

## **Joshua 7:1-26 “Have You Taken Something That Does Not Belong to you?”**

Jericho was the first city that the Israelites overcame upon entering the promised land, the land of Canaan. In the eyes of God it was firstfruits because upon overcoming the city they were not to take anything from the city for themselves. Everything was sacred and belonged to God. So in that sense this is a form of firstfruits; The spoils of the first victory completely belonged to God.

### **Exodus 13:1-2**

Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Sanctify to Me every firstborn, the first offspring of every womb among the sons of Israel, both of man and beast; it belongs to Me."

### **Exodus 23:19**

"You shall bring the choice first fruits of your soil into the house of the LORD your God"

### **Deuteronomy 26:1-11**

*"Then it shall be, when you enter the land which the LORD your God gives you as an inheritance, and you possess it and live in it, that you shall take some of the first of all the produce of the ground which you bring in from your land that the LORD your God gives you, and you shall put it in a basket and go to the place where the LORD your God chooses to establish His name.* "You shall go to the priest who is in office at that time and say to him, 'I declare this day to the LORD my God that I have entered the land which the LORD swore to our fathers to give us. Then the priest shall take the basket out of your hand and set it down before the altar of the LORD your God.

## **Jericho was a type of Firstfruit and belong to the Lord**

### **1 Corinthians 15:20-28**

But now Christ has been raised from the dead, **the first fruits** of those who are asleep. For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive

### **Romans 11:16**

If the **first piece** of dough is holy, the lump is also; and if the root is holy, the branches are too.

**Proverbs 3:9-10 (NKJV) Honor the LORD with your possessions, And with the firstfruits of all your increase;** <sup>10</sup> So your barns will be filled with plenty, And your vats will overflow with new wine.

**“Have You Taken Something That Does Not Belong to you?”**

## DO YOU KNOW WHAT TWO TOPICS ARE THE MOST MENTIONED IN THE BIBLE?

I want you to guess what two topics are the most mentioned in the Bible? There are approximately **2350 verses about the most mentioned topic and around 300 verses regarding the second most mentioned topic**. I will also tell you the top two topics are love and money/possessions.

**Love is second** which makes money/possessions the most mentioned topic in the Bible! Money is not just cash as is the typical mindset of today. Money or mammon in the Old Testament was any and every possession not just cash, coins, gold or silver. Try to think of a single incident in our daily life where we do not use some type of possession to interact with others. When we wake up we get out of a bed, we have clothing on our bodies (hopefully), we get food to eat, we shower, we get in a vehicle or pay to ride public transportation to the destination where we make the money to pay for everything we have!

Very, very few families have this type of mindset. If every interaction or action we make utilizes some possession, does this include every action I take for God? Absolutely! I realized the reason for the Bible having over 2300 references to money is because we cannot escape the effect it has on our lives. In order to fulfill some of our greatest commissions, go and make disciples of all nations, taking care of the orphans/widows, raising our children in the admonition of the Lord, we naturally use money and/or possessions. So, could our view of money impact our effectiveness for God? Absolutely!!!

If we do not have a Biblical perspective on money and possessions, how can we be effective? Let alone achieve maximum effectiveness for God?

I want to talk to you about giving and how God sees giving. Many in the church today have a miss guided perspective of giving. Their view of giving hinders them from doing what is right in the eyes of God. Even the very subject of giving turns people off.

People are quick to say how much they Love God, but that love is shown in word only. When you are a giver it shown in your actions also. People know there responsibility, and are ready to sacrifice for Love.

**Love always involves responsibility and love always involves sacrifice.**

**Luke 16:13-15** **13**"No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money."  
**14** The Pharisees, who loved money, heard all this and were sneering at Jesus. **15** He said to them, "You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of others, but God knows your hearts. What people value highly is detestable in God's sight.

From this verse we can learn why so many people hate giving and do not really want to hear a message about giving. Returning to God what is The Tithe. If you are serving God then you will willingly and cheerfully remove His 10% and give It back to Him as He has instructed.

## I. WHEN YOU RETURN THE TITHE YOU HONOR GOD

**Proverbs 3:9-10 (NKJV) Honor the LORD** with your possessions, And with the firstfruits of all your increase; <sup>10</sup> So your barns will be filled with plenty, And your vats will overflow with new wine.

**Proverbs 3:9-10 (MSG) Honor GOD** with everything you own; give him the first and the best. <sup>10</sup> Your barns will burst, your wine vats will brim over.

**Proverbs 3:9-10 (AMP) Honor the Lord** with your capital *and* sufficiency [from righteous labors] and with the firstfruits of all your income; <sup>10</sup> So shall your storage places be filled with plenty, and your vats shall be overflowing with new wine.

## II. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO HONOR?

To give **high respect**, to give **great reverence** and **esteem**. Doing what is right, making it a standard of our conduct. Making it part of your custom?

