritual leader may have a project that you are prompted to support. Sacrificial giving is in addition to your worship giving therefore it should come from investments and other stewardship practices that have produced an increase above your income sources.