

## DON'T GIVE GOD THE LEFTOVERS

**Leviticus 23:22 (MSG)** "When you reap the harvest of your land, don't reap the corners of your field or gather the gleanings. Leave them for the poor and the foreigners. I am GOD, *your* God."

**Deuteronomy 24:19 (NKJV)** "When you reap your harvest in your field, and forget a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it; it shall be for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hands.

**Genesis 4:2-7 (NKJV)** Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. <sup>3</sup> And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the LORD. <sup>4</sup> Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the LORD respected Abel and his offering, <sup>5</sup> but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell. <sup>6</sup> So the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? <sup>7</sup> If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire *is* for you, but you should rule over it."

### **Malachi 3:7-8 (NKJV)**

<sup>7</sup> Yet from the days of your fathers You have gone away from My **ordinances (DECREES, ORDERS)** And have not kept *them*. **Return to Me, and I will return to you,**" Says the LORD of hosts. **"But you said, 'In what way shall we return?'** <sup>8</sup> "Will a man **rob** God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, 'In what way have we robbed You?' **IN TITHES AND OFFERINGS.**

### **Malachi 3:10-12 (NKJV)**

<sup>10</sup> Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, That there may be food in My house, And try 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 *such* blessing That *there will not be room* enough to receive it. <sup>11</sup> "And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, So that he will not destroy the fruit of your ground, Nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit for you in the field," Says the LORD of hosts; <sup>12</sup> "And all nations will call you blessed, For you will be a delightful land," Says the LORD of hosts.

### **SEVEN PROMISES**

The Lord gives us this most remarkable promise: "And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts" (verse 12). In this noteworthy portion of Scripture, we find the Lord's command to bring "all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house." The Lord clearly tells every believer that the tithe belongs to Him and His work.

**The Lord even challenges us to test Him: "Prove me now herewith"** (verse 10). **This is the only time in Scripture that the Lord makes**

**that offer.** That is one of the most amazing invitations we have ever been given by the Lord Himself; that we, as God's people, can prove Him in this matter.

Following His challenge in Malachi 3:10, He then begins to give us the seven most amazing blessings of the tithe:

1. **"If I will not open you the windows of heaven"** (verse 10). The windows of heaven always deal with revival. The Lord promises to revive every person who obeys Him.
2. **"And pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it"** (verse 10). Think about it! God Almighty declares clearly in His Word that the tither will be prosperous—so prosperous, in fact, that there will not be room enough to receive the prosperity and blessings God has in store for the one who obeys Him.
3. **"I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes"** (verse 11). Years ago when I taught on this subject in Orlando, I discovered that *rebuke*, to my amazement, means "to cripple" or "to paralyze." God Almighty will actually cripple the enemy on your behalf when you tithe. The tithe is so important to the Lord that He promises to paralyze and cripple the enemy so that he will not be able to touch your life! Remember, the Lord said to prove Him. These things will happen, for this is the Word of the Lord!
4. **"He shall not destroy the fruits of your ground"** (verse 11). This means that the enemy, whom God has crippled on your behalf, will not be able to touch your finances. The "fruits of your ground" refers to your money. The enemy will not be able to touch your money as a result of your obedience to the Lord in the tithe.
5. **"Neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts"** (verse 11). It is remarkable that in John 15:5, Jesus said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches." The vine, therefore, means the family, and God gives this amazing promise to the tither when He says that the enemy will not touch your family, if you obey the Lord.
6. **"All nations shall call you blessed"** (verse 12). In this most amazing blessing and promise, God will bless and prosper you so that the nations of the world will see the blessings of God upon you. In other words, you will be a mighty witness of the power and blessings of God.
7. **"Ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts"** (verse 12). *Delightsome* means "highly desired." As you obey the Lord with the tithe, God will so highly desire you that He will use you.

These seven most amazing blessings of the tithe can be summarized:

1. You will have revival.
2. You will experience great prosperity.
3. The enemy will be crippled and will not touch your life.
4. Your finances will be safe.
5. Your family will be safe from the hand of the enemy.
6. You will be a great witness of the power and blessings of the Lord to the nations.
7. You will be highly desired, and God will use you for His glory!

### **THE STOREHOUSE**

Before giving these seven blessings in Malachi 3, the Lord very clearly mentions **the tithes and offerings** in verse 8: "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? **In tithes and offerings**" (Malachi 3:8). Then He says, "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse" (verse 10).

The "storehouse", I have come to realize that the storehouse is not the local building **but the ministry that feeds your life.**

Any ministry that feeds you the Word of God is that storehouse! The Word of God is clear on this, for He says, "Bring ye all the tithe into the storehouse." **The tithe belongs to the ministry that gives you fresh bread and the meat of God's Word.**

As you support the storehouse that the Lord has placed into your life, the Lord has promised to send these seven supernatural blessings upon your life!