**Deuteronomy 5:16 (NIV2011)** “Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you, so that you may live long and that it may go well with you in the land the LORD your God is giving you.

Parents, and people seem to understand what it means to receive Honor from their children, and they demand that they show it. Why it so hard to Honor God as He has asked? With the Tithe and the offering?

Many people give an offering, but it is not the Tithe which is 10% of your income. If you do not remove the 10% and bring it to the Storehouse which is the church that is feeding you, the church that is caring for you. That there is Food, Supply, and Resources in that church. God Himself had something to say about that.

## III. WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU DON'T HONOR GOD WITH THE TITHE?

**Are You A Thief/ A God Robber?**

**Malachi 3:6-10 (NIV2011)** “**I the LORD do not change**. So you, the descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed. <sup>7</sup> Ever since the time of your ancestors you **have turned away** from my decrees and have not kept them. **Return to me, and I will return to you,**” says the LORD Almighty. “But you ask, ‘How are we to return?’ <sup>8</sup> “**Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob me.** “But you ask, ‘How are we robbing you?’ “**In tithes and offerings.** <sup>9</sup> You are under a curse—your whole nation—because you are robbing me. <sup>10</sup> **Bring the whole tithe** into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. **Test me in this,**” says the LORD Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.

Many people have used what belongs to God, to buy Cars, Clothes, even Homes. So, the question today “Are you wearing stolen clothes? Riding in stolen Cars, and living in a stolen home? How long will God’s people steal what is His?”

**Have you shown God Honor or Dishonor? Are you showing God Honor or Dishonor**

#### **IV. HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN GOD IN TITHES & OFFERINGS?**

**Deuteronomy 8:11-14 (NIV2011) Be careful that you do not forget the LORD your God, failing to observe his commands, his laws and his decrees that I am giving you this day. <sup>12</sup> Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down, <sup>13</sup> and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied, <sup>14</sup> then your heart will become proud and you will forget the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.**

When times are really hard, we remember God, because we need His help. We come to church faithfully, we attend bible study, we pray daily, we read the bible. We do all the things that we think will get His attention.

But when our situation turns for the good for the better that is the times, we start to forget God. We start missing church and bible study, we pray every now and then. Even our giving becomes less and less. All these things show we are moving away from God.

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#### **V. PEOPLE DO FORGET**

Years before the Pearl Harbor bombing Japan had a 8.4 earthquake which caused massive loss of life and property devastation. The United States stepped in to help financially and with physical assistance. Japan was so grateful they vowed to never forget what the United States did at their time of need.

Yes, several years later they Bombed Pearl Harbor “THEY FORGOT”

We can tend to forget when things that were done do not mean anything any longer.

Have you ever done something for someone, and they forgot what you did? How you went out of your way to help? How you give your last to help?

## HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN? GOD ASK YOU NOT TO FORGET? HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN?

Ask yourself this question Have you really Honored God in your giving?

Or have you forgotten what He did for you?

Are you wearing, riding and living in stolen things? Are you a God Robber?

### **In the beginning of this message we looked at a story of someone who stole from God. Joshua 7:1-26**

**Joshua 7:21 (NKJV)** "When I saw among the spoils a beautiful Babylonian garment, two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold weighing fifty shekels, I coveted them and took them. And there they are, hidden in the earth in the midst of my tent, with the silver under it."

### **THE GOOD NEWS IS THIS TODAY!!**

God offers us a chance to return to Him, by bring Him Tithes and Offering

Returning to Him what belongs to Him "The Tithe"

**Malachi 3:6-10 (NIV2011)** "I the LORD do not change. So you, the descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed. <sup>7</sup> Ever since the time of your ancestors you **have turned away** from my decrees and have not kept them. **RETURN TO ME, and I will return to you,**" says the LORD Almighty. "But you ask, 'How are we to return?' <sup>8</sup> "Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob me. "But you ask, 'How are we robbing you?' "**IN TITHES AND OFFERINGS.** <sup>9</sup> You are under a curse—your whole nation—because you are robbing me. <sup>10</sup> **BRING THE WHOLE TITHE** into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. **TEST ME IN THIS,**" says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it."

**God challenges to you today to Test Him to Prove Him in this area.**

**This is not just for this moment but for a life time.**

**Will you Honor God today by making the choice to do what He has asked of you?**

**Proverbs 3:9-10 (NKJV)** **Honor the LORD with your possessions, And with the firstfruits of all your increase (Income);** <sup>10</sup> So your barns will be filled with plenty, And your vats will overflow with new wine.

### **Giving is God's way of providing a supernatural economy for us.**

The Bible having over 2300 references to money is because we cannot escape the effect it has on our lives. We cannot escape the effect it has on our churches. In order to fulfill some of our greatest commissions, go and make disciples of all nations, taking care of the orphans/widows, Paying the rent or mortgage for the church keeping the lights on and paying the staff. **Love always involves responsibility and love always involves sacrifice.**