

Principles of Prayer and Promises

Advanced Seminar

"The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" Psalm 27:1.

PPP: Lesson 11:

Having God as Your Partner

1: Because God created the Earth, He actually owns it and everything on it, including us.

"The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." Psalm 24:1.

"For every beast of the forest is Mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are Mine." Psalm 50:10-11.

"The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine, saith the Lord of hosts." Haggai 2:8.

"Know ye that the Lord He is God: it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture" Psalm 100:3.

Here we see He owns us twice over; first because He created us and second because He redeemed us or bought us back from the enemy.

"But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine." Isaiah 43:1.

"For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it" Exodus 20:11.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Genesis 1:1.

"For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods. In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also. The sea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land." Psalm 95:3-5.

"He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing." Job 26:7.

"Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever." Psalm 104:5.

"Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Hebrews 1:3.

"For in Him we live, and move, and have our being." Acts 17:28.

"For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." 1 Corinthians 6:20.

2. God gives us the power to get wealth; therefore He has a right to ask something of us.

"But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is He that giveth thee power to get wealth." Deuteronomy 8:18:

We are the steward, manager or caretaker of God's goods, but it all belongs to Him.

"And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat [food] in due season?" Luke 12:42.

"For the kingdom of heaven is as a man traveling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods." Matthew 25:1.

3. What does God expect of us?

"Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." 1 Corinthians 4:2.

"After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them" Matthew 25:19. They needed to give a report of what they did with His goods.

"And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods. And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward." Luke 16:1-2.

The Spirit of God reproves men of sin and judgment **"And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:" John 16:8.** Surely every man knows that he must render an account to God for life, health, wealth, time, and all things.

The great duty of a steward is to make the best possible use of that which is entrusted to him, not for himself, but for the owner. The sinful steward will make himself first. The Christian steward will make God first.

"What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me?" Psalm 116:12.

"Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase." Proverbs 3:9.

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Matthew 6:33.

4. What does God ask us to return to Him?

"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." Malachi 3:10.

What is the tithe? The tithe means one tenth. If a man earns \$1, his tithe is 10 cents. If he earns \$100, it is \$10. If he earns \$1,000, his tithe is \$100. The tithe is always the first tenth, not the last. It seems the more a man has, if he has a lot, that is when it may get hard.

"I was so poor, my purse so small,

"I hardly felt one tenth at all.

"I gladly gave from my poor store
"With but the wish I could give more.
"But now my purse, which was so small,
"Contains one million, all in all;
"And wonder I each passing day
"If I can give one tenth away!"

"Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name: bring an offering, and come into His courts." Psalm 96:8:

God requires the tithe. What a man gives above that is his offering, or gift. Land, trees, flocks, herds, salary—all are to be tithed.

"And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's: it is holy unto the Lord. . And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the Lord." Leviticus 27:30, 32.

Jacob promised to pay tithe to God on the very necessities of life.

"Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God: and this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that Thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto Thee." Genesis 28:20-22.

The first mention of tithe in the Bible is in the days of Abraham, who paid tithe to Melchizedek. In Abraham's day the tithe was paid to God's priest.

"Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the Most High God. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth: and blessed be the Most High God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all." Genesis 14:18-20.

"And, behold. I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation. " Numbers 18:21.

The Levites in the Old Testament did the work that Pastors and Bible teachers do today. The same tithe plan be followed for the support of the gospel ministry.

"Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preached the gospel should live of the gospel." 1 Corinthians 9:13-14.

5. What curse is pronounced on unfaithfulness; and what are the promises to those who do right in this?

"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." Malachi 3:8-9.

"And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Matthew 25:30.

God pours out upon tithe payers a great blessing.

"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. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes. and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field. saith the Lord of hosts." Malachi 3:10-11.

"It is more blessed to give than to receive." Acts 20:35.

"Give, and it shall be given unto you." Luke 6:38.

"He which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. . 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 9:6-7.

"His lord said unto him. Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord." Matthew 25:21.

Peter said, **"Lo, we have left all, and followed thee."** Jesus said, **"There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting"** Luke 18:28-30.

God and Miss Clancy's Tithe: This story took place in the early 1900s in a big city. Miss Clancy's income sent from a niece and nephew was \$6.00 a week. Out of that it took \$4.50 for her rent. She had \$1.50 left to live on. Then she went to Bible meetings and learned she needed to pay tithe.

How could she do it? That would be 60 cents and would leave her only 90 cents to live on. But after looking over what the Bible said, she felt she had to obey. She paid the 60 cents to the church for tithe and claimed God's promises.

Did the lady starve? Not at all. She found that various things were given her by friends and neighbors and week after week as she brought in her tithe, she found she had more than when she kept all her money.

Then came the Big Surprise, after a few weeks of this, she received a letter from the dear nephew. In it he said, "I've felt for some time, Auntie, that you must have a hard time getting along on \$6, and I've wanted to send you more. Now I can do it, for I have just had a raise in wages. You will find \$10 in this, and there will be \$10 every week from now on."

Her rent stayed the same so now, when she paid \$1.00 in tithe, she had 4.50 left for herself! Much more than before she started tithing. Shall we put God to the test; by paying tithe? He says that He will open the windows of heaven, and pour out a blessing, that there will not be room to receive it. The Blessing is there for the obedient!

Having God as Your Partner: Details about Tithing

Exactly how is our tithe to be calculated? The “Tithe” was one tenth of the ‘increase’, that is, one out of ten. The tithe was always to be laid aside first, this is why it is often called ‘first-fruits’. We need to know what our ‘increase’ is in order to know what our tithe is. This is different depending how we get our living, or our increase.

1. If we work at a job and receive wages, then what we receive when we are paid, is our ‘increase’. In this case I set aside one tenth of this as tithe before I use the rest of it. If I receive 50 dollars, Then one tenth, or the ‘tithe’ would be 5 dollars. If I receive 100 dollars, then my tithe will be 10 dollars.

2. If we get our money by selling things, it is a little different. Suppose I have a store and I sell bananas. When I add up my sales at the end of the week, I find I sold 100 dollars’ worth of bananas. But is this all increase? No it is not, because I have expenses I had to pay to have the shop and also to get the bananas to sell. Maybe the rent for my shop costs me 20 dollars, and to buy bananas to sell, cost me 30 dollars; that is 50 dollars for my expenses. So I subtract 50 dollars from my 100 dollars, which leaves me only 50 dollars profit or ‘increase’ for that week. So my tithe on this would be 5 dollars.

3. Maybe I get my increase from raising cattle and selling them or their milk? The simple way to calculate this would be if I have ten cows out in the field, and they each have a calf, one calf out of the ten would be my increase. I could sell that calf and give the money, or give the calf as my tithe. But this would not be so simple if I have to pay for the food for my cows, or other expenses to do with raising them, then I would add up that cost and subtract it from the value of my ten calves and pay tithe on the balance. If I sell milk and get 50 dollars for that, again I figure out what I had to pay to feed the cows and take the milk to market. I subtract my cost from my income, and that is my increase.

4. Maybe, like the people in Bible times, I grow fruit and vegetables, or plant grain. If I sell it for money, I simply figure out how much it cost me to grow the crop. Maybe I go to market and sell them for 50 dollars, and I know I paid 10 dollars for the seeds and 10 dollars to rent and plough my field. Then my increase is 30 dollars and my tithe, or one-tenth, is 3 dollars.

If I do not sell my crop for money, I can bring my one tenth to the church to be used by the Elder, pastor, or teachers who work in serving the church. For example, I have 10 baskets of fruit, one basket is my tithe. If I grew ten bags of corn, then one bag is my tithe.

From these examples you can see how the system works. It is a very fair system, because those who have very little money, their tithe is very small, while those who have a lot of money, their tithe is much more, but God will bless both of them equally for being faithful!

Here is a Bible Example of someone bringing produce for their tithe, also called ‘first fruits’, to the prophet, or minister. **“And there came a man from Baalshalisha, and brought the man of God bread of the firstfruits, twenty loaves of barley, and full ears of corn in the husk thereof. And he said, Give unto the people, that they may eat.” 2 Kings 4:42.**

What about Offerings? While Tithes is something that God claims as His own, offerings are left up to the person to decide what they want to give. They are called 'free-will offerings'. While they are left to the person to decide, still God does expect us to give offerings.

Use of Tithes and Offerings: While the tithe is given a special purpose, to support God's ministers and help spread the gospel to others, it is not to be used for church expenses, such as paying rent for the church, or helping the poor. This is what offerings are for. What does the Bible say about those who give offerings as well as returning their tithes?

"But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:" 2 Corinthians 9:6-8.

"Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering." Exodus 25:2.

"If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother: But thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth." Deuteronomy 15:7, 8.

"For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not." 2 Corinthians 8:12.

"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again." Luke 6:38.

"He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given will he pay him again." Proverbs 19:17.

"For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister." Hebrews 6:10.

Example of a generous giver.

"And he [Jesus] saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites. And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all: For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had." Luke 21:2-4.

This lady loved the Lord, and wanted to bring an offering to show her love; no one made her do this, it was her own free-will, and God blest her for it.

Even our labor can be an offering when we use our time to serve the church in some way.

When we think of all what the Lord has done for us, and what He promises to those who return faithful tithes and bring offerings, surely we will want to be among the 'cheerful givers'!