If this ministry has been that storehouse for you, then it is the law of God that you should give your tithes and offerings to this ministry. In fact, according to the Word of God, you should support whatever ministry God uses to feed your life.

I want to share an important truth with you. The Word of God is clear also in Deuteronomy 26 that the tithe does not belong to the dead. In the midst of teaching on the tithe, the Lord tells us, "Nor given ought thereof for the dead" (Deuteronomy 26:14). If you want to receive the seven supernatural blessings of the tithe, make sure you are not giving your tithe or offering to a dead work.

If you give to a dead ministry, there will be no result! But when you give to a ministry that is alive and preaching the Gospel, then these promises will be yours.

### **BREAKING DEBT FROM YOUR LIFE**

When I saw this powerful truth and began applying it in my own life—as I became a tither myself—God truly broke the debt from my life.

# Is There Really a Difference in Tithes and Offerings?



If you've attended church even once in your life, you've probably heard the phrase *tithes and offerings*.

It's often printed in the bulletin, or the pastor talks about it as the ushers pass the collection plates. "Tithes and offerings" is often treated as one type of giving.

But is there a difference between tithes and offerings? Yep! And as the giver of those tithes and offerings, you should know how to tell them apart.

- The tithe is the first 10 percent of your income that God calls you to give to your local church each month.
- An offering is any money you choose to give *above and beyond* the tithe.

Let's look at each one closely.

## The Firstfruits of All Your Increase

Proverbs 3:9 calls us to honor God with the first and the best of our earnings—the *firstfruits*. At this time, Solomon was speaking to a society of farmers, so most people’s “income” came from the crops they grew or animals they raised. Today, we measure our increase in dollars, not donkeys. But the principle still applies: **God calls us to bring Him the first of our earnings. Specifically, the first tenth.**

*“Tithing is really a form of worship.”*

So the tithe, which means “tenth,” is a baseline for giving—the bare minimum. It’s a tenth of your monthly income, and it goes specifically to your local church (**Malachi 3:10**). It’s the first thing you do when you budget your money—before you pay down debt, make a mortgage payment, or fill your car with gas.

Tithing is really a form of worship, because it shows God we trust *Him* (not money) to provide for us.

## Giving Freely and Cheerfully

Offerings are different. They’re given **above and beyond the tithe**. The Bible doesn’t *command* us to give offerings, but it *does* encourage us to give generously, and offerings—since they aren’t required—reflect the generosity in our hearts.

Here’s the thing about offerings: Unlike tithes, which come out of your budget before anything else, offerings should be given only when you have the financial margin to do so. That means you tithe first and then take care of your own household: your bills, your debt payments, your housing costs, groceries, transportation, and clothing.

After all that is done, and you feel called to give an offering beyond the tithe, feel free!

***"God loves a cheerful giver."***

Now, someone who's debt-free with lots of extra income every month might not give much beyond the tithe. They *can*, but they choose not to. That's where offerings become a heart issue. God wants us to give with open hands and hearts, to be as generous as we can *within our circumstances*.

In fact, **2 Corinthians 9:7** (NIV) says, "Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

Now, you have a lot more freedom as to *where* you can give your offering than you do with your tithe. **Tithes must go to your local church, but offerings can really go anywhere**—to your church, to a parachurch organization or even to a charity with a cause you believe in.

## **The Bottom Line**

Tithes and offerings are different, but they do have one big thing in common: They both work to build your **trust in God as your ultimate Provider** and decrease your dependence on money. After all, **Matthew 6:24** (ESV) tells us, "No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money."

And if you're not giving at all? There's no time like the present to start!

# 3 Things the Bible Says About Money



Christian financial expert Howard Dayton has said that the Bible references money and possessions 2,350 times. That's *a lot*. It's more than Jesus talked about love, and more than He talked about heaven and hell combined.

It's almost as if God knew we would need *lots* of direction and clarity on the whole money and stuff issue. Ha! Does He know us well, or what?

So what's in those 2,350 verses? Way more than we have time to talk about here. But I do want to highlight three of my favorites. **These are the verses I turn to when I need a little guidance in my own financial decisions.** I hope you'll glean as much wisdom from them as I have.

## 1. 1 Timothy 6:6: "Godliness with contentment is great gain." (NKJV)

It's interesting to me that in God's economy, we actually have "great gain" when we're *not* driven by the quest for more.

We all have different vices. Mine has always been discontentment. I've always wanted to accomplish more, better, faster. But here's the crazy thing: **I've experienced the greatest gain when I was content *regardless of the outcome***. It's okay to be driven to succeed, but it's unhealthy when success dictates our happiness.

Let's not confuse contentment with apathy or lack of ambition, but let's also not become so consumed with any pursuit that overshadows our pursuit of God Himself. **Contentment is the most important characteristic of people who are successful with money**. That's because they think long and hard about the purchases they make and therefore have more money left over to save, invest and give.

### **2. Proverbs 13:22: "A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children." (NKJV)**

This verse keeps our life goals, our vision and our legacy front and center when we're choosing how to use our money today. When we weigh what we want *now* against what we *really* want *later*, we realize how temporary satisfaction pales in comparison to a legacy of purpose and generational fulfillment.

And an inheritance is not limited to money. It also includes godly character qualities like **integrity and trustworthiness**. Combining a financial inheritance with wisdom and godliness ensures that the next generation will also manage God's blessings God's way for God's glory long after I've graduated to heaven.

### **3. Proverbs 22:7: "The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is slave to the lender." (NIV)**



I like this one because it speaks honestly about the relationship between a debtor and a creditor. God wants us to be in a position to hear from Him and to serve people in His name . . . not to be in bondage to payments. He wants us to have **freedom and options**. Many of us sense God calling us to do great things for Him, but when we're in debt, we can't.

What verses do you turn to when you're seeking financial guidance? God has provided us with so much wisdom in this area as an act of love because **He is for us, not because He wants anything from us**. It's worth digging into and finding some financial insight that motivates and inspires you!

## Are You Answering the Call to Generosity?

*Since generosity doesn't come naturally to human beings, we're diving deeper to explore what being generous really means—and how it shapes the legacy we're building. After all, we're made in the image of the greatest giver the world has ever known.*



Since **generosity** doesn't come naturally to human beings, we're diving deeper to explore what being generous really means—and how it shapes the **legacy** we're building. After all, we're made in the image of the greatest giver the world has ever known. So, it only makes sense that we're most like Him when we're giving generously.

In an [episode of \*Chris Brown's True Stewardship\*](#), Chris challenged his listeners to answer **five big questions** on this topic. But why do these questions matter?

When you're wrapping up Baby Step 3 and moving through the rest of the Steps, you start asking different questions than you did when you were paying off debt—questions about **biblical wealth and generosity**. Your focus shifts from the here and now to what comes next. **You're in a different stage of life.**

These five questions, which come from the last lesson of [The Legacy Journey](#) (a class specifically designed to deal with some of those questions about wealth and generosity), will help you start thinking about the next steps in your financial journey.

Related: [Wondering what the Bible has to say about building wealth and leaving a legacy? Learn more about The Legacy Journey](#)

If you're having a little trouble getting started, we've got a few ideas to get the wheels turning.

### **1. What are some big things that God has given you?**

Start by making a list. God has blessed us all in more ways than we could ever really put down on paper, so don't limit yourself to the first few thoughts that come to mind. Challenge yourself to think outside of the box. If you get stuck, ask a mentor or close friend for their opinions and ideas.

## **2. How do those gifts affect your life each day?**

It's easy to lose sight of our blessings in the hustle and bustle of everyday life. Maybe we get caught up in the comparison game or we simply start to take them for granted. Dedicate a specific amount of time to *really* slow down and see how the gifts you listed for question one impact your life on a daily basis.

## **3. How are you using those resources for God's glory?**

You've been blessed to be a blessing. God has placed you in a world full of needs, and He wants you to use His resources to meet them. Are you supporting a charity you really believe in? Are you helping to send kids on mission trips? If you aren't at the stage where you can give financially, think of ways to donate your time or your skills. Jot down some ideas on how you can use what you've been given to invest in the lives of others.

## **4. What are future generations learning from your generosity?**

We're all leaving a legacy—for better or for worse. That's why you have to be intentional about what you're building. Think about what you're teaching the next generation about generosity, especially inside your own family. A family constitution can really help with that. You can also think about generosity on a global scale. How can what you do change the world?

## **5. Why is it important to make sure your legacy outlives you?**

We all want to be part of something bigger than ourselves. It's human nature—and the way God wired us to live generationally. As you consider this question, think back to the story of David and Solomon in **1 Chronicles 22**. David didn't just prepare his son to build a temple for God. He also passed down the vision and wisdom—not to mention the wealth—necessary to get the job done. When

thinking through your own legacy, consider the value of teaching vision and character in addition to leaving wealth and resources.

Related: [What Legacy Are You Leaving?](#)

If we're only living for ourselves, we're missing the point. As you tackle these tough questions, take your time. Remember, **the goal is progress, not perfection**. After all, as Chris said, "Generosity is an ethos, not an event." But if you **make generosity a habit**, it will become a part of your character—and the **legacy** you leave behind